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Using the Student Readiness Inventory as Part of a Comprehensive Intervention and Retention System

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The Need

Six-year graduation rates average 57% at four-year institutions (Horn & Nevill, 2006) and 34% at two-year institutions (Swail, 2004) suggesting that many new students are ill-prepared to meet the challenges they face upon entry into college. The literature suggests that early identification of academic risk can lead to increased academic performance and retention (e.g., Robbins et al., 2004, 2009).

Introduction to the SRI

The Student Readiness Inventory (SRI) was developed based on the literature on academic performance and retention. It is a measure of psychosocial and study skills factors associated with academic success and retention. The SRI is a low-stakes, self-report instrument composed of 108 items measure traits that are amenable to change through intervention. It consists of 10 scales that fall into three broad domains: Motivation and Skills, Social Engagement, and Self-Management.

The SRI shows excellent reliability and has demonstrated incremental validity in predicting GPA and retention over and above other predictors, and has been shown to increase an institution's ability to detect risk by as much as 50%. When combined with the ACT, COMPASS, or other achievement scores, the SRI provides a powerful tool for identifying entering students who have high levels of risk and for targeting those individuals for intervention.

Case Studies

Two case studies of institutions using the SRI are presented. The first case study focuses on a large, 4-year public institution that has used the SRI to identify at-risk students and refer them to resources, and then monitored academic progress and resource use throughout the academic year. Results show that, at-risk students who made use of resources significantly increased their college GPA and were more likely to remain enrolled at the institution.

The second case study focuses on an urban, 2-year institution that uses the SRI in combination with COMPASS (a set of computerized adaptive placement tests) and faculty referrals based on student classroom behaviors to identify risk and intervene with students. Results show that at-

risk students who engage in classroom behaviors supportive of academic success are more likely to make academic performance gains.

Both case studies highlight the use of SRI as part of institution-wide initiatives designed to (1) identify at-risk students early, (2) provide students with resources designed to increase their opportunity to succeed academically, and (3) track student progress. Additional implications will be discussed.

Narrative of Hope and Resilience

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This presentation will be organized into three sections: brief overview of the research and strengths movement, educational journeys of five first generation college students (including video clips of interviews with the students) and discussion of the impact of strengths on students' educational journeys and strength based strategies to implement on campus.

The first section of the presentation will provide an overview of the research and strengths movement. The methodology for the study will be presented, as outlined in previous question. An overview of the strengths movement will feature the work of Dr. Don Clifton and the Gallup Organization. Developed from a positive psychology perspective, Dr. Clifton created the Strengths Finder assessment, which is designed to identify a possible 34 innate talents or themes. An individual completing the Strengths Finder assessment will be provided with top five talents. Using knowledge and experience, these themes can develop into strengths. After original interviews were conducted with first generation students, seven students agreed to take the Strengths Finder assessment. Through the stories told by these students, evidence exists on how their top five themes impacted their educational journeys.

Each session participant will be provided an overview of each student's themes. Five students' stories will be told as conveyed in original qualitative study. Analysis will be presented for how the themes impacted each student's educational journey and life. Students featured will be three men, two women. All five students are non-traditional, with all enrolling in community college after being out of the educational pipeline for a period of time. Each was faced with life challenges to overcome, choosing education as a way to transform their lives. All had experienced difficulty in the K-12 educational system, with three leaving to complete GED's. Since returning to education and pursuing college degrees, all five are success students.

Using Dr. Don Clifton and Dr. Chip Anderson's principles of using a strengths approach to promote student achievement as a guide, discussion will focus on how each student's story could have been impacted by a strengths based approach to education. Discussion will continue

with various strengths based strategies that can be implemented on campuses to help promote student achievement.

Resources will be provided for participants to learn more about the Strengths Finder assessment and materials for strengths based education.

The Third Time Really IS a Charm

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Presented by the lead faculty member and staff member from the three major FYE course development and execution attempts in the last 20 years, our goal in this session is to highlight the challenges and opportunities addressed along the journey. The three P's (Politics, Policies, and Procedures) will be points of discussion along with qualitative and quantitative data, "a-ha" learnings, and more. The first two failed attempts with execution and sustainment of our versions of FYE ranged from human resource challenges to acquisition of top-level support to financial aid policies and transferability. The list of barriers seemed endless. This session will address professional persistence, motivation, ally building, and more. We'll also address our institution's recent implementation of the SENSE Survey (Survey of Entering Student Engagement) and CCSSE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement) and how the data collected from these instruments have changed our curriculum and instructor training.

Organic Beginnings = Success

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The three members of the AAA 101/109 curriculum team (faculty chairperson from developmental reading, staff member who directs retention activities, and staff member who directs new student orientation) will provide 15-20 minute introduction about the class. Topics will include instructor training, curriculum development, choice of textbook, demographics of student enrollees, nuances related to teaching high need remedial students, and an overview of past, present, and future directions for the AAA classes and program at Aims Community College. We will provide a “nuts and bolts” booklet of information for session participants to take to their campuses for ideas and adoption. The remaining portion of this session will include a panel of 3-4 current instructors in AAA 101 (one credit) and AAA 109 (three credits) who have taught the class in various formats including online, late start, learning communities, and utilizing the inaugural common reading book from fall term. Panelists will be a diverse mix of new and seasoned instructors from the Aims faculty and Aims staff ranks. We will guide the panel questions within the following themes: training, curriculum, professional benefits, challenges, and open Q&A with the audience. Questions will focus on the following:

- How we gained support from seasoned faculty members and what “lessons learned” they have taken back into their specific academic disciplines and classrooms.
- Working through the “this isn’t an important class” barriers and how we turned the non-believers into believers.
- Selection criteria for faculty.
- Importance of instructor training and weekly / bi-weekly follow-up meetings throughout the semester.
- Lessons learned – what may be important to faculty may not be what students take away. Community building within the class.
- Need and importance for standardized curriculum.

Rewarding Academic Excellence: Honor Society for First-Year Students

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Dr. Glenda Earwood will give an overview of Alpha Lambda Delta including the Purpose, History, Number of Chapters, Members, and Dues. National President Dr. Susan Huffman Programs will discuss services provided by Alpha Lambda Delta including Workshops, Magazine, Scholarships and Fellowships. Lisa Ruch will present the benefits of rewarding and recognizing academic excellence among first year students including retention, use of chapter for campus service projects, college recognition of academic excellence, opportunity for collaboration between academic and student affairs, and involving parents. Dr. Earwood will explain how to start a chapter of Alpha Lambda Delta. The audience will be given an opportunity for discussion.

First-Year Seminar: Delivering on a Promise with a New Course Design

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In this session, the presenters will briefly outline the general education curriculum and the specific goals of the First Year Seminar. Participants will then be asked to serve as expert consultants as they review copies of syllabi from the First Year Seminar. Specifically, they will be asked to critique these documents in light of the course purpose of having “students and faculty engage in a shared process of inquiry around a broad, interdisciplinary topic or question.” Among the criteria for this review are 1) use of varied and engaging pedagogies to help freshmen make the transition from high to college by 2) developing creative and critical

thinking abilities, 3) cultivating effective communication skills, and 4) introducing students to a variety of research tools and methods. Additionally, it is important to provide students with 5) the opportunity to make connections with faculty and other students, 6) to discover the wide range of resources available on the Appalachian campus, and 7) an opportunity to become part of the university and local community. This feedback will then be summarized and provided to Appalachian's Director of First Year Seminar to be used when planning future faculty development activities.

The ABC's of Summer Reading

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Summary: None

Waving the Magic Wand: Fostering Change through Early Intervention

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Paula Bradberry
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Summary: None

Predictors of Thriving Among First-Year Students of Color

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This session will focus on the campus experiences that are predictive of thriving in first-year students of color. Thriving is a term built on research studies of adult “flourishing” that have been conducted within the field of positive psychology. The concept of thriving is rooted in theories of psychological well being as well as student retention theories. Thriving is defined as students fulfilling their goals in the context of a healthy community and is divided into three areas: academics, intrapersonal, and interpersonal.

Academic thriving is comprised of two factors: engaged learning and academic determination. Engaged learning is a positive energy invested in the learning process, indicated by meaningful processing, focused attention, and active participation (Schreiner & Louis, 2006). Academic determination is an ability to set goals, regulate one’s own behavior in order to meet those goals, and invest the necessary effort to do so.

Intrapersonal thriving represents emotional or psychological well-being. It is indicated by a positive perspective on life in general as well as toward one’s current circumstances. Satisfaction with one’s life, as well as a general optimism about the future, are the hallmarks of intrapersonal thriving.

Interpersonal thriving targets the relationships in students’ lives, assessing social connectedness with other individuals on campus as well as one’s commitment to the larger community. Openness to diversity and elements of citizenship and community engagement comprise this aspect of thriving.

Each of the above aspects of thriving has been tested in larger national studies and forms a second-order factor we have labeled “thriving.” In addition, each aspect of thriving is predictive of college students’ cumulative GPA and/or their intention to graduate from the institution where they are enrolled. National studies have found that these aspects of thriving can predict up to 24% of the variance in these important outcomes.

This session will focus on the specific campus experiences that predict thriving among first-year college students from different racial groups. The hierarchical multiple regression analyses indicated that institutional features were not significant predictors and that only high school grades were significant demographic predictors. Thus, the majority of the variance explained by the model is from the campus experiences in which these students were engaged in their first year. A comparison across racial groups will form the basis for the presentation, highlighting the key areas where particular campus experiences were more important for thriving among certain ethnic groups.

Weaving Strengths-Based Approaches into Existing First-Year Curricula: A Lesson for Faculty Development

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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 research recently conducted on the implementation of a strengths philosophy in a first-year seminar at a state university. The session will begin by describing the strengths-based philosophy and why it was hypothesized to help students succeed in their first year of college. A connection to the concept of "thriving" in the first year of college will provide participants with a theoretical framework for evaluating the success of this approach.

Because a primary challenge for any first-year seminar is the comfort level and expertise of faculty with course content and pedagogical strategies that may not be regularly utilized within their own disciplines, this session will highlight the ways in which the faculty were equipped to incorporate this approach into curricula that they had already designed. Examples of how the strengths-based approach was woven into the existing curriculum of the first-year seminar will be provided, and specific sample materials from the faculty training will be distributed. The emphasis of the session will be on how to incorporate this philosophy into existing curricula and how to equip faculty to feel comfortable doing so. Research evidence of the impact it had on first-year students will be used to demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach.

The final aspect of the session will focus on the variety of activities that faculty utilized to introduce the strengths philosophy to first-year students and how they taught students to invest time and effort into developing their talents into strengths that could be applied to academic tasks. Samples of the activities faculty used with students for community building, goal-setting, and academic success will be shared with participants, with time for questions and answers about the study.

My Sky Cafe: Taking a Strengths-Approach to the First Year to a Deeper Level

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Description of the Format:

The first section of the presentation will engaged the audience in a brief discussion of a strengths-approach to the FYE. Recent research indicating the need for a strengths development approach as opposed to a strengths identification approach will be reviewed. Participants will have a brief opportunity to connect with other strengths-oriented FYE programs.

The second section will introduce the conceptual framework embedded in the MySkyCafe on-line curriculum. Constructs such as hope, self-theory, and locus of control that shape the framework will be reviewed. The most current research showing the link between the construct and student success will be presented. Additionally, the relationship of strengths development to each construct will be reviewed.

The third section of the presentation will give participants an opportunity to interact with the My Sky Café program to provide a hands-on perspective of how e-learning technology can be utilized in strengths development. The essential question: “Can an on-line, e-learning environment improve student success and retention?” will be explored through audience participation.

Positive Student Development Theory: A New Approach to Helping First-Year Students Experience Success

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This interactive program will begin with an overview of the emerging field of positive psychology and positive organizational science. A brief history and current direction of the fields will be reviewed. The existing paradigms in higher education will be illuminated and the concept of student flourishing will be introduced. An overview of the theoretical framework for positive student development theory will be reviewed. The audience will be asked to participate in a lively discussion regarding outcomes for graduating seniors and the relationship of those outcomes to the concept of “the good life.”

The heart of the program will be used to discuss the five strengths of character including hope, zest, curiosity, self-regulation, and gratitude as the theoretical foundation for positive student development theory. Not only will definitions be given but the audience will also have a chance to rate themselves on each of the constructs presented. Recent empirical findings will demonstrate the critically important effect each of the constructs has on first-year student success. Videos of current college students will be woven throughout the presentation to put a face to the concepts.

The last section of the program will provide assessment measures and practical curricular applications for the integration of positive student development theory into first-year programming. Questions such as: “How do we help first-year students develop a hopeful life?” will be explored. And finally, the audience will have time to ask questions and reflect on the emerging thriving paradigm.

Who’s Driving Your Car?

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Summary: None

Ensuring a Quality Education for Indiana's Students with Disabilities: Results from a Department of Education (DOE) Grant

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Ball State University has a distinguished history of providing access and opportunity for students with disabilities. Ball State's success in serving students with disabilities is the result of a campus-wide commitment by faculty, staff, and administrators to academic and personal achievement for students with disabilities.

The presenters of this poster session, the director of disability services, the coordinator of Learning Center services, a faculty member in Educational Studies, and a faculty member in Criminal Justice, received funding from the federal Department of Education's grant program entitled "Ensuring a Quality Higher Education for Students with Disabilities." The presenters' grant, "Ensuring a Quality Education for Indiana's Students with Disabilities," focuses on increasing support for matriculating students with disabilities and properly training faculty members in best practices in teaching students with disabilities.

The genesis of this grant is the successful Faculty Mentorship Program which connects new students with disabilities with a faculty member to provide mentoring for the student. This program was created three years ago and each year more faculty and students have become involved as they have seen the merits of participating. This grant allows the university to expand this program and add dimensions related to faculty training and outreach to secondary schools.

The project consists of four distinct components:

1. The Faculty Mentorship Program (FMP) for students with disabilities. The FMP connects new students with disabilities with a faculty member in the student's major or career interest.
2. A faculty training series that will bring experts to campus to train staff on best practices and current issues in teaching students with disabilities. Regional and national experts are presenting to Ball State faculty on topics such as Universal Instructional Design, teaching

students with different types of disabilities, and assistive technology for students with disabilities.

3. Enhanced Learning Center support for students in the FMP and other students with disabilities. Graduate assistants and peer tutors with disability training are working with students in the FMP and with other students with disabilities on study skills, time management, etc.

4. Outreach to secondary schools in Indiana on the transition to college for students with disabilities. DVDs and brochures have been created and sent in Indiana high schools describing the differences in services, laws, and philosophies in disability services between secondary and postsecondary education.

The presenters, the co-principal investigators for this federal grant, will share the year one results of this federal grant and discuss ways that similar programs can be implemented on other campuses.

Homesickness: Normal Transition or Serious Issue?

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For virtually all students, separation from the past is at least somewhat isolating and stressful, the pains of parting at least temporarily disorienting. For some it may be so difficult as to significantly interfere with persistence in college. (Tinto, 1993. p. 96).

Despite Tinto's acknowledgement that separation from the past is stressful for college students, there has been limited research on new college students; and almost nothing linking homesickness with student outcomes. Previous work on homesickness has largely focused on the predictors of homesickness which include those younger in age, women, strong family cohesion, dependency on others, and those living further distances from home (Kazantzis & Fett 1998; Stroebe et al, 2002; Fisher & Hood, 1988; Brewin, Furnham, & Howes, 1989). Other researchers have explored the psychological outcomes such as feelings of sadness, loneliness, adjustment problems, low concentration, lack of ability to perform, and lack of other essential cognitive functions necessary for optimal performance (e.g., Constantine, et al, 2005). Overall, previous research has focused on residential high school students, campers, the precursors of homesickness, and the psychological impacts of homesickness. What has been largely overlooked is the impact of homesickness on college student success. This study sought to fill that gap.

The data gathered comes from the MAP-Works project, a national survey of first-year student transition to college. By focusing on early experiences, MAP-Works captures early experience

data at about the three-week mark, prior to the departure of many students who leave during their first semester in college. Measures include homesickness scales, academic skills, social transition, institutional commitment, academic goals, on-campus living, and time management skills. In addition, data is collected from the institution regarding students' pre-entry characteristics. Outcomes measures like GPA and retention are also collected. This study used demographic data, homesickness scales and outcome data to explore the relationships between homesickness and outcomes.

I will begin this presentation with an open discussion of the signs of homesickness (both internal and external symptoms) as displayed by students on participants' campuses. Next, I will provide a brief overview of MAP-Works highlighting the homesickness and retention variables. Next, I will provide a summary of the results including the relationships between the various dimensions of homesickness and student outcomes (i.e. student performance and retention.) Next I will lead an open discussion of the implications this raises for first-year experience programs. Finally the session will end with open discussion and questions.

Greening the First-Year Experience: Sustainability Initiatives in Ball State University

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As institutions work to increase the green and sustainability initiatives on their campuses, Ball State University has applied these principles specifically to its first year program, Freshman Connections. This strategy has been broad reaching. First, the Freshman Connections program has identified "Sustainability Connections" as one of its learning community objectives. As a result, each learning community is charged with providing an experience where students learn about sustainability issues and participate in some way to increasing the sustainability of the campus and/or broader community. This effort was also reflected in the 2008 selection of the Freshman Common Reader, "Field Notes from a Catastrophe" by Elizabeth Colbert. The book selection committee worked closely with the university's Council of the Environment to find community volunteers to serve as discussion group leaders and provide a variety of programs, films, speakers and events related to sustainability. The program takes this commitment further by using non-disposable supplies at events and purchasing choices are geared toward to greenest choices possible. This session will describe these and other sustainability related choices in the first year at Ball State University and other campuses as a means to create open dialogue between participants about what their programs are doing and suggestions on how to best implement these types of initiatives. The last portion of the session will provide an opportunity for attendees to discuss best practices, things that worked, things that didn't and ideas on what we would do differently next time.

Re-Thinking the Orientation Course for First-Year Adult Students

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The presentation will focus on the 5 purposes of service learning in a first year adult student orientation course:

- * Service learning helps students acquire academic skills and knowledge.
- * Students who participate in service learning are more engaged in their studies and more motivated to learn.
- * Service learning is associated with increased student attendance.
- * Service learning results in greater mutual respect between students, peers, teachers and the community at-large.
- * Service learning improves the overall academic/learning environment.

Plan4ward: Planning to Make the Most out of College

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In 2008, Berry College introduced Plan4ward a campus-wide initiative intended to help students take greater responsibility for their educational experience and plan intentionally to make the most of their college years. At the heart of this ambitious program is a revised first-

year seminar curriculum designed to engage students through strengths assessment, career and major exploration, and investigation of work and campus involvement opportunities. Each student completes a four year plan, detailing personal goals, intended coursework, and plans for involvement in extracurricular and co-curricular activities. Plan4ward is revisited each year as students work with advisors to select courses and learning opportunities that support their aspirations and goals. A senior retreat is planned that will allow students to reflect creatively on their college experience and the ways that their plan has evolved in response to new opportunities and discoveries.

Prior to completing Plan4ward in First-Year Seminar, students take the Clifton StrengthsFinder© and are encouraged throughout the course to explore and develop their strengths as they plan for their future at Berry and beyond. Later in the semester, students are asked to draft a mission statement articulating their values and goals and steps that they will take to achieve them. A website dedicated to Plan4ward offers course planning information for each of Berry's majors and minors as well as extensive information about campus clubs and organizations, student work opportunities and co-curricular offerings such as study abroad and internships. All of this information and self-assessment provide the backdrop for Plan4ward, which students work on throughout the course.

In this session, we will briefly discuss the genesis of Plan4ward before sharing our experiences in the first and second year of implementation, offering insight from our various perspectives as administrator, instructor and student. We will share Plan4ward assignments, learning outcomes and assessment rubrics, and discuss ways that Plan4ward might be adapted for other institutions and purposes. We will place special emphasis on the way initial feedback was used to improve the program.

Interactive Teaching and Advising Support STEM Success

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Boston University's Science and Engineering Program (SEP) is a two-year transitional program that provides academic support to students interested in STEM but who lack credentials for direct admission into these majors. SEP is unique because it has a dedicated Academic Counselor who teaches a required first-year seminar and students see the Academic Counselor as a faculty member.

SEP's faculty members are outstanding teachers and they teach the introductory courses to ensure exemplary classroom experiences. SEP recently received a grant to transform its introductory mathematics course by incorporating Tablet PCs for note-taking and in-class problem solving, including the display of student work so that students learn from one another. Class recordings are posted as Flash files on the course website.

Since SEP faculty members share observations about student performance with the Academic Counselor, academic interventions are made prudently. Data from the Tablet PC implementation suggest that student engagement is higher in Tablet PC classes than in conventional "chalk talk" classes of the same size offered by the same instructor in prior years. "Hits" on the website increased (4884 hits with Tablet PC class vs. an average of 2307 hits in prior three years). Attendance was slightly improved (99% vs. 96%) and academic performance was also better (0 withdrawals and 1 C- out of 20 students in Tablet PC course vs. 5 withdrawals, 5 D, and 3 C- grades out of 56 students in prior three years).

SEP's success in retaining first-year students in STEM derives from its integration of academic advising, STEM instruction, and community building. Retention in STEM is a major national challenge, especially for at-risk first-year students who might abandon STEM for non-technical majors. SEP addresses this urgent need by providing coordinated academic advising and an innovative learning environment to engage first-year students and promote their academic success.

Using Peer Mentors to Drive Students toward Deep Learning and Productive Reflective Writing

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This session will present and model with participants a system through which peer mentors can promote deeply reflective writing using an evaluative rubric and a group feedback process. Research on the first-year experience suggests that learning communities, reflective writing, and peer mentor support can increase student engagement and deepen learning orientation. However, applying these strategies independently or even collectively may or may not lead to desired change. Moon (2004) suggests everything in an experience needs to be designed to bring about the impact desired. She recommends using respected mentors and engaging in reflection in a meaningful context. Attending to Moon's (2004) suggestions on impact and reflection, Entwistle's (2000) ideas about promoting deep learning and Palmer's (1993) work in developing communities of learners, we strategically designed and implemented a model for reflection and a peer mentor led process for feedback. Our reflection activity synergistically and strategically employed the elements of learning communities, reflection, and peer mentor support.

Students wrote bi-weekly reflections using a model for reflection. Meeting in small groups with a peer mentor, they read and evaluated their reflection while other group members listened and took notes. Each group member then provided feedback commenting on strengths, asking questions, and giving suggestions to deepen understanding. Peer mentors guided the discussion. Through this feedback process, freshmen became increasingly skilled at integrating their experience and coursework, connecting their ideas to the social issues being explored in the learning community. They became better at identifying strengths and weaknesses in their own work and that of others.

Description of Session

This session will be highly interactive. We will begin by sharing the theoretical basis of our work, our model, and the process for reflection. Then participants will be divided into groups and paired with a peer mentor. At each table, peer mentors will first share with participants the model for reflection and the rubric for evaluation. They will engage with the participants by modeling the process for providing feedback. Each peer mentor will read an early reflection and provide an evaluation of it. Participants will use a rubric to identify strengths and weaknesses in the reflection and make suggestions to support revision. Each group will then repeat the process with the last reflection produced. As a whole group, we will then answer questions about the process and provide suggestions for how others might use this approach.

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Integrating Advising, Teaching, and Learning: A Formula for Success and Retention

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A wide variety of mediating factors contribute to a student's academic success and achievement during the first year of college. Research suggests that there are patterned variables that influence success, whereas practitioners argue that academic success for students is highly idiosyncratic and individualized. Colleges and Universities are challenged then to design support programs with best practices that not only reflect research in higher education, but also to provide services that are attentive to individual needs. This session examines Bryant University's innovative approach to supporting students during their first year and beyond. The University has designed a support system intentionally integrating three functional areas of the institution: Advising, The First-Year Experience, and Learning Assistance. The design of the support system lays the "foundation" for academic success and retention during the first year through graduation.

The purpose of the presentation is to provide attendees with the information and tools to create a similar integrated model at their institutions. Attendees will learn how technology in advising is used to augment advisees' connection to the University's advising system—a system attentive to individual student needs; how advisee assignments are intentionally linked with the first-year experience course—a course based on retention and success research, and how the first-year experience course's innovative curriculum is designed to foster student participation in learning assistance programming and advising services. Longitudinal data will be presented to show how the model has functioned to decrease probation and dismissal numbers. Participants will be provided with a packet including curriculum materials from the First-Year Experience course, and practical advice will be offered for implementation ideas. Successes and challenges will be explored. The objectives of this session will be met through a power point presentation, a brief examination of institutional research, and participant discussion.

Delving into Diversity

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Summary: None

Reinventing the First-Year Seminar: A Community College Case Study

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A highly visual PowerPoint presentation will explore the following elements of BHCC's Learning Community Seminar:

- 1) Broad engagement: A diverse team of 22 faculty and staff designed the structure, objectives, and outcomes of the Learning Community Seminar. The seminar was designed to be college level and content driven, with study skills taught within the context of an academic conversation. Importantly, the team envisioned the seminar as a learning community, emphasizing its role in building relationships among faculty, students and staff.
- 2) Participation of full-time faculty in pilot phase: In fall 2007, faculty from across the disciplines were invited to submit proposals to teach the first round of seminars. 33 sections were piloted in 2008-2009, including Dow Jones, Google and You, which engages students in simulated investing and is team taught by a business and a computer professor; Connecting to Your Inner Orange Line: Next Stop – Community College, which helps students to grapple with the many issues faced by urban males; Math – Fear = Success, which tackles students' math anxieties.
- 3) Professional development and collaboration: Faculty piloting the new seminars participated in an extensive professional development program that featured critical reflections on teaching

and learning, strategies for teaching to multiple learning styles, collaborative learning approaches, strategies for integrating and assessing the seminar's core learning outcomes, and discussion of the challenges and opportunities of working in a diverse environment. Monthly meetings fostered a learning community of faculty sharing best practices and providing support.

4) Institutionalization: Formation of an ad hoc committee, solid research, and college-wide conversations led to a near unanimous decision by the college's governance body to phase in a seminar requirement for incoming, full-time students. Expansion of the seminar across disciplines and integration of the course into program requirements are now in process.

5) Integration of support services: Key support services have been woven into the Seminar curriculum. Seminar instructors serve as Seminar students' academic advisors. Success Coaches are collaborating with faculty in the classroom and working with Seminar students to develop educational and professional goals. Students who have successfully completed the Seminar are serving as peer mentors, participating in weekly Seminar classes, facilitate study group formation, and providing positive role modeling and peer support.

6) Assessment: Drawing on the pioneering work of BHCC's faculty-driven Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Program (SLOAP), the Seminar has been built on a foundation of student outcomes assessment. Assessment strategies incorporated into the Seminar are documenting student performance and achievement, informing teaching and learning improvements, and promoting best practices proven to foster student achievement. Quantitative as well as qualitative data will be shared, including an embedded video of student and faculty testimonials.

Presenters will engage participants in a 20-minute discussion of lessons learned from the case study regarding the particular challenges of developing and institutionalizing a first-year seminar at community colleges and potential solutions for those challenges.

*Note: Co-facilitators for this session will be selected over the next few weeks and will include faculty and staff involved in Learning Community Seminar instruction. A complete list of presenters will be provided as soon as it is available.

Embedding Information Literacy Modules in an First-Year Seminar

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Literature on the first-year experience has long established the importance of student exposure to vital academic skills early in their college careers in order to promote academic success and persistence to graduation (Astin, 1993; Kuh, 1993; Pascarella and Terenzin, 1991; Tinto, 1988, 1993). Of crucial importance is the development of information literacy competency.

First-year students, however, often lack adequate skills in using library resources and understanding basic information literacy, such as understanding plagiarism, citations, and how to evaluate information for reliability. This problem is particularly acute at the institution where the study took place; students are primarily first generation college attendees requiring extensive basic remediation.

Although undergraduates receive in-depth information literacy instruction in the more advanced “Writing and Research” English composition class, because many of them have to take two mandatory remedial writing courses first, students often do not get exposed to information literacy instruction until the end of their first year or even later in their college career.

In order for students to develop a solid foundation for academic success, this initiative focused on the embedding of information literacy modules into the context rich environment of a mandatory 2-unit first-year experience course.

To attain this goal, information literacy modules were developed and implemented in five first-year experience sections. These modules focused on a common reader, a text required of all first-time freshmen. The experiences of the students receiving this newly designed, intensive, weekly information literacy instruction were then compared with students from five other sections who had received only the standard “one-shot” library instruction given to first-year experience classes.

This presentation will first detail how the modules were developed. Next, a detailed description of the implementation of the modules will be provided. Both qualitative data and quantitative data will then be provided, detailing the successes and failures of the initiative.

Reducing Stress among First-Year Students

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Video excerpts and narratives from first year students will be used to highlight many of the most common stress issues that instructors may recognize in the classroom or in conversations with students. In addition, ideas are presented for ways to discuss these issues in class and provide students with skills, strategies, and methods to manage and prevent stress and handle the inevitable social, academic, financial, and family pressures that will emerge.

Several exercises will be presented and introduced, including ways that students can easily be taught deep breathing and cognitive self-talk skills that can be adapted to a variety of situations and contexts. Participants will be encouraged to deal more openly with stress-related issues as they arise, particularly as they affect social adjustment, renegotiated relationships with family, and academic pressures.

Interviews with first year students on video highlight the main concepts and demonstrate the ways that the ideas may be applied in a number of ways.

Promoting Social Justice and Community Service: Inspiring First-Year Students to Get Involved

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Regardless of whether students are interested in service to build their own career options, or out of pure interest in being useful to others, the effects can often be the same. When people are really honest with themselves, they will often admit that there are clear payoffs to them of a very personal nature.

- They feel like their lives are redeemed. They are doing something that seems like it matters.
- They are giving their lives greater meaning. Many have left high-paying jobs because they felt empty.
- They are paying back what others have given to them. They have been wounded or hurt earlier in life and recovered sufficiently to want to ease others suffering.
- They are following a spiritual path. This can be either self-serving (a ticket to heaven) or following divine inspiration.
- They are developing new areas of expertise and gaining valuable experience. This can range from beefing up one's resume to developing skills that will be useful in the future.
- They are feeling useful. Their sense of self-worth and importance can be directly related to the impact they believe they are having on others.

This program will present case examples of students who have been involved in service projects, especially on a global scale. It describes several grass-root efforts, organized completely by students, to make a difference in isolated communities that have been neglected. This project focuses specifically on lower caste girls in Nepal who are at greatest risk to be sold into sex slavery. Students from several campuses, as well as their faculty, have been actively involved increasing awareness of the problems, building a scholarship fund, and even traveling to mentor the girls in their villages.

The focus of this program is on RECIPROCAL influence, in other words, how becoming involved in such efforts impact the students on both sides of the effort. Faculty, as well, have been transformed by their own experiences.

Video excerpts and powerful photographs demonstrate the principles involved and describe options for including such projects in a variety of classes.

Social Justice: When Diversity Isn't Enough

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Presented as a training for trainers, an interactive workshop will be assimilated in the space for 10 minutes after a brief description of the activity and a review of definitions. Participants will break up in small groups and try to solve a problem - this problem is designed to bring up stereotypes, judgments, and assumptions. The facilitator will then say FREEZE, and will ask participants to dialog internally (yes - talk to themselves) while a review is giving on trends from across the country from students, staff, and faculty alike.

Once judgments and assumptions are seen as a commonality, the group will then move towards a discussion of incorporating such conversations into their own classrooms, trainings, and departments. Facilitator will offer a number of resources to help with these difficult and highly necessary conversations.

One of the most popular and problematic elements of "adding" social justice based conversations to existing curriculum plans is time and money. Facilitator will share new programs being offered and additional trainer resources with participants so that time and funding can be less of a road block. This brings the participants and the facilitator alike one step closer to dismantling institutionalized and individualize oppression.

Community-Building Excursions

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During this presentation, participants will learn about each Case Venture offered at Case, discuss the impact of such programming for first-year student through institutional research results and evaluations, learn how to strategically market pre-Welcome Days programs through Orientation sessions and mailings, discover how to create a three-day program without a budget and have the opportunity to share best practices.

Following an introduction of myself as the presenter as well as an overview of our institution, I plan to share the session goals and outline with the audience. I will then offer a history of how “Case Ventures” community-building excursions came about at Case Western Reserve University considering any budgetary restrictions we were facing and how the program progressed throughout the last 5 years. I plan to explain the process of building an excursion and also make recommendations of best practices in doing so.

Next, I will familiarize participants with each of our ventures, as they greatly differ from one another as well as our role in including student coordinators in helping to create the programs. Our ventures include: “Serves,” “Leads,” “Explores,” “Treks,” “Spelunks,” “Eats,” and “Rides.” I will also share our newest initiative: Case Ventures Winter Series. Due to its overwhelming popularity, we are excited to expand the program to continue throughout the academic year through a winter series. We are hopeful in its success.

Finally, I will share the institutional research we have collected that demonstrate the impact these excursions have on our first-year student population, particularly their level of comfort in their transition as well as the amount of involvement they partake in extra-curricular activities. I will also share evaluations and open-ended feedback (qualitative) we have from participants throughout the years of offering the Case Ventures Series.

Successful Collaboration with Residential Hall and Residential College Staff in a Primary First-Year Community

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The collaboration of paraprofessional of both residential hall and residential college, are used to help the primarily first year students.

Paraprofessional Residential Hall Staff are responsible for:
Residential Assistants
? Community Building and Peer Relations

- ? Peer Assistance
 - ? Residential Hall Programming
 - ? Administrative Duties
 - ? Health and Safety
 - ? Residential Hall Regulations
 - ? Staff Training and Communication
- Multicultural Advisor is responsible for:
- ? Shares responsibilities with Residential Assistance
 - ? Represents Underrepresented Residents
 - ? Promotes Diversity Programs on Campus and in the Residential hall
- Paraprofessional Residential College Staff are responsible for:
- ? Advising Resource for Residents
 - ? Residential College Programming
 - ? Community Building and Peer Relations
 - ? Staff Training and Communication
 - ? Reside on the Residential College Executive Board
 - ? Host weekly Study Session
 - ? Check and Help Maintain Members Student Status

Combined Paraprofessional Staff are responsible for:

Many of the responsibilities overlap between hall and colleges paraprofessional staff. They collaborate in program planning to better the experience for the residents in the hall. Residents therefore do not have to choose which programs they wish to attend with both staffs supporting each other's programs. The staffs also work together for university task such as campus retention tools like MAP-works. Many of these provide valuable insight and ability to better work and retain first year student to an instruction. Another valuable resource that both paraprofessional staff shares is the welfare and wellbeing of the residents. In many but not all the residential college staff can act as a Resident Assistant in emergency. If a first year resident does not feel comfortable talking to either one the other staff is there for them. Furthermore the paraprofessional staff is placed into an authority and mentoring position such as taking part of Hall Councils or other campus leadership opportunities.

Got Goals? Inspiring Students to Take Action through the GPS LifePlan

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Through discussions, group activities, and videos session participants will be introduced to the GPS LifePlan program, which launched in the spring of 2006. Century College demographics, including student make-up, location, recent growth and expansion will be presented first so the audience has a common understanding of the student population and current college data. Secondly, by reviewing national assessment results, participants will gain a greater understanding of the driving factors and that inspired the creation of the GPS LifePlan, such as the desire for increased student retention and persistence rates, especially in students who test into developmental coursework. In addition to learning more about the program creation, the audience will be introduced to the GPS LifePlan program components, including, the website, eFolio (electronic portfolio) and curriculum integration techniques. The audience will also gain a better understanding of how it is currently sustained and supported at Century College through external and internal assessment, campus activities and student success initiatives. The focus of the remaining portion of the presentation will be on the GPS LifePlan First Year Experience (FYE) program, what it is, how it works, and how it helps first-year students make a successful transition into college. Student evaluations and assessment of the FYE program will be shared with the audience as well as new campus-wide initiatives that will be implemented by fall of 2010 to improve the entering student experience. The programming includes mandatory faculty/staff advisors for all new students and the creation of a two-credit first year experience course aimed at both college level students as well as students who test into developmental coursework. Lastly, participants will learn about the future of the GPS LifePlan, including system-wide expansion and veteran/K-12 partnerships. The presentation will end in-time for audience members to ask questions.

The Evolution of an First-Year Seminar at the Community College

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This presentation will outline the history of our program (from a one credit course with required topics to three course options with standardized syllabi and course schedules). We will also discuss our advisory committee and its role in leading the course through a quality improvement process. We will thoroughly explain our mandatory instructor training process and review our standardized syllabus, policies, course topics, and course schedules. Our

evaluation process will be explained and quantitative and qualitative data will be used to support the success of the course. Video will be used to enhance the presentation.

Helping Students Build Online Learning Skills

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The work of Chickering and Gamson established principles of good practice in undergraduate education. This session will explore ways to accomplish their principles in the online environment.

1. Encourage contact between students and faculty. Right from the start.
2. Develop reciprocity and cooperation among students - by creating a community of learners on the discussion board
3. Student Engagement
4. Encourage active learning.
5. Vary the activities.
6. Emphasize the relevance.
7. Ask students' opinions/feedback.

Key questions will be discussed

What motivates students to learn online?

How can faculty continually engage students in their learning process?

What are effective ways to encourage student-to-student communication?

How can faculty effectively draw student into dialogue?

What online activities can give students a sense of achievement and progress?

What support services do students need to function online most effectively?

Student READINESS for online learning is crucial to their success. Model programs will be explored which include student resources, such as; Online Learning Readiness Assessment, tutorials, practice courses, orientations (online & on-campus)

Faculty readiness is also critical to student success. Many successful faculty development programs already exist and will be explored.

- Online Faculty Mentors
- Learning Management System Training
- Pedagogy Training

- Readiness Checklists
- Instructional Design Support
- 24/7/365 Faculty Technical Support
- Instructional Technology Workshops
- Online Faculty Resource Center

(Chickering, A. W. & Gamson, Z. F. (1987). Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. AAHE Bulletin, pp. 3-7. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED282491).

Sound Practices: Performing Composition and Literature

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In this interactive session, I begin with a review of current research which concludes that the best ways for students to become deep readers, critical thinkers, and effective writers is for them to participate in whole-group discussions, small-group informal talk, and recitation. Increased student voices can and should be a central learning event in the classroom and the best means for students to practice high level acts of attention to texts. When students talk over the content and meaning of texts, they practice the kind of conscious oral communication that is often missing in their lives. A fresh commitment to student voices creates solid connections between their inner lives and the world that surrounds them. Through a careful description of theory and classroom practices, I demonstrate that a pedagogy of orality begins with voices other than the teacher sounding in the classroom. Students need practice reading a range of texts aloud, from published works to their own writings, and they need to hear literary material performed both recorded and live. Participants will discuss sample materials that apply performance and orality to learning activities and formative assessments.

First-Year Experience Programs in Community Colleges

Sarah Oglesby
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Summary: None

Destroying a First-Year Seminar Program and Rebuilding from the Ground Up

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In 2005, Concordia recognized that its First Year Experience seminar wasn't working. It had no clear direction and students were disappointed and angry with having to take the class. Leadership at CTX made the decision to cancel the class, leaving no opportunity for intentional contact with freshmen students during the fall semester. Before that semester was over, several faculty members took it upon themselves to resurrect the class and provide something new – and better – for Concordia's freshmen students.

The first key to the success of the new program was an intentional visioning and goal setting process. We knew from experience that the seminar not be “all things to all people” so we went through an intentional planning process to narrow the focus of the seminar. The result was 3 objectives: Successful Transition to College, Lifelong Learning and Leadership. While each instructor has the freedom to craft the course as they wish, these 3 objectives remain central.

A second key to success has been a strong partnership between student and academic affairs, including faculty, staff and administration. First, we have been very intentional about who is invited to teach in the program, maintaining a balance between qualified faculty and staff, all who must demonstrate a passion for first year students and the objectives of the seminar. Second, we have integrated the FY seminar course into student services programming. Students are introduced to elements of Freshman Seminar during our summer orientation programming and this continues into Week of Welcome. Student Services Mentors (upperclassmen) are assigned to Life and Leadership classes to serve as mentors to the freshmen.

A final key to success came from ongoing communication with the faculty and staff about the course, helping to achieve buy-in and overcome obstacles. Regular updates are given to the faculty and staff about the objectives and progress of the course. In addition, an annual workshop for faculty who teach freshmen has begun, followed up with regular emails to these faculty, encouraging them to think strategically about how to teach freshmen.

The result of these 3 things has been increased student satisfaction with the course, greater faculty- staff buy-in and a more comprehensive first year experience program. Sometimes it's necessary to destroy what is bad before building something that works.

Information Literacy: What is it and Why is it a Critical 21st Century Skill?

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The ability to locate, evaluate and use information is becoming increasingly important especially given the attention that this information literacy movement is receiving with a variety of national initiatives from The Partnership for 21st Century Skills to the most recent proclamation by President Obama declaring October as Information Literacy Month. Librarians and educators are mobilizing to ensure that students master the skills necessary to manage information and use it intelligently in college and graduate work with the ultimate goal of creating a more informed citizenry with effective lifelong information literacy and critical thinking skills. What is higher education doing to ensure that students have an intentional opportunity to develop, practice and perfect their information literacy and critical thinking skills before entering the workforce? More specifically, what is being done at the first year level to help students make the transition from K-12 to academic level information competencies? In order to understand the answers to these questions, the presenters will set the context for the conversation by exploring what information literacy tools that are available to educators and students. These range from curricular standards developed by professional associations to learning objects and best practices developed in collaboration by teaching faculty and librarian practitioners.

Academic libraries are complicated places and academic level information research and management is more complex than ever before. The very tools that are intended to simplify research, such as the Internet, merely shift the skill sets needed to manage information. It may be less difficult to access information but how do students effectively discern quality over quantity? Academic librarians are at the forefront of thinking about how to stratify a student's learning experience with developing information literacy skills, but they do not necessarily always have direct access to students. Their work largely hinges on their ability to successfully collaborate with program directors and teaching faculty to ensure student success. The ultimate goal of this session is to provide an environmental scan of how information literacy instruction at the first year level is done and how this sets the stage for upper division library instruction in the disciplines.

The Convergence of Information Literacy and the First-Year Experience

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Summary: None

Improvement, Institutionalization and Assessment of a First-Year Experience Seminar at an HBCU over the Last Ten Years

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This presentation will utilize an interactive format. There will be a power point presentation that will outline the history and evolution of the first year experience at program at Dillard University. Information from various types of assessments that have been used in the first-year experience program will be shared with the participants. Participants will have the opportunity to share and learn through role play, case studies and discussion the many factors that affect a first year program. There will lots of time devoted to questions and answers while using relevant literature to support the many findings.

Development and Initial Validation of the Student Strengths Inventory: A Measure of Non-Cognitive Variables that Impact Student Performance and Retention

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The poster will describe the need, rationale, development, and results of the efforts to create the Student Strengths Inventory as well as potential research applications of non-cognitive/motivational data on efforts to address retention and academic performance. Recent statistics suggest that institutes of higher education are experiencing growth in first-time college enrollment (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2006), while also continuing to struggle with issues of premature post-secondary departure. Although attrition rates are highest among open admission (45%) and two-year colleges (47%), traditional admission, 4-year, public institutions also report alarming rates of institutional departure (25%). Not only are students leaving college, they are not graduating in a timely manner and there are pronounced, and disturbing ethnic differences in graduation rates (Consortium for Student Retention, 2001). The cost of attrition is shared by both the institution and individual. Institutions invest many resources in recruiting, enrolling, orienting, and retaining. Students and their families are also affected by delays in graduation, institutional transfer, change of college major, and student stop-out or dropout. In addition to the economic advantages associated with completing postsecondary education, there may also be psychosocial benefits. Research has identified significant and positive relationships between the amount of formal education and subjective well being, physical health, and marital success (Bryant & Marquez, 1986; DiPrete, & Buchmann, 2006; Lee, 1982;).

Research has consistently identified non-cognitive/motivational factors as primary determinants of student success. A recent meta-analysis of the relationship between non-cognitive/motivational variables and college persistence and performance identified nine factors positively related to student outcomes (Robbins et al., 2004). More importantly, these non-cognitive factors were found to account for variance in academic performance and post-secondary persistence beyond that accounted for by past academic performance (high school GPA) and standardized test scores (ACT/SAT scores). Given that existing measures are lengthy and time consuming to administer the SSI was developed to specifically assess the 6 factors that most directly predict academic performance and student persistence on campus and to accomplish this goal with fewer items. In this manner a brief instrument (48 items on six scales, 15 minutes to administer) was created that measures the variables most critical to instructors, administrators, and student services personnel. Subscale intercorrelations as well as the Cronbach alphas and basic descriptive statistics for each of the six SSI scales will be presented. Scales shared low to moderate correlations and all scales demonstrate good internal consistency reliability.

The Cultural Passport: Introducing Students to Their Off-Campus World

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The Cultural Passport is an innovative booklet, designed in similar fashion to a US passport, which includes descriptions and photos of various Philadelphia cultural attractions and institutions, including the Philadelphia Art Museum, Philadelphia Zoo, The Franklin Institute, and a multitude of other museums, exhibits, theaters, concerts, and performance venues. The booklet also includes a map of the city and a scavenger hunt that offers a \$500 award to the first 5 winning student teams. The passport continues to grow and now includes 34 partnering institutions in and around the Philadelphia region.

All first-year students receive their Cultural Passports during their first week of classes in their University 101 course (this is an introductory course required for all freshman students to orient them to college life). Once students receive their passport, they are encouraged to use it on their own, with classmates, roommates, and new acquaintances. In addition to students, all freshmen residence hall staff, peer mentors, and University 101 faculty members also use the passport to coordinate group events or for use in the classroom as an experiential learning tool.

Students are permitted one free pass to each of the partnering institutions plus access to tickets to specific performances (ballet, orchestra, concerts, plays, etc). Students may reserve the tickets to the performance venues online through the Cultural Passport website. In addition to the website, the Cultural Passport is also available through Facebook and other on-campus marketing avenues. While the Cultural Passport is the first of its kind to be offered solely to college students, many universities have duplicated the program in Philadelphia and other cities. It has been proven to be a valuable tool in transitioning first-year students to college life because it gives them not only a complete listing of available cultural venues in the area, but free entrance to each institution as well. It gives them a reason to explore downtown, take public transportation for the first time (for many), and see something new (many of our students have never see an opera, ballet, or the orchestra). Additionally, it has been used as a successful marketing tool for the institutions interested in engaging a younger audience. The program has even grown to incorporate some on-campus events to spark student interest. For example, the Philadelphia Orchestra has scheduled several “campus concerts” whereby two or three orchestra members perform pieces on-campus in the residence halls for the students.

Building a Foundation for Information Literacy Through Librarian Partnerships

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Information literacy (IL), like critical thinking and technological competence, remains peripheral to the standard undergraduate core curriculum despite its known importance to lifelong success. Librarians have long struggled with incorporating IL into the required general education curriculum through means that have provided varied results. Students need to become information literate individuals in order to be competitive in the 21st century workforce. Of equal importance, they need these skills in order to make informed decisions in countless arenas of daily life, due to the nature of today's information barraged world. Ultimately, there is a disconnect in a student's academic experience: IL is an increasingly important academic and life skill and it is often not even addressed at the curricular level.

The first year of college is often a student's first encounter with the world of knowledge, its creation, organization, and advancement. Unlike the research experiences that most of us had in college, FTIACs have grown up in an environment where electronically accessible information is both preferred and more readily available than that in print. The use of the Internet as the primary means of information access allows the boundaries between types of sources to blend, which makes critical thinking about information that much more challenging. Students are often expected to have mastered basic IL skills by the time they find themselves in upper-level undergraduate courses. In order to fairly and adequately prepare them for this mastery, we must help them build a foundation in their first year. We argue that of these skills, the ability to evaluate the purpose, accuracy, and authority of information is the most important and underdeveloped. By providing examples of collaborative activities, assignments and goals, we will present the steps necessary to create, assess, and maintain relationships between librarians and instructors that put students on the path to becoming information literate.

Interestingly, President Obama has declared October Information Literacy Awareness Month, stating that it "highlights the need for all Americans to be adept in the skills necessary to effectively navigate the Information Age." All of us encounter and consume information from countless sources daily. Because, as adults, we have grown alongside the Information Age, we (professors, librarians, administrators) have learned these skills along the way. As our society continues to recognize the role of information in our lives, we must step up and fill the curricular gaps for the benefit of our students.

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

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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 and potential transition issues like homesickness and time management. Each student receives an individualized report that helps them identify areas for further growth and connects them to campus resources. In addition, individual student information and feedback are provided to faculty/staff that are directly connected to them (e.g. residence hall staff, academic advisors, first-year seminar instructors, or retention committee members) to facilitate one-on-one interventions with students struggling in their transition. Smaller check-up surveys are administered throughout the academic year 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.

Pairing Social Networks and Academic Purpose to Boost First-Year Retention

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First-year college students have made social networks such as Facebook, MySpace and Ning their life platforms. Online communities are becoming a place where students live their lives and a venue in which they interact with people whom they have never met, forcing institutions to curtail their communications efforts accordingly.

Purpose Networks: Pairing Social Networks and Academic Purpose to Boost Retention will address the question: How can institutions effectively harness the power of social networks to

serve an academic purpose, as well as engage first-year students? This presentation will begin by explaining one of the key drivers behind first-year students who fail to matriculate or persist, and the lack of a meaningful student-school connection. Attendees will learn how to effectively engage first-year students from the moment of acceptance, and build meaningful student-peer and student-faculty relationships.

Discussion will then shift to an overview of purpose networks as a way to enhance social engagement, and increase academic engagement and success. Attendees will gain a thorough understanding of the core building blocks that comprise these communities:

- Reporting: Understanding the activity of a community and assessing success
- Longevity: Building competencies that are sustainable
- Administration: Managing behaviors within communities
- Academics: Encouraging faculty engagement
- Parents: Establishing an alliance with parents

Next, Mr. Tomassi will reference relevant case studies which show that first-year students who participate in purpose networks yield at a greater rate (up to 14 percent) and retain at a greater rate than non-participants. He will also speak to the “calls to action” and content that resonate best with various student groups to keep them engaged.

This presentation is recommended for higher education administrators looking to improve the effectiveness of their first-year student experience programs.

Cross Institutional Implementation of Supplemental Instruction

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El Paso Community College (EPCC) is one of the largest Hispanic-serving community college in the United States. At the same time, EPCC and the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) are de facto the only institutions of higher education within reach for a growing population of local students, the overwhelming majority of whom are Hispanic. Due to this constellation, the Mathematics departments of both institutions have a long tradition of close cooperation.

We will report on a new joined initiative, supported by the U.S. Department of Education, to integrate mandatory Supplemental Instruction (SI) sessions into EPCC's Precalculus courses.

The idea of the program is to give students the opportunity to supplement the lecture given by their professors, to get a deeper understanding and additional practice in the concepts introduced in the classroom, and to get help from fellow students without feeling intimidated by their professors or classmates. The instructional mode was changed from the traditional lecture to a new format of lecture with an additional hour of regularly peer-facilitated sessions called Supplemental Instruction (SI) labs. Graduate students from the Department of Mathematical Sciences at UTEP are serving as SI leaders for this Supplemental Instruction component at EPCC. A large portion of these graduate students started their academic career at EPCC and will therefore be able to act as role models for their EPCC peers. Our poster will introduce in detail the concept and practice of mandatory Supplemental Instruction in Precalculus I and II courses.

This strategy is aimed at helping freshmen students adjust to the unfamiliar learning expectations they experience at the college level and at increasing student knowledge of the course material, thus improving student success and reducing the student drop-out rate for these courses.

Simply Serving: Incorporating Civic Engagement into a First-Year Experience

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The presentation will begin with an interactive activity designed to introduce participants to the diverse components of civic engagement and determine the level of audience knowledge of service-learning and civic engagement. Following the activity, Nancy Valkenburg, the director of civic engagement at Elizabethtown College, will introduce the audience to the concept of service-learning at Elizabethtown and describe how service introduces first-year students to life

at Elizabethtown, the college motto "educate for service," and fosters a sense of civic engagement.

Dr. Kozimor-King will then discuss the role of service-learning in her first-year seminar and living learning community titled "Simple Living." The multitude of service opportunities/requirements in the course will be detailed including the Orientation Program in August, Into the Streets in October, and a full semester graded project called Simply Games (providing an after-school program weekly for a city school) will be explained. Dr. Kozimor-King will discuss the assessment data from the service projects including both qualitative and quantitative instruments.

Arianna Krayo, a current student in the seminar, will give the student perspective of the service projects. She will describe her personal and group experience with service-learning. She will share pieces of her reflection papers and photos of the group engaging in service.

Finally, all three presenters will address the outcomes, challenges, and process of integrating service-learning into a first-year seminar. A discussion of how service relates directly to institutional goals and transitions of first-year students will end the program. Questions will be taken from the audience during the entire program, but will be specifically solicited at the end.

Beginnings Lead to Endings: Ensuring Student Success and Parent Satisfaction through an Orientation Program Designed to Ease Their Transition

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Orientation is the first chance for institutions to convey their message to new students and families. This seminar will present several methods to create a proactive and positive Orientation by asking the following questions:

- What tone does the institution want to set for new students and their families?
- What information or resources does the institution feel their new students need to be introduced to during the summer in order for them to be successful in the fall?
- What do students need to be able to do when they arrive in the fall?
- What information do your new students want to know before they leave your campus?
- How can the institution ease the concerns of new students and their families?

The roundtable will emphasize Maslow's hierarchy of needs when designing a program around the needs of the audience rather than the egos of administrators.

The presenter will summarize what the research says about the key elements of a successful orientation as well as Maslow's theory of motivation and how this model could be used in planning an orientation. Five different institution's orientations and their different

characteristics will be presented and analyzed based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Participants will discuss how differences in these orientations meet the unique needs of student, parents and institutions as well as discuss how these models could be used within their own institution.

At the conclusion of the presentation component of the session, the group will have the opportunity to discuss their institution's models, ask questions and get feedback by the presenter and the participants.

Creating Change in First-Year Seminars Using Assessment Data

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First-year seminars have become ubiquitous in the past two decades. The benefits of these programs are numerous. For instance, the University of South Carolina–Columbia found that students who participated in their first-year seminar between 1973 and 1996 were more likely to persist into their sophomore year than students who did not participate. (Porter, S. R., and R. L. Swing. 2006. Understanding how first-year seminars affect persistence. *Research in Higher Education* 47 (1): 89–109.)

So, if these programs are already effective, is there room for improvement? A national assessment, the EBI First-Year Initiative Assessment which provides information to promote improvement, measures the effectiveness of the course from the student perspective. Reporting highlights predictors of Overall Program Effectiveness and programs are encouraged to use their data to improve their programs. But do they? The four campuses represented in this presentation have.

One presenter will discuss how they moved their Freshman Seminar course to be academically grounded in content connected to a revolving theme that serves to integrate curricular and co-curricular. They recruited more faculty to teach to make sure that a deeper academic introduction to college ways of thinking and knowing was a central focus. They also allowed faculty to choose their reading material rather than mandating a campus-wide freshman read.

The next presenter will discuss how they sought to continuously improve the effectiveness of their new student seminar courses by creating a curriculum committee that makes recommendations to modify, refine and improve their course delivery and content.

Another presenter will discuss how they focused on three areas related to personal interactions. They changed the format of the course to include more active teaching strategies, ice breakers, and more peer to peer interactions. They also had more faculty members teach the course instead of professional staff, as well as added peer leaders.

The final speaker will discuss how, based on their assessment data, they made the decision to turn their 5 year old program from an informal course to a formal course. They will discuss the decisions made and the lessons learned during that process.

The presentation will be organized in five sections. First, the presentation will briefly introduce the EBI First-Year Initiative Assessment. Next, each presenter will speak about how they used their assessment data to create change. Finally, we will end the presentation with an open discussion of how similar projects can be conducted on participants' campuses.

Beginning and Sustaining First-Year Programs: The First-Year Seminar as Axis for Student Achievement

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Many attend this conference to transform ideas into action by building on the best—and better—practices of other institutions. Even though first-year seminars have been useful curricular offerings in one form or another before the model developed at the University of South Carolina, they are still being reinvented every year at the numerous institutions that adopt them. Three critical assumptions fuel our proposal:

- Schools seeking to develop first-year programs and instituting a first-year seminar on their campus benefit from a deeper understanding of how other schools have faced their own challenges and how obstacles can become opportunities.
- Schools with first-year programs and seminars benefit from periodic and regular self-examination and continuous improvement.
- Data-driven decision making can work in all of our favor not only to prove and to improve but also to convince.

The AAC&U has identified the first-year seminar as a “High Impact” practice, and it indeed provides the necessary grounding to promote first-year student achievement. SIUC is embarking on establishing a first-year program after participating in John Gardner’s Foundations of Excellence self-study, through which they fully engaged their campus in a critical review and proposals for a path forward.

Their Chancellor’s excitement—not to be ignored—led to a version of the Saluki First Year in the second year of planning. The campus is simultaneously implementing many of the recommendations of the Foundations of Excellence Task Force and planning for the implementation of a campus-wide first-year seminar. Their current two student-success seminars, aimed at specific populations, will be expanded to all students in its eight undergraduate colleges.

FIU began its FYS 15 years ago by crafting a course that would not only meet student needs but also convince the Faculty Senate that it should be a core-curriculum requirement. And as the university’s mission expanded from regional comprehensive to research intensive, so too did its students’ needs in making the academic, personal, social, and intellectual transition to a new learning environment.

This session will summarize research about first-year seminars, review curricular models, discuss the institutional transformation necessary to establish a course, and examine strategies for sustaining program excellence and continuous improvement. It will provide a supportive framework for other institutions to vet their issues re initiating and maintaining effective structures that can be sustained.

The Dot Commies Are Coming! The Dot Commies Are Here!

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The World Wide Web, email, text messaging, and social media have created opportunities to conduct research and “stay in touch.” Facebook, My Space, Linked In, and Twitter can let anyone correspond with hundreds or thousands of people in an instant. One study found that “59 percent of 100 leading retailers currently have a fan page on Facebook.” (Reuters) Social networking sites are a part of our cultural landscape. The Dot Commies are not only coming--they are most definitely here!

As with any technological or timesaving device, however, there are opportunity costs. While technology keeps us connected, it can be a serious drain on time. While it helps with research, it accelerates the opportunities for violations of academic integrity.

Do our students (and our colleagues) know how to maximize their technology time, while not jeopardizing their academic and personal priorities? Do they adhere to rules of civility? Do they protect their privacy? Consider the following:

- One professor maintains that the “massive presence of the Internet in college students’ lives is contributing” to tension between professor and student. (Forni)
- Psychologists suggest that texting is leading to anxiety, sleep deprivation, and even making it harder for adolescents to separate from their parents. (Hafner)
- One study said, “Information and communication technology (ICT) addiction has been treated by policy makers as a kind of elephant in the room ... Signs of possible addiction--excess use of ICT and related stress illnesses--are often ignored.” (Rutgers University)

In this interactive session, participants will:

- Examine challenges they and their students have encountered concerning use of technology in the classroom and on campus.
- Develop a cost-benefit matrix of ICT use.
- Propose strategies for “users” to monitor and adjust their ICT “addiction” habits so as to build positive Information Age habits.

Promoting Student Engagement through Sustainability Initiatives

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The session will run for 45 minutes, with 15 minutes left for questions and discussion. Following introductions and experience with the topic from presenters, the session will move into a brief overview of sustainability in US culture and then move into a section about how sustainability is spreading on the college campus. Specific attention will be given to sharing examples from colleges all over the country on sustainability initiatives that are taking place and campus impacts from those initiatives. A few examples include: LEED certified buildings, student groups to promote sustainability, the economic impact on a university's budget, the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment program, the development of sustainability departments and programs.

The middle portion of the program will focus on Furman's recent adoption of the 'Sustainable Furman Program: A Plan to Infuse Sustainability into a Liberal Learning Tradition and Reach Carbon Neutrality.' The presenters will examine the development of sustainability on the Furman campus and explore the current and proposed campus initiatives. These include current co-curricular programs for first-year and upperclass students such as two residential learning communities based on sustainability, the development of a student-run all organic garden, orientation sessions for first-year students on sustainability, the development of a 'green' residence hall rooming program, first-year student sustainability fellows program and the emergence of the Sustainable Connections student group. Initiatives focusing on the curricular will also be discussed, including the formation of a sustainability major, the adjustment of general education requirements to have students take a course on the topic of 'Humans in the Natural Environment' and the creation of living/learning laboratories around campus.

The session will end with a discussion centered on the perceived successes and failures of an initiative that is largely promoted from the top down, rather than a grassroots movement, as it is on many other campuses. This session will address economic and social sustainability, but will focus primarily on environmental sustainability.

Social Connection Strategies of Academically Underprepared College Students

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First, my presentation will introduce the idea of the interplay between students' social connections and their transition to college. A review of my theoretical framework, which includes the work of Astin, Tinto, Chickering and Reisser, and Kegan, will quickly demonstrate the importance of social connections to the academic lives of college students.

Next, I will summarize my research methods, giving special care to explaining grounded theory methodology and how my theory arose from the data I gathered. Taking a moment to explain this method will enhance session participants' ability to understand my research as well as

provide useful information about a method of data analysis they may be interested in utilizing themselves.

I will devote the majority of my time to explaining my findings, and I will share quotes from participants that illuminate various aspects of my findings. Through this research, I developed a model of how students categorize their friendships into six levels of closeness, each with its own characteristics: varying degrees of familiarity, different activities done with friends, specific territorial and temporal limitations of the friendships, differing greeting behaviors, how the friendships began, and the potential future of the friendships. At each level, students received different amounts of academic, emotional, and social support. The way that students made sense of their relationships through categorizing their friends into this complex system of levels also influenced two processes in which they engage during their time in college: the growth and development of friendships and the academic and social transition to college.

Students formed friendships largely based on academic matters. From the lowest-level friendship formed with the person who happened to sit next to a participant in class to the highest-level friendship that will last forever, academic matters provided both the way students met each other and the basis for many of their activities during college. Friends studied together and supported each other through difficult academic times, and many participants credited their friends with their academic persistence.

Following the presentation of my research, I will review the implications for practice and suggestions for future research (described in the next section of the program proposal) and take questions and comments. I usually turn the question-and-answer part of my presentation into a general discussion among members of the audience, if they are so inclined, so that we can all benefit from each others' thoughts and reactions to the subject at hand.

Using Evidence to Make Change in the First Year

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The First Year Experience program at Gallaudet University uses an array of assessment tools to measure student, course and program outcomes. One such tool is the Educational Benchmarking First Year Initiative (EBI- FYI). In addition to providing national benchmarking comparisons with other participating institutions, longitudinal data can help assess new initiatives. For example, in AY 2003, significant changes were made to the FYS course and specific outcomes were targeted. By comparing AY 2003 & 2004 FYI data, and assessing student narratives and best work, it was clear that the new initiatives has significant impact on student outcomes.

However, one cannot rest on past success. As a new highly integrated curriculum for General Studies was begun, some of the important first-year initiatives began to disappear. By using and comparing benchmark data from 2004-2005 with current (2009) data important first year elements (especially out of class engagement) were strengthened when it was noted this was on the decline.

Information from the EBI FYI and NSSE tools was indicating a slight improvement in academic rigor - but the question became at what cost? Were we losing some of the important first year initiatives that were critical to the first year?

This session will highlight the initiatives and assessment measures and data.

First-Year Outcome Initiative: A Focus on Critical Thinking Performance and Perception Data

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In this interactive presentation, we will illustrate how our assessment cycle in the Freshman Foundations portion of General Studies at Gallaudet has evolved over the course of 2 difficult years of accreditation-driven mandates for improvement. The new outcome based General Studies program has facilitated a core group of faculty teaching first, then second semester Freshmen so that the entire first year is enhanced by including program initiatives such as Critical Thinking outcomes assessment in courses beyond the first semester. In addition to implementing outcome based assessment in courses and teaching, these core faculty members collect, manage, consume, and expect data for course and program improvement.

The University now has 5 student learning outcomes, one of which is critical thinking. Critical Thinking (CT) perception data has long been collected at the university via NSSE surveys, and the First Year Initiative (FYI) survey. NSSE and FYI data, while meaningful for institutional purposes, is delivered to instructors too late (at the end of the semester) to be used for quick

course improvements. Therefore, more timely measures of perceptions of CT engagement in individual General Studies courses have been collected via an online student course report, issued twice during the semester, once before mid-term, and once at the end. CT performance by students is also collected and analyzed twice during the semester in order to determine student skills on the CT outcome as measured by our University Critical Thinking Rubric. Faculty participation in the performance data collection was facilitated by plugging the new assessment demands into the existing assessment cycle and with the current semester course practices and schedules, into what teachers have called the CT Work Chart. First semester instructors in a General Studies course focusing on Critical Reading and Writing focused on two CT course objectives, collected student performance data using the CT rubric, made course improvements based on responses to student impressions on the 4th week course evaluations, which emphasized course outcomes and engaged learning. Second semester students will engage with these same CT course objectives, and will again be assessed using the CT Rubric. The shift from single measure student impression data (the FYI first semester) to multiple measures embedded meaningfully into the work life of faculty and students has made a difference in teaching and learning of and for first year faculty and students.

Effective Practices for Integrating Common Reading Programs into the First-Year Seminar: Institutional and Author Perspectives

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Common reading programs are implemented in a variety of formats and models at postsecondary institutions of all types. The literature suggests that when these programs are focused on new students, they may be more effective when the reading is related to the students' "common transitional experience" (Cuseo, "Common Reading: The Case for the Existing Paradigm and Alternative Approaches"). However, choosing an engaging reading that is related to first-year college transition issues is often one of the biggest challenges faced by administrators of common reading programs. A second and equally important challenge is designing strategies to promote reflection and encourage active involvement with the reading material. One strategy for addressing the second challenge is to integrate the reading into an

existing first-year seminar course. Not only does this provide a mechanism to hold students accountable for completing the reading, but also it provides opportunity for structured and intentional engagement with the content.

This roundtable discussion will feature facilitators who represent both the institutional and the author's perspectives in designing an effective common reading program that is integrated with a first-year seminar program. Warren St. John is the author the recently published book, *Outcasts United: A Refugee Team, an American Town* that was selected by Georgia Tech for use as a common reading in its first-year seminar program (GT1000). St. John recently visited the Georgia Tech campus and gave a seminar to freshman seminar students. Dr. Steven Girardot, Director of the Office of Success Programs at Georgia Tech and Dr. Rebecca Campbell, Director of Academic Transition Programs at Northern Arizona University oversee common reading programs and first-year seminars at two postsecondary institutions.

Participants who are working with first-year seminars and/or common reading programs will come together to discuss some common questions and share practical ideas and suggestions for how these two programs can be effectively integrated. In addition, participants will have the opportunity discuss how the author of a common reading selection can play an important role in the overall success of these programs.

Reconsidering Retention

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After a brief history of the term “retention” in higher education, we will discuss two problems with the concept. The first is definitional in nature. “Retention” is shop talk that doesn’t have a widely shared meaning beyond the group of administrators charged with increasing the “retention rate.” To be sure, for most college and university officials, retention is a proxy for student success. From this perspective, efforts designed to help a student navigate the often rough waters of the first college year are inherently student centered. But just as “credit hour” is a context-specific term in higher education, so is retention. When we use retention as a proxy for success for students and parents, we sometimes conjure other images. Consider “retention ponds” or that in some cases, students who don’t progress to the next grade level are said to have been “retained” in the lower one. Frankly, though, we’d prefer that students and parents were confused about the term if the alternative is being turned off by it, which may be the effect when we tout retention rates at recruiting or orientation events. Faculty, too, often view retention suspiciously, as an effort by administrators to encourage faculty to lessen standards.

Even if everyone agrees with defining retention as a proxy for success, it still begs the question: success for whom? Retention rates ostensibly measure an institution’s success in facilitating students’ success. But retention rates are very crude measures for doing so, particularly when

the entire first-year class is viewed in the aggregate. Even if demographic differences are delineated, other factors, such as a student's intention to transfer, can skew the results. Conflating institutional success with student success is also problematic because they can work at cross purposes. Consider again the student who enters intending to transfer. Let's say she's intentionally chosen a smaller four-year institution to begin college because she values small class sizes, but hopes to go to graduate school, and wants the opportunities of a larger research institution closer to graduation. With institutional resources geared toward promoting her retention, what structures are in place to help her make a successful transfer?

After outlining each of these issues, we'll turn to implications for practice (described below). We'll also save significant time for discussion. How should institutions communicate improvements in retention? How might we improve the metric to more accurately capture both students' success and institutions' success?

Addressing the "Fall Crash": The Other Side of a Summer Bridge Program

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The session will begin with a brief introduction to Georgia Southern and the history of the Eagle Incentive Program (EIP), including rationale, entrance requirements, and the performance required for earning full admission into the Fall semester.

Next we'll discuss the structure and assessment of the program. As described above, students perform very well in the summer. There are various reasons for this. Part of the success is due to students' performing well under pressure: if they don't perform, they won't continue. We believe that the structure of the program, however, also plays a role: students take small classes in cohorts, and we select faculty who work well with new students. Both the pressure and the structure disappear for students who successfully make it to the Fall, and the grades plummet.

The bulk of the session will address how we've attempted to intervene to improve performance in the Fall semester. The University identified the severity of the "fall crash" in January 2008. Additional resources were not immediately available, and therefore initial efforts were directed toward programmatic-level changes and closer monitoring of EIP students' progress. We built discussion of the "fall crash" into the Summer orientation course and encouraged students to participate in a peer mentoring program in the Fall. In Fall 2008, EIP students' average GPA was 2.05, up slightly from 1.89, but still very low. In January 2009, we successfully filled a new professional position in FYE called the Academic Intervention Coordinator (AIC), and one of his major responsibilities was serving as a resource for EIP students. The AIC [who is one of the presenters] taught five class meetings of the summer orientation course for all EIP students in 2009, where he emphasized the "fall crash" message and the availability of support resources. We also are piloting the MAP-Works intervention survey, and all EIP students were

invited to participate. If midterm grades and withdrawal rates are any indication, the increased efforts of intervention will have some effect for 2009 EIP students. Withdrawals for EIP students dropped in half this semester. The number of students with three or more unsatisfactory grades at midterm dropped from 30.4% to 22.2%. We hope to be able to provide verification in Denver that the “fall crash” has not been as steep for this cohort.

We’ll close with at least 20 minutes for discussion about what intervention strategies work with Summer bridge and/or provisionally admitted students.

Writing across the Four-Year Experience: Creating a Comprehensive Writing Program Beginning with Freshman Learning Communities

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This panel will discuss the collaboration between Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and the Freshman Learning Community (FLC) Program to work toward a comprehensive writing program at Georgia State University (GSU).

FLCs at GSU consist of five linked courses currently anchored by GSU 1010, a university orientation course. Approximately half of GSU freshman join a Freshman Learning Community, and the program has been successful in raising retention levels, creating community, and readying students for their college careers. The FLC Program is in the process of restructuring the anchor course to address credit hour issues and to raise academic expectations. WAC pedagogy will play a role in this transformation.

For many years, the WAC Program attempted unsuccessfully to institute a writing-intensive requirement for all majors at GSU. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools requires, as a part of re-accreditation, a university-wide Quality Enhancement Plan. In 2008, after consideration of its university-wide learning outcomes, GSU chose critical thinking and writing as the focus of what has become the Critical Thinking through Writing (CTW) Program at GSU. Students entering fall 2009 will be required to take two CTW courses within their major before they graduate. While CTW is not a direct fulfillment of WAC goals, the initiative does demand that all students take two courses within their major that require them to write. Since major courses are not taken until the junior year, there is a need to prepare students for these writing intensive courses prior to their last years at GSU. The integration of WAC in the FLC program presents opportunities for freshmen to develop writing skills that will be essential to their later success. Additionally, the inclusion of these courses in the FLC program enhances the academic integrity of the FLC program.

The success and scope of the FLC program makes it an ideal partner in preparing students for the increased writing requirements at GSU. In the summer of 2008, WAC held a series of workshops to develop rubrics and writing-to-learn assignments for faculty teaching the learning community anchor course. By restructuring the FLC program to include at least 1 WAC course, we hope to better prepare our first-year students for this requirement.

Habitudes: Developing Leadership Habits and Attitudes in First-Year Students

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This interactive session, given by the author and creator of the Habitudes™ curriculum, 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; especially with first year students. By leveraging the power of pictures, attendees will learn to teach leadership principles that are memorable and transferable.

During the session, the presenter will guide attendees through the 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 student self-assessment, and an exercise in which first year students 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.

Instituting a Campus-Collaborative Student Success Program: Retention at Work

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This presentation will explain the background of the college and the goals and challenges present for Guilford College. From there, we will explain the comprehensive first year program, including our 4 credit first-year experience class with advisors as instructors, the development of the Student Success Program, the Student Success Team (involving academic affairs, campus life, and residence life), the successes and the challenges of this program, an evolution of how this program has grown and changed (including contract development and change, new feedback tools, and assessment), and how such a deep collaboration between academic affairs, campus life, and residence life has made a positive difference in so many lives. Through power point, handouts, and anecdotes, we will share experiences and findings while engaging participants in conversation about the program.

Enhancing Your First-Year Experience Program through Custom Publishing

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This session will introduce to the audience Hayden-McNeil Publishing and its panel of relevant authors, who will discuss differences between instructor-authored content versus prewritten material and specifically, the benefits of creating your own content, including:

- Complete control over the pedagogy
- Lower costs to students
- Control over royalty rates, if applicable, for department funding
- What to look for when partnering with a publisher – and what to avoid

The panel will review samples of previously published works to identify characteristics that were instrumental in the success of the First Year Experience course. In addition, the panel will explore the following topics:

- Their experiences with Hayden-McNeil’s publishing program.
- How to develop and publish a custom text.
- How best to identify objectives for the custom content.
- Course content objectives and the relative importance of :
 - University history/tradition
 - University resources—locations, purpose, services, etc.
 - Student success skills
 - Perspectives from across the University
 - “Look and feel”—the student experience with the text
- Costs

Attendees will learn how to navigate their way through the custom publishing process and leave armed with a solid understanding of how custom course materials will support the goals of an FYE curriculum.

Panelists (expecting 3 or 4) will be determined when time/date of presentation is known.

Using CIRP Survey Results to Support First-Year Learning and Success

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Directors of First Year Programs often find themselves faced with both external demands for accountability and internal commitments to enhance student learning. These demands amplify the need for a comprehensive framework for evaluating student learning and success that addresses both student learning outcomes and the kinds of practices that foster those intended outcomes.

At CIRP, one of our highest priorities is to provide institutions with information that demonstrates the extent to which students engage in educational practices associated with student learning and development. CIRP conducts two surveys that enable institutions to gather information and examine changes amongst students in the first year: The Freshman Survey (TFS) and The Your First College Year Survey (YFCY). This presentation is designed to:

- 1) Briefly familiarize participants with how CIRP surveys and reports can be used as a tool for assessment of first year programs
- 2) Demonstrate the potential applications of results to examine student learning and development in the first year

- 3) Demonstrate how data can be used to foster collaboration between the many campus constituencies who “touch” first year programming (e.g. student affairs, academic affairs, institutional research)
- 4) Highlight specific examples from institutions that use CIRP surveys of how to convert data into action on campus.
- 5) Discuss challenges and insights to using data

Partners in Service and Learning: First-Year & Graduate Students Working Together

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The presentation will begin with an activity that was used as a part of the collaborative project, using the children’s book *Zoom* by Istvan Banyai (1995). *Zoom* is a picture book that uses drawings to show an increasingly more broad view of the world. It begins with a drawing of a rooster’s comb and ends with a look at the planet earth from space. Just as was done with the first-year students and graduate students, each participant will be given one page from this book and asked to walk around the room and describe the picture to others, one at a time. Participants are instructed to look for connections between the pictures, and once finished, a discussion will be held linking the civic engagement projects in the community to the project.

Following this activity and discussion, I will present the purpose, design (including the relevant theoretical framework), and findings of the multi-year, research-based activity, addressing the multiple phases and levels of learning and development inherent in the project. The specific focus will be on the first-year students, who are new to the community, to the institution, and to each other. To assess students' learning, a variety of methods were used.

Data from the five years of the activity were analyzed using a constant comparative technique. Based on the analysis process, distinct and broad categories emerged and are used to document areas of learning and development within the jointly conducted service learning projects. Common themes emerged throughout the five years of the projects, even though the activities, instructors, and the individual student participants varied. The freshmen and the graduate students consistently reported the following areas of reflection as a result of the activity: understanding their connection with people in need and the community; satisfaction with the work completed; enjoyment in working as part of a team; awareness of the value and impact of work; appreciation for what they had; and awareness of personal skills and competencies. There are also some emerging themes which we have identified as empathy for the call to serve and relevance of the service to course material.

Interaction with the participants will be built into the presentation throughout, wrapping up with an opportunity to discuss “lessons learned” from this project, as well as highlighting the shared experiences of colleagues.

Information Literacy and First-Year Students: Evaluating Knowledge, Needs, and Instruction

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Illinois Wesleyan University, a private, liberal arts school of 2100, requires all students to enroll in a writing course during their first year on campus, with the majority doing so in the fall semester. This “Gateway” course is a small, discussion-oriented class designed to develop students’ critical thinking and writing skills. Although not required, many Gateway instructors include library instruction sessions as part of their course content. The Ames Library, as part of its increased information literacy efforts, would like for this component to become a mandatory part of all Gateways.**

As part of a larger two-year study, an Ames Library research team composed of faculty librarians and a visiting anthropologist, surveyed 75% of the fall 2009 Gateways, in order to better understand the following research questions:

1. Do library instruction sessions in the Gateway class improve students’ research and information literacy skills?***
2. In what areas, if any, of information literacy are incoming first-year students lacking?
3. What are the obstacles facing first-year students while working on their research assignments?
4. How can the library better address students’ information literacy needs?

This presentation will discuss the research findings and implications for the following research activities:

1. An information literacy skills pre-test, administered at the beginning of the semester, based on the standards developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries.
2. An information literacy skills post-test, administered at the end of the semester.

3. Interviews with approximately 30 first year students as they conduct their research in the library, while accompanied by the study's anthropologist.

4. Interviews with approximately 30 students to describe to the researcher, step-by-step, what s/he did when working on a Gateway research assignment.

In order to contextualize the students' research activities, Gateway instructors are also asked to provide copies of the research-related assignments given to students, and librarians are asked to provide information on the type and number of instructional sessions provided to Gateway courses.

The data from these activities is analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative measures. In addition, the results of this analysis will enable the research team to make recommendations for improvements to the instructional curriculum of both the library and Gateway courses. These findings and recommendations will be shared in the presentation.

** Information Literacy is the set of skills needed to effectively find, retrieve, analyze, and use information.

Using BCSSE and NSSE Data to Investigate First-Year Engagement and Outcomes

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Using BCSSE and BCSSE-NSSE Reports

In this section we will discuss the BCSSE Institutional Report and the BCSSE-NSSE Combined Report. The BCSSE Institutional Report is distributed to campuses in late summer/early fall shortly after the conclusion of their BCSSE administration. The BCSSE institutional report includes overall item frequencies and scale means, as well as frequencies and means by gender and first-generation status. The BCSSE-NSSE report is distributed to campuses in their NSSE

Institutional Report the summer following the BCSSE administration. This report includes cross-sectional results with item frequencies presented by reported high school experiences (BCSSE), expected first-year experiences (BCSSE), and reported actual first-year experiences (NSSE). The report also includes longitudinal results designed to better understand how various incoming student characteristics (past high school engagement, expected engagement, expected academic difficulty, etc) relate to first-year engagement as indicated by the NSSE data. Participants will be shown how these reports are of particular interest to faculty and staff involved with first-year students. The presenters will engage the audience in a discussion on how these reports may be useful on their own campuses.

Customized Reports

In addition to the standard reports, institutions are able to create their own customized reports with the BCSSE-NSSE data. This is particularly useful for institutions that have specific questions or research interests regarding their first year students' experiences. For this presentation, we will describe how the BCSSE-NSSE data can be used to compare the experiences of first-year students that participated in a learning community with those first-year students that did not participate.

Incoming First-Year Students with Learning Disabilities: The Academic Challenge

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In BCSSE 2009, approximately 7% of the respondents indicated that they had a cognitive, mental, emotional, or learning impairment. Of these LD students 56% were male compared to 44% female. Approximately 29% of LD students indicated they were a first generation student, compared to 71% that indicated they were not first generation (for non LD students, 44% indicated they were first generation). Finally, LD students were proportionately over represented by Caucasian students. About 78% of all LD students were Caucasian, compared with 67% Caucasian for non- LD students. Minority students were much less likely to identify a learning disability.

In high school, LD students were significantly more likely to report that they were a B- or lower student and much less likely to report that they were an 'A' student. In addition, only 17% of LD students completed calculus compared to 29% of non-LD students. Somewhat surprising though, is the high rate of completion of high school chemistry for both groups of

students (85% LD students and 90% of non-LD). LD students were also comparable to non-LD students in other ways. For instance, they were as likely to indicate that they read for pleasure and that they spend about the same amount of time preparing/studying for class.

Given their high school experiences, it is expected that LD students will experience a more difficult transition to college during their first year. Not surprisingly then, LD student expected to earn lower overall grades and reported lower confidence in their preparation to be successful at writing, math, and learning on ones' own (note to reviewers - presentation will include detailed analysis of these results). When LD students were asked, "How supportive are your parents/guardians of your decision to attend your current institution?" approximately 88% indicated that their parents were very supportive. Though this is a high percentage, it is not as high as non-LD students who report that approximately 93% feel very supported by their parents.

However, the results also indicate that LD students are working toward a successful transition. On average, LD students expect to interact with faculty more often than non-LD student to discuss grades and to discuss readings/coursework. Also, LD students expect to be equally engaged in their academic experiences (ask questions in class, make a class presentation, etc) as non-LD students.

Improving Retention from the Inside Out

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This poster presentation will detail the development of the program from inception to current status. Specifically, bringing together Gateway Course Coordinators has made a significant difference in the visibility of first-year courses, along with attention to the retention initiative. Even though emphasis is placed on mentoring, advising, peer programs, the deliberate effort to bring like faculty together in an endeavor to decrease DFW rates and increase retention has been very successful.

The use of Best Practices, a Gateway website for faculty, a Gateway coordinators' handbook, Gateway specific professional development opportunities, Gateway faculty research and program grant offerings, creation of an advisory board, have all contributed to an improved first year program.

This poster session will detail how to set-up a similar program at the attendees' institution and will provide recommendations for a reasonable timeline.

On-Line Peer Mentoring: Keeping Students Connected from Orientation through the First Semester

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Institutions all over the country are seeking innovative strategies to connect their students to their campus in mediums that this generation of students is using. In this session, two institutions will share how they have accomplished this by utilizing Blackboard, email, Facebook, Twitter and Ning.com to engage students with each other and the campus after orientation and through the first year.

This project began at the University of Louisville three years ago and was shared at this conference last year. IUPUI was inspired by their work and began collaborating with U of L last Spring. Both programs are designed to aid new students' transition to their institution by building a bridge between new student orientation and the first day of class. In this online environment, new students were able to connect with peers from their learning communities, meet their instructional team, and begin collecting new resources for the upcoming school year. Each week, a peer mentor, posts information tied to the week's topic.

In this session, presenters will discuss the specifics of mentor training and the structure and implementation of the summer program. Benefits and pitfalls of an all online mentor program which takes place before classes start will be shared. The training guide and weekly lesson plans that the mentors follow will be reviewed, as well as, mentor reporting via contact logs, and the kinds of information that we have been able to generate from all of our assessment strategies. The presentation will be structured so that participants will hear from two institutions that have created a similar but very different online environment for their campus'. Participants will leave with information that can be used as a template for programming on their campus and an understanding of what resources and information they will need to start such a program.

Capturing the Learning: The Curriculum, Co-Curriculum, and Assessment of IUPUI's Themed Learning Communities

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IUPUI's Themed Learning Communities (TLCs) involve two or more discipline-based courses paired with an integrative seminar in which cohorts of 25 incoming freshman students enroll. TLCs engage students, student mentors, faculty, librarians, advisors and others in a community of learners that explore interdisciplinary connections both in and out of the classroom. Through the use of thematically linked curricula, service learning and co-curricular experiences, TLCs provide enriching learning experiences that have demonstrated significant impacts on first semester GPA, first year retention and student engagement.

Thematically Linked Curricula

Currently, IUPUI offers 33 unique TLCs housed in a variety of academic schools. Each TLC is comprised of an interdisciplinary course combination united through a theme. Examples of course combinations, themes, syllabi and interdisciplinary assignments will be presented for participants.

Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is a key component of each Themed Learning Community. Co-curricular and service learning experiences relating to the curriculum and theme are part of each TLC. For example: students in the "Urban Community" Education TLCs complete service learning projects in the surrounding community including tutoring children in homeless shelters through School on Wheels. Students in the "Psychology and Religion: Science and Dreams and Visions" Themed Learning Community participate in American Indian ceremonies and hear stories of Cree elders. Finally, students in the "Transcending Perceptions" TLC use IUPUI's global classroom to participate in a real-time discussion with a researcher of an experimental Israeli-Arab school. Examples of experiential learning experiences will be visually displayed for observers.

Assessment

In order to measure the impact of the program and strive toward continual improvement, comprehensive assessment methods are employed. First semester grades, first year retention rates, and NSSE results of TLC participants are compared to students enrolling in a freshman

seminar course while controlling for background characteristics. Quantitative and qualitative responses from a Student Feedback Questionnaires are routinely analyzed. Assessment methods, instruments and results will be displayed.

Developing and Assessing High Impact Educational Programs to Support First-Year Student Learning and Engagement

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In this session, we will summarize the effects of participating in “high-impact” practices on other college experiences and self-reported outcomes. In consultation with experts, we developed sets of items about learning communities, student-faculty research, student independent research, and study abroad, and added them to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

To illustrate, the learning communities’ items ask about the nature of the program and co-enrolled courses, and to what extent participating in the learning community contributed to essential learning outcomes and the student-faculty research items ask about aspects of the collaboration, the kind of data collected and where (library, lab, field work, etc.), the student’s role in the research process, and the extent the research experience contributed to essential learning outcomes.

Learning communities, student-faculty research, and other high-impact practices are effective because they create conditions whereby students devote more effort to their learning, interact more with faculty and peers (which exposes them to diversity), get more frequent formal and informal feedback, and practice and apply what they are learning to real-life situations. As a result, students typically invest more of themselves in their studies and benefit more.

The session will present these research findings and then we will engage participants in discussion about campus approaches to assessing these practices using NSSE and other institutional data sources, approaches to ensuring the participation of underrepresented first-year students, and how different campuses structure experiences to maximize student learning.

IUPUI administrators will share how they have examined these practices on campus and their approaches to ensuring that more urban commuter first-year students realize the benefits these high-impact practices. We will build in time to discuss with participants the implications of our findings for improving the organization and structure of programs and practices on their own campuses and for expanding student access to high-impact practices.

Individual Efforts Making an Impact on First-Year Student Retention

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Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) has for the last ten years been dedicated to a comprehensive effort to increase the retention rates for freshmen, and the campus has been remarkably successful. The one-year retention of freshmen has risen from 55% in 1997 to 68% in 2007. But several years ago, the campus experienced a small setback. The retention numbers didn't increase that year; they actually fell by a small percentage point. Had we retained just 21 more freshmen that year, our rates would have increased. That realization gave birth to a new project, the IUPUI 21 Club.

With the 21 Club project, we were able to reframe our retention efforts to concentrate on our successes instead of our failures. Each spring semester, all returning freshmen are sent a survey, asking them to identify one person (faculty, administrator, academic advisor, staff member, or student) at IUPUI who has helped them succeed and to explain how. That data is collected and analyzed. Those nominated by the students are recognized in their home units and throughout the campus. This poster session will demonstrate the strategies for collecting the data, the analytical results over several years, and the impact on the campus.

The session will begin with introductions of the presenters, and will ask audience members to introduce themselves with regard to their role in working with first-year students.

Next, the audience will be engaged in a reflective writing activity where they will discuss who made a difference in their undergraduate first-year success.

Next the presenters will detail the IUPUI 21 Club project.

Next we will have the participants in small groups discuss ways they can enhance retention on their campuses by highlighting the efforts of individuals.

Finally, we will end with a question and answer period.

Impact of First Semester College Experience on Cardiovascular Risk Factor Development and Implications for Campus-based Programming for Risk Reduction and Health Promotion

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During the first year college experience, many young adults experience significant lifestyle changes that may negatively impact their health. Previous research has documented weight gain, as well as other behavioral changes, likely to increase cardiovascular and other risk factors during the transition in the new college environment. Research has also strongly suggested that multiple risk factors for heart disease, the leading cause of mortality in the United States, actually begin in adolescence. Consequently, young adults have increasingly become the target of research investigating strategies for cardiovascular risk reduction and prevention. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of the first semester college experience on cardiovascular risk factor development. Study participants were thirty-one male and female freshmen, aged 18-22 years. Consent was obtained as required by the university Institutional Review Board for Protection of Human Subjects. Pre-testing was conducted during the first three weeks of the first semester and included a lipid panel with total cholesterol, HDL and LDL cholesterol, triglycerides, and fasting blood glucose (measured by finger stick following a

12 hour fast utilizing the Cholestech LDX system), body mass index (using Quetelet's Index calculation), and resting systolic and diastolic blood pressure. Post semester testing was conducted 12 weeks later. Results indicated statistically significant increases from pre to post testing in total cholesterol ($p < .000$), LDL ($p < .001$), fasting glucose ($p < .031$), weight ($p < .020$), and BMI ($p < .005$). Triglyceride levels significantly increased ($p < .015$) for students living in dorms compared to those living off campus. In conclusion, results of this study suggest that first semester college experience may have a negative impact on total cholesterol, LDL, fasting glucose, and triglycerides. Further research on the impact of first year experience on cardiovascular health is recommended, particularly concerning cardiovascular risk associated with living on campus and campus-based interventions.

Creating a Total Package: The First-Year Experience at Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne

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The Office of the First Year Experience (FYE) at Indiana University Purdue University (IPFW) is six years old. In the beginning, its sole responsibilities were centered around learning communities (LCs). Through the first five years, learning communities grew from sixteen to fifty. Faculty and campus leaders were pleased with the this growth and the slightly improved retention rate of LC students.

Faculty and staff know that first year retention rate of freshmen is crucial. Because of the early successes of the LCs, new thoughts, ideas, and programs have emerged and were placed in the FYE office to support our improving freshmen retention rate.

This presentation will share new campus initiatives (mandating a community hour in the LCs, creating an F3 dinner program, moving the freshmen seminar course, and instituting the MAP-Works survey), their implementations, and preliminary findings.

The mandatory community hour is based on Richard Light's work. In his book, *Making the Most Of College: Students Speak Their Minds* (2001), he asserts that what happens outside the classroom can be as important or more important in connecting students to campus and persisting to graduation: "Students who are able to integrate the in-class and outside-of-class parts of their lives can reap great benefits . . . [and] build an 'educational package.'" Initially, we asked faculty to have five community hours; this year we asked for ten co-or-extracurricular

community hours; faculty receive a compensation for their planning, executing and attending of their community hour.

The F3 (Freshmen, Faculty, Food) dinner program is for students who are in learning communities or classes with a high D, F, W rate. These dinners support the research that students who connect with their professors have a higher persistence rate. These dinners are held out of class and are supported by the Offices of Academic and Student Affairs and Enrollment Management.

IPFW's freshmen seminar course was originally housed in the tutoring office. Moving it to the FYE office strengthens the course and presents a new message about it. Students no longer see this course as developmental but as a necessary tool that helps ensure their success.

MAP-Works, a commercial survey, was offered at weeks three and four to most of our beginning freshmen. Seeing the results of this survey allows faculty and staff an opportunity for early intervention to at-risk students.

These new programs strengthen the connections and experiences of our students as they persist on the road to graduation.

Summer Bridge Programs: What works?

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Summary: None

Opening the Toolbox: Tricks, Strategies, and Ploys to Promote Active Classroom Engagement

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The imagery often attached to higher education is a tiered classroom full of students and a faculty member lecturing on a topic of choice. Quite often, if you look into the faces and eyes of the students seated in those classrooms you will see the evidence of Lecture Induced Mind Paralysis: droopy eyes, heads that appear too heavy to support their own weight, profuse drooling, extended periods of staring, dazed appearance uncontrollable doodling, snoring, and

window/door gazing. The symptoms can be directly related to a lack of engagement in the instructional process.

Although the lecture does have its place in the process of teaching and learning, research would indicate that it is used to excess and produces less than adequate results. The alternative is to infuse presentations with easy-to-use interactive strategies that allow students to process their learning, discuss their views and learn the views of their classmates, engage in problem solving, and integrate new knowledge with opportunities for application, synthesis, and evaluation.

During this session, participants will experience and learn a minimum of 12 techniques that can be easily applied and replicated in any academic discipline.

A Pedagogy of Transformation: Strategies for Teaching Millennial Students that Engages the Mind and Captures the Heart

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Detailed outline of what the preconference workshop entails including any interactive activities and topics of discussion:

1. Understanding the roles expectation of faculty members: A series of interactive strategies to provide participants with an opportunity to reflect on their own approaches and challenges in teaching:
 - a. The Generative Paradox (Gilley, 2005)
 - b. The Three Voices of Teaching
 - c. The Ironies of Teaching
2. Understanding and addressing the pedagogical preferences and styles of millennial learners
 - a. Characteristics of the millennial generation
 - b. Implications for the classroom
3. Classroom teaching strategies across the curriculum
 - a. Reflective Teaching Strategies
 - i. Encounters with fictional literature and movies
 - ii. Interactive journaling
 - iii. Reflective emails
 - iv. Contextualized Reading
 - v. The Virtual High School Reunion
 - vi. The Rear View Mirror
 - vii. The Letter Home
 - viii. My Best Effort
 - ix. The Story Line

- b. Cooperative Learning
 - i. The Research says ...
 - ii. Strategies for creating groups
 - iii. Roles and Responsibilities in Cooperative Learning
 - iv. Facilitation of the Group Process/Harvesting Responses
 - v. Jigsaw
 - vi. Graffiti
 - vii. Problem-Based Learning
- c. Service-Learning
 - i. Characteristics of service learning
 - ii. Creating community service options
 - iii. Side by Side Service
 - iv. Short-Term Challenges and Long-Term Benefits

Teaching that Ignites Learning

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Summary: None

Not What to Learn, But How to Learn: First-Year Writing around a Harkness Table

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After ten years of teaching first-year writing the same way, in the fall of 2009, the presenter tried an entirely new method: mutual learning around a “Harkness” table. The Harkness method was pioneered almost eighty years ago at the Phillips Exeter School through the generous gift of businessman and philanthropist, Edward S. Harkness.

The principle behind the Harkness table is amazing simple, not uncommon in college capstone courses or upper-level seminars, but not much practiced in freshman composition / first-year seminars / first-year experience offerings. Students sit around an oval table -- everyone AT the table – to discuss collaboratively, question each other, challenge assumptions and the teacher, find understanding and meaning. As an introduction to college pedagogy, its influence can be powerful on first-year students: it is profoundly egalitarian, expectations for investment and

participation in the class are high and held mutually by all participants, and those around the table – including the teacher – discover not what to learn, but how to learn.

In the fall of 2009, the presenter never once stood, never wrote on the small board provided, never presided or lectured. We were a “fierce democracy” of mutual support, encouragement, and collaboration. Though the “results” are not yet in, the presenter is eager to share her experience with those in attendance.

Summer Reading: Shifting to a Transitional Student-Centered Paradigm Shift

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Traditionally, popular literary works have been chosen as the reading format (genre) for use in common/summer FYE reading programs. While there are numerous anecdotal reports of the effectiveness of using this genre, others have acknowledged its limitation for new students who are transitioning from high school to higher education, such as the following:

- * At some institutions, students are admitted too late to complete a novel-length reading prior to the onset of the fall term.
- * Entering students with poor reading skills may not be ready to reap the full benefits of an unstructured reading assignment that requires inferential reasoning and critical analysis.
- * New international students may lack familiarity with metaphorical language needed to appreciate literary text.
- * During high school, it is not uncommon for students to read novels that have been assigned as summer reading. Encountering this assignment again as their first college assignment may trigger a "been there, done that" attitude toward the summer reading program and detract from new students' anticipatory excitement about college being “different than high school.”
- * The cost of a novel-based summer reading program can be substantial, particularly if it includes a campus visit from a nationally known author.
- * At some campuses, the objective or intended outcomes of a common reading program using a best-selling book, coupled with recruitment of its best-selling author to campus, has taken on the purpose of promoting PR for the campus, rather contributing directly to the initial adjustment and subsequent success of first-year students.

International Experience for First-Year Students

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In an effort to better serve high achieving students, and to introduce them early in their academic experience to Kennesaw State University's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) entitled "Global Education for Engaged Citizenship, KSU implemented in fall 2009 a new program entitled the "President's Emerging Global Scholars" program. The program is coordinated through the Center for Student Leadership and University College and emphasizes the development of leadership skills in a global society. Incoming first-year students who were in the top 5% of those admitted to the university were invited to participate. After an interview process, two groups of students were selected and enrolled in the Honors program. A pre-enrollment summer retreat was held to allow students to begin to form connections with one another and with the program coordinators. One group of 21 students, with an interest in a variety of majors, was selected to participate in a 4-course learning community. The courses included a First-Year Seminar focused on the "Seven Revolutions" (seven factors that will influence what the world will look like in 2025 and beyond; www.7revs.org), English Composition, Public Speaking and Introduction to Business. Students in this group participated in a 10-day international study trip to Salvador, Brazil. The second group consisted of 19

students with an interest in majors within the College of Science and Mathematics. These students are not part of a formal learning community. Instead they participate in weekly meetings, are developing and will implement a national civic engagement project, are engaged with faculty mentors, and will participate in a 10-day international study trip to Guadalajara, Mexico. The focus of this program is to provide a value-added experience for high-achieving first-year students. The effectiveness of the program is being measured by retention and GPA. In addition, pre/post testing using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is being employed to determine the effect of the international experience on intercultural awareness.

Emergency Preparedness Learning Communities: Creating a Cohort of “Prepared Citizens” in the First Semester of College

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The first 10 minutes of this presentation will be used to establish the context in which the “Emergency! Are You Prepared?” learning community was created, including (1) dissolution of the Civil Defense program at the end of the Cold War (the last time the United States had a culture of preparedness), (2) individual, community, and federal government response to the crisis, and (3) campus response to “active shooters” such as the mass murder at Virginia Tech.

Responses have included grant funding for campus-based emergency response programs and training staff and faculty as crisis coordinators.

However, the “Emergency! Are You Prepared?” learning community is among the first, if not the first, curriculum-based program specifically designed for first-semester first-year students. In the next 25 minutes, the presenters will provide an overview of the curricular structure of this learning community and its connection to a newly-formed Registered Student Organization. The presenters will share assessment data about this vibrant new learning community that

provides a structured, curricular response to an emerging national trend – creating a culture of preparedness for the 21st century.

Examples of assignments and student work will be shared. And tips for how to establish an emergency preparedness learning community on [your] campus will be offered, including advice about proper selection of faculty for such a learning community (at least one faculty member should be trained in CPR, AED - automated external defibrillator - use, and First Aid).

A five-minute buffer is built into the presentation (because the presenters expect to get a little carried away with examples of student response to this learning community), which leaves about 20 minutes for open, interactive discussion with the audience.

Education and Career Plans: Helping Students Successfully Transition to Postsecondary Education

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For years research has revealed the positive impact of students having an education and career plan in place when they leave secondary education. Today with more and more schools, districts, and states across the country recognizing this importance and adding a four-year plan to their graduation requirements, educators are looking for user-friendly and innovative ways to help students create these plans. Kuder's successful and proven solutions are being continuously enhanced and improved to meet these demands. Not only, does the new completely Internet-based Kuder® Navigator incorporate Kuder's tradition of research-based assessment, lifelong portfolio development, and engaging career exploration for a comprehensive approach to education and career planning, it offers an expanded education planner that is customizable by school, district, or state. Throughout the system, students are guided through career planning and exploration in a thoughtful, interactive, and clearly defined step-by-step process appropriate to their age and level. The education planner allows students to create a plan based on an education and career goal and select school-specific coursework. Students can update the plan on an ongoing basis and maintain it throughout their educational careers.

Launching Student Success in the First-Year Seminar

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The First Year Program offers an integrated experience through all First Year courses designed around guiding principles and best practices for transitioning students. The Program:

- fosters metacognition and self-knowledge by deliberately connecting course instruction to advising.
- introduces students to the cognitive, affective and physical dimensions of learning.
- provides a rich academic program that is collegiate and intellectually stimulating.
- helps students understand brain function, learning issues and executive function demands.

The FY Studies Department offers foundational courses to support all Landmark College students in navigating academic, social, and related challenges in making a successful transition to college. Our curriculum integrates educational experiences and knowledge that nurture our students' understanding of their own learning and of their individual process and academic strengths and challenges. We accomplish this from our deeply rooted philosophy of effective teaching derived from research on the learning brain, LD, ADHD, and current educational theory and practice.

In this presentation we will use the Perspectives in Learning class as an example of how students engage in learning about themselves and develop skills and strategies to launch academic success. Goals for this class include: personal and social development, metacognition, self-efficacy and self-advocacy, comprehension and critical thinking, written composition, reading and study skills, research and technology. Outcomes for these goals will be presented. Data from the 2008-2009 FY Studies Department assessment project which looked at student metacognitive efficacy of using our Internet Student Information System (ISIS) is one of the assessment instruments that will be introduced and explained.

Participants will be engaged through a sample lesson and activities that illustrate Landmark College's student-centered approach to learning. Finally, participants will have the opportunity to reflect and apply the principles used in this presentation to their academic setting.

Raising Expectations through District Outreach: Creating Better Prepared Entering First-Year Students

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The presentation will be given in the following format:

Basic overview of education in America: Snapshot of college freshmen

Comparison of students who are in Asia, South America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Finland, Singapore

Why do we need to start much earlier with college and career readiness? What are the major patterns keeping students stuck and how can colleges work with surrounding districts to forge these partnerships?

- Denver Public Schools partnership with Community College of Denver
*Lincoln High school example with DU, CCD, Metro, CU Boulder
- Marana school district- 5th-12 the grade transition readiness program
- Johns Hopkins Talent Search
- Small Learning Communities schools

What are skills which employers will both require and reward in this century? How can we work with students in high school and before to come to college with more information about themselves, their abilities, their career interests, their life goals and their strengths and weaknesses? If we have a vision of a more extensive, creative and rigorous K-12 experience, we can work with college freshmen on critical and creative thinking skills, how they can solve the world's biggest problems, and explorations about internships and fields which interest them. It's time to reverse the trend of doing triage at the college level. For our nation to be competitive for years to come, we need to work with our counterparts at all levels of the educational ladder and with the world of work hiring these "products" of Higher Education.

This session will be highly interactive and will have breakout components for participants to explore the pros and cons of each of the bulleted strategies above.

Research on which this session is based:

o Crossing the Finish Line: Completing College at America's Public Universities, by William G. Bowen and Matthew M. Chingos, Princeton University Press, 2009.

o U.S. News & World Report, "Solving the College Crisis," September 2009.

o Johns Hopkins Talent Search, What We Know About Academically Talented Students: A Sample of our Findings on Under-Represented Students,
<http://cty.jhu.edu/research/wwkunder_rep.html>

o We're Born to Learn, by Dr. Rita Smilkstein, Corwin Press, 2004.

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From Deposit to December: An Approach to the First-Year Experience through the Use of a Peer Mentor Program Across Five Initiatives

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In 2007, Longwood University committed to expanding the first year experience in effort to increase student retention, persistence, and overall satisfaction. This included the establishment of the Office of First Year Experience and a presidential charge to create a comprehensive experience for all incoming students. Orientation programs were previously housed with the Office of Leadership and New Student Programs and student leadership roles were disjointed between programs. As the Office of First Year Experience was establishing its foundation, it became evident that Peer Mentors were the common thread between program success and the strengthening of powerful peer to peer connection was a necessity.

This session will overview the seamless transition of students from deposit through end of the freshman seminar while focusing on the collaboration between Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Student Success and the unique use of a single Peer Mentor team for five programs. Peer Mentors are supervised through both the Office of First Year Experience in Student Success and the Director of Longwood Seminar in Academic Affairs; resulting in investment from many areas of the university.

The following areas will be featured to demonstrate the connectedness of the Peer Mentor program throughout initiatives:

Office of First Year Experience

- The challenges associated with rapid growth of the Office;
- Creation and implementation of the FYE Student Coordinator positions.

Peer Mentor Program: Updates and Restructuring

- A successful, two tiered approach to Peer Mentor selection that produces extensive cross-campus collaboration;
- A restructure of Peer Mentor “Summer” and “Fall” Teams;
- Five staff training opportunities;
- Weekly staff meetings during the first 8 weeks of the semester.

Summer Orientation & Registration

-Responsibilities of the Peer Mentor Summer Team

The 1839 Experience

- A Blackboard based correspondence program that allows for extended orientation during the ten weeks prior to campus arrival. Peer Mentors serve as liaisons of information to students assigned to their Longwood Seminar class section. The use of Blackboard allows for the tracking of students who may be a retention risk while Peer Mentors make connections with their students leading up to their campus meeting.

New Lancer Days

- A four day mandatory welcome orientation where students participate in programming with their Peer Mentor and Longwood Seminar classmates. In addition to academic, social, health, safety and diversity programming, students hold their first session of Longwood Seminar before classes officially begin. The author of the First Year Reading Experience assigned reading also speaks and Peer Mentors lead focused discussion on the book. Class credit is given for program participation and a written reflection during Longwood Seminar.

Longwood Seminar

- An 8 week, one credit course taught by faculty/staff members and co-instructed by a Peer Mentor that is mandatory for all first year students. Each course is required to cover a specific set of information but is allowed to cover other topics as desired. Peer Mentors assist in syllabi creation, facilitate class discussion, present on specific topics and assist students with transition needs.

Peer Mentor Program Impact

-Impact of the program on retention, student persistence, overall student satisfaction, and the campus community as seen through qualitative and quantitative assessment;
-Personal and professional growth and development of the staff.

Bengals Beyond the Bayou: Programming for Out of State Students

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For this presentation, I will do a brief version of one of the programs we did entitled “What’s the Big Deal About Jambalaya?” where the audience can take their shot at pronouncing various Louisiana terms as well as learn a little bit about the Louisiana culture. For the bulk of the program, I’ll discuss how we developed Bengals Beyond the Bayou, the various programs that are part of the series, and how we market to students. In addition, I will review our assessment results from the students participating in the programs. Finally, I’ll share our plans for the future of the program series. I will also leave time for a question and answer session as well as an opportunity for anyone to share what they do for their out of state/international students.

Help! I Teach First-Year Students!

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The Book Club encourages faculty to participate in weekly discussions on a selected book or topic chosen by FYE. The shared experience of reading and discussing important themes that affect the classroom assists faculty in understanding and addressing the importance of promoting first year student success.

The Book Club selection was *The Impossible will take a Little While* by Paul Loeb. FYE collaborated with Campus Life to bring Paul Loeb to speak on campus in September.

Roundtable discussions provided faculty with the opportunity to connect with campus resources and to voice their concerns on issues regarding assisting students with academic success, academic integrity, and identifying and supporting students in distress.

Feedback from each event was collected and evaluated for program assessment. As a result, FYE will host additional Roundtable discussions featuring topics such as web-based study environments, labs, and lecture styles.

The Power of Impact: Designing Academic Interventions for First-Year Students

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As competition for students increases, higher education institutions must not only be creative in attracting students, but must be more intentional in its efforts to retain students. Recent projections in the state of Louisiana forecast a steady decline in the number of students entering high school, which will impact the number of students eligible to enroll in the flagship institution. As a flagship institution, there was concern that the current retention rates were not consistent with other peer institutions. As a result, more directed outreach to students experiencing academic difficulty was an initial approach in enhancing student success. The Impact Program was designed to offer additional support to first year students on academic action (students on academic warning or probation) after the fall semester.

Presenters will share the specifics on the communications, marketing plan, and outreach efforts related to the program. Detailed information will be provided on the design of the Impact Program (session format, session content, learning outcomes, and evaluation methodology). In addition to the programming, students were offered individual appointments to meet with a learning strategies consultant within the Center for Academic Success and develop individual strategies for increasing their academic performance during the spring semester. Presenters will offer strategies on how facilitating those conversations and techniques can be utilized.

Discussion of the data analysis pre and post Impact Program will be shared as well as proposed enhancements to assessing the program outcomes. Information on logistics, such as locations, budget, and developing campus partnerships will also be highlighted.

Presenters will also share lessons learned and how the data and program evaluations have shaped the program for future years. Beyond the program itself, information on the campus climate and politics will be discussed to provide framework for how other campuses can develop similar outreach initiatives. Participants will also have an opportunity to ask questions, share best practices, and engage with the presenters as they share the data.

Faculty Involvement in Common Reading Programs

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This roundtable hopes to create a forum for discussion of what it takes to get faculty engaged with a Common Reading program. Joe Cuseo has said “The need to get faculty involved or ‘on

board' has been a never-ending lament expressed at FYE conference" (qtd in Keup, 2008, p.12.) and argued that if existing faculty reward systems are not aggressively re-structured, we can expect "laments about lack of faculty involvement in FYE initiatives will continue ad infinitum (and ad nauseam.)"(p. 13). Although this session may be at risk of inviting those laments, we'd like to invite participants to discuss what can be done to get faculty involved in Common Reading programs.

Lyndon State College's Common Read program, co-sponsored by the First-Year Experience office and academic affairs, is five years old, and is becoming quite robust; this year, the program included a multi-media response contest, discussions of the book during orientation, and a campus visit by the author. A limited number of faculty served as contest judges and discussion leaders, but very few faculty have created curricular tie-ins to the book in their courses; given the program's goal of creating a campus-wide shared intellectual event, the limited participation by faculty is problematic. The faculty should be at the heart of shared intellectual experiences.

What does it take to get faculty involved? How can we help busy faculty understand the goals of Common Reading programs? How can we transcend departmental barriers? Can we create opportunities for involvement that are specific and delimited, and therefore not too daunting, or provide curricular templates or faculty development that allow faculty to see how they can get involved without adding excessively to their workload or detracting from their curriculum?

Lyndon's Common Read program has been assessed with questions embedded in student surveys about first-year experiences, with student focus groups, and, most importantly in this context, with questions embedded in a reading-and-writing-across-the-curriculum survey of faculty. We will focus this round table by sharing the results of these assessments. Participants will also be asked to do a bit of role-playing and a bit of appreciative inquiry, and to share experiences from their own campuses. We hope the discussion will give participants the opportunity to share worries and problems, but to also share success stories and brainstorm solutions together.

Keup, Jennifer (2008) Insights from a First-Year Experience Expert: An Interview with Dr. Joseph Cuseo. *Transitions*, 2(3).

Basic Skills Remediation for First-Generation Students: The Students' Perspectives

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This session will present qualitative research about first-year students' attitudes towards and perceptions of basic skills remediation in writing and in mathematics. As part of a grant-funded project focused on first-generation low-income students, Lyndon State College created a pair

of basic skills pilots. Underprepared math students were enrolled in a five-day a week intensive course that covered the pre-college algebra curriculum in the first third of the semester, and a first-year college math course over the remainder of the semester. Basic writers and readers were enrolled a first-semester composition course and co-enrolled in a two-hour tutorial to help them with the work in that course.

The goals of the pilot program were 1) to help students with financial obstacles pay fewer tuition dollars for basic skills remediation, 2) to ensure that students earned more credit towards graduation in first semester of college, and 3) to develop a model of integrated basic skills instruction that works. The first semester the program was implemented, students enrolled in the pilot the first semester reported that they liked the integrated basic skills model and appreciate being given the chance to try passing the “real” college courses in their first semester. Math instructors, however, reported that what they called the “work ethic” of the math students declined rapidly after midsemester, and English instructors reported that attitudes about reading that may have impeded students’ more than a lack of reading skills; reading seemed to be viewed as a necessary evil, not a route to knowledge, and school reading was primarily “boring.” These instructor reports convinced us that we need to know more about the students’ perceptions of what is happening in their basic skills courses.

In order to investigate further, data was collected using focus group interviews. The results of this qualitative research may have implications for FYE programming designed for all underprepared students, including bridge programs, study skills instruction, and supplemental instruction. The research also has implications for the ways we work with, and talk with, underprepared first-generation, low-income students, both in the classroom and during other facets of their first year experience, such as advising, academic support, and co-curricular programming. The session will expand on the themes and tensions identified by transcript analysis of the focus group interviews, share examples of student voices, and then conclude with a discussion of the implications for basic skills practices and pedagogical design.

First-Year International Student Success Initiatives

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The presentation will begin with a brief history of the First Year International Student Success Program at Marietta College. We will provide an overview of current literature on transition and success for international students in U.S. higher education systems. We will explain how the program developed at Marietta College, rationale for the program and how it is funded. A small liberal arts college in southeast Ohio, Marietta College averages 50 new first year international students each fall out of a class of 400 first year students.

The second part of the presentation will focus on two curricular initiatives that provide the cornerstone of the First Year International Student Success Program. First is a two week intensive course, Introduction to American Culture that combines morning classes and afternoon experiential activities to introduce students to U.S. culture, to the U.S. educational system, and to English writing and speaking immersion with an emphasis on writing basics, vocabulary building and voice and articulation. Each morning courses on a particular area of U.S. culture are taught by a variety of faculty using different pedagogy to not only introduce students to the topic, but to model what they can expect in U.S. classrooms. Afternoons are spent working in small groups on writing, voice and articulation, and experiential activities. A trip to Washington, DC at the end of the first week is a key experiential component. The second week of the course culminates with virtual scrapbook presentations to English speaking peers of the Washington, DC program. The second course is a 1 credit course, Cultural Transitions that meets the first eight weeks of the semester to assist students with institutional and cultural issues. Pedagogy, syllabi, assignments and outcomes will be share with participants.

The third part of the presentation will focus on the experiential portion of the program and the orientation program. We will share examples of successful and unsuccessful experiential components. An important aspect is the tie between curricular objectives and reinforcement through experiential activities. Orientation materials and evaluation will be discussed.

Finally, we will share assessment data with participants and provide models for programs to create their own assessment starting with student learning objectives and types of direct and indirect assessment measures.

Teaching and Preparing Teachers to Teach the First-Year Seminar

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The effectiveness of a first-year seminar (FYS) depends not only on its content, but also on its pedagogy—the instructional methods used to deliver the course. As much thought should be given to how the course will be taught as to what material will be covered; in other words, process is as important as content. This session's goal is to provide a coherent, systematic set of teaching strategies for FYE instructors that is well-grounded in research on effective college teaching and learning.

The session is intended to do provide instructors with more than a series of superficial teaching “tips,” which focus exclusively on the how of it—teaching mechanics; it also includes examination of the why of it—research-based reasons for the effectiveness of the strategies that are recommended. Including discussion of the research and theory that support recommended instructional practices serves to highlight teaching as a form of scholarship, elevates the academic credibility of the FYS, and validates the efforts of the student-centered instructors who teach the course. Moreover, if instructors share the rationale for their teaching strategies with their students, they will gain a better understanding of the educational purpose behind the practices, which should increase the likelihood that students will respond with greater effort and enthusiasm.

The instructional strategies cited in this manuscript have been drawn primarily from three sources: (a) research on instructional improvement conducted by scholars in the field of faculty development, (b) research on human learning, cognition, and motivation, and (c) research on the characteristics and behaviors of college instructors that have been empirically associated with student perceptions of effective teaching and self-reported learning.

Core Content for a Comprehensive First-Year Seminar: Substance and Sequence

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This session identifies content for first-year seminars that goes beyond strictly academic topics and embraces a comprehensive, holistic (whole-person) approach to promoting student success. This whole-person (holistic) FYS is the quintessential “student-centered” course; its content centers squarely on, and is driven directly by, the first-year student experience. Arguably, this type of FYE is unique because it is likely to be the only course in the curriculum whose content originates with, derives from, and focuses on the learner, rather than on an external corpus of knowledge that reflects the research interests of discipline-based scholars.

Student retention and persistence to degree completion are strongly influenced by factors that are not strictly cognitive or academic in nature.

A holistic approach to promoting student success addresses the full range of educational goals expressed in college mission statements, the vast majority of which involve student outcomes that are not strictly academic or cognitive in nature. Furthermore, a holistic first-year seminar can help unify academic and student affairs and promote students' holistic development is consistent with the goals of liberal (general) education.

Research suggests that first-year seminars with a holistic focus are the most effective type of seminar for promoting student learning outcomes. Collectively, these findings point strongly to the conclusion that it is important for the FYE to focus not only on strictly academic-success strategies, but also on “non-academic” adjustments to college and development of the student as a “whole person.”

In sum, a holistically-focused FYS has the following major advantages:

- * It addresses the full range of factors that promote student success and prevent student attrition.
- * It serves as a stimulus for promoting partnerships between academic affairs and student development professionals, leading to more coordinated and collaborative efforts to promote student retention.
- * It addresses the full range of educational goals expressed in college mission statements, the vast majority of which refer to student outcomes that are neither strictly academic nor cognitive in nature.
- * It is congruent with the goals of liberal education, which represents the foundation of a college education and what it means to be an educated person.
- * It is consistent with brain research, which indicates that the impact of cognitive and emotional experiences on human learning cannot be separated.
- * It is the type of FYS that is most likely to have a positive impact on multiple student-learning outcomes.

Telling vs. Showing: The Evolution from a Welcome-to-College to a Thematic University Seminar

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I hope that the presentation will allow conference attendees to contemplate some of the following questions: how does this course allow for individual instructor autonomy while at the same time cohering into a discrete, consistent program? What are specific instructor practices as well as institutional support for those practices? How does the program foster collaboration between administration and faculty, student life and academics, and instructors and peer mentors? And, for us, how may questions, comments, and feedback allow us to continue our creation of a strong and comprehensive First Year Experience? Presenter will begin by providing the context for exploring this new course. I will give a brief summary of the institution including size, demographics. I will share the university agreeing that there was a need for change and the process of drafting the new course. We went from a 'welcome to college' course where we talked about plagiarism, academic integrity, time management, to a thematic course where the students are experiencing all of these things. Presenter will discuss the shared goals (community, communication, critical thinking) of all courses and briefly describe some of the diverse themes offered for the course. We have developed a unique partnership between student life and academic affairs which has evolved into an ongoing assessment of the needs of our students. We have a strong instructor community which is enhanced by ongoing discussion groups and workshops throughout the year. Our peer mentor program is an additional unifying component of the course. Each of the university seminar sections have term projects which are required and we hosted a year-end showcase of student work which was a wonderful finale to the new program. Some of the areas I will touch on are the evolving components including piloting our living/learning community, integrating service learning into the first-year experience, and extending the goals of the course into first-year experience general education courses in the spring semester.

The Implications of Students in a Second-Choice Major on First-Year Engagement and Satisfaction

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The survey was administered at the beginning of the semester to the fall 2009 entering class. Our major study, "was this major your first choice", yielded some interesting results. Twenty-one percent of our first-year class indicated their current major was not their first choice. The results are even more staggering for certain programs, up to 93% of one program comprised students who were not in their first choice (14/15). The Pharmaceutical Science Program, where students often enter with the hopes of transferring to the PharmD program has a second choice major rate of 88% (45/51). Students were also asked if they wanted to change their major as soon as possible, 87% of Pharmaceutical Science majors indicated they want to change their major. Although transfer is possible in year 2 into the PharmD program, space is limited and students must have taken the correct sequence of courses and earned a gpa of 2.7. Our study focuses on those students who entered College with the hopes of switching to another program and if they feel the same way after one semester. Descriptive statistics will be presented for each program on the number who want to change at the beginning of the semester and again at the end.

A second focus of the study is to examine how those in a second choice major and their covert dissatisfaction in their current major can influence their engagement in the first semester. Students were asked if they plan to study more than in high school, join a club or organization, participate in a community service activity and if they plan to seek assistance from the academic resource center. Students will be asked these same questions at the end of the semester to see whether or not students did what they "planned" to do. An overall engagement measure will be developed and independent samples t-tests will be calculated for those in their first choice major and those who are not. It is hypothesized that students in a second choice major will be less engaged than those in their first choice major.

Academic Advising Perceptions of Students Enrolled in a FYE Course where their Advisor Serves as the Course Instructor

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In 2008-2009, a small Midwestern public university launched their freshman seminar with a new name and new delivery model. Student enrollment in the seminar had traditionally been in the teens and was now over 90%. This enrollment trend has continued into the second year of the seminar. Data has been collected for the 2008-2009 school year regarding the numbers of first year students enrolled and leaving the first year seminar course, as well as fall to spring retention for those enrolled in the seminar versus those not enrolled or withdrew from the course. Student data was also collected after the fall 2008 semester looking at a variety of factors including most and least helpful aspects of the course and student recommendations regarding making the course mandatory. In 2009, similar data is being gathered and in addition, IRB approval has just been granted to conduct a survey of the student's perception of advising quality, as related to enrollment or lack of enrollment in the first year experience

seminar. Our model for seminar delivery utilizes the student's advisor as their instructor for the course. Data regarding advising quality perceptions will be gathered 10-22-09 through mid November and analyzed and written up in a manuscript for journal submission by December 20, as a requirement for a doctoral course this potential presenter is taking. A survey has been constructed for measuring perceptions of quality academic advising.

Integrating Learner-Centered Instruction into First-Year Experience Courses: A Practical Approach

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The goal of our presentation is to elicit reflection and discussion around solutions to the challenge of moving first-year learning experiences closer to a learner-centered model. Barr and Tagg (1995) acknowledge that changing from an instructional paradigm to a learning paradigm is difficult. Our approach, more incremental than paradigm-shifting, is to combine syllabus review with faculty development to maximize learning outcomes. Cullen and Harris (2009) propose a specific tool, the Syllabus Assessment Matrix (SAM), which is effective in creating an entry point for faculty to explore specific measures they can take to move toward learner-centered instruction.

The SAM measures three dimensions of learner-centeredness as expressed in course syllabi. Those are community, power and control, and evaluation/assessment. As Cullen and Harris themselves recommend, our approach has been to ask faculty to share their syllabi, then to aggregate the findings of where those syllabi fall on the three dimensions of learner-centeredness defined on the SAM, and finally to share those findings in a workshop format with faculty. Our workshops are designed to generate conversation, help faculty to see the benefits of using learner-centered instructional practices, and provide them with ideas about specific incremental changes they can make.

Our presentation will showcase our experiences using the SAM to advance the integration of learner-centeredness with first-year instruction, following this rough outline: We will introduce the broad principles of learner-centered instruction, the gains that this approach brings to student learning outcomes, and how those principles align with best practices in First-Year Experience instruction. As an example, we will describe the practical challenges of aligning these principles and practices at Metropolitan State College of Denver. We will introduce the

Syllabus Assessment Matrix and our experience with its application in providing an entry point to faculty development and in bridging learner-centered instruction with FYE best practices. Lastly, we will ask audience members to contribute feedback about how effective they believe the SAM might be for advancing student learning outcomes in FYE programs on their campuses.

First Year Success in the City: Unique Challenges and Best Practices for Effective Student Engagement on Urban Commuter Campuses

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First year students who make the daily commute to urban campuses face academic and nonacademic issues not typically experienced by their non-commuter counterparts on traditional residential campuses. Intentional first year programs and interventions are extremely critical in addressing the challenge of student engagement and academic success for this student profile. Such programs and initiatives have a direct and often profound effect on college and university student retention and graduation patterns. The first year experience is the critical foundation in establishing a sense of belonging, direction, and confidence as students' pursue academic and professional goals. Employing innovative programs and cooperative learning is necessary in meeting the needs of this student group.

For example, Metropolitan State College of Denver is one such institution meeting the challenge of first year student engagement on a non-residential campus in the heart of downtown Denver, Colorado. The Auraria campus is particularly unique in that it plays host to the Community College of Denver, the University of Colorado at Denver, and Metropolitan State College of Denver. Combined, the three institutions enroll over 40,000 students with Metro State as the largest institution with approximately 22,000 of that total number. In addition, Metro State has an open enrollment status and attracts an extremely diverse student population with approximately 25% being students of color. Due to the open enrollment,

students arrive with wide ranges of academic preparation. The First Year Success Program at Metro State is an institution wide initiative that is aiming to serve all first time to college students via first year learning communities and by providing a comprehensive first year experience.

By strategically creating a collaborative network of faculty and staff, first year programs are able to establish and build an environment that creates a seamless learning experience for students from the time they arrive on campus and as they navigate their first year. The experience continues, evolves, and changes as the student becomes integrated into the academic learning community and student experience. As first year programs continue to grow and develop program research and evaluation are essential.

This discussion will revolve around the unique challenges experienced by similar urban institutions and programs. An articulation of best practices and exchange of ideas and successful strategies for first year student engagement and success on urban commuter campuses will be the focus of this presentation.

Putting Students First: A Demographic Imperative

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Summary: None

Semester in a Bottle: Experiential Abroad and Away First-Year Seminars

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In 2003, Michigan State University adopted a freshman seminar program focused on introducing students to inquiry, with significant attention given to first year transition. The timing of the program in the summer between high school graduation and full-time enrollment, coupled with a cohort structure provided by the study away/abroad model, serves as a microcosm of the first year transition experience. Students must not only engage in the

academic expectations of the seminar, but also quickly adapt to a new living environment, build new relationships with peers, learn to interact with faculty members, and manage time effectively. Experiential freshman seminars away and abroad capitalize on the new student's expectations and motivations for learning. These seminar models create immersion experiences that proactively attend to students' transition to increased intellectual challenges and decreased structure.

This session focuses on the creation and expansion of experiential freshman seminar program models, starting with the first seminar abroad program in Quebec, Canada in 2003, through the launch of the first away seminar in Hickory Corners, MI in 2006, and concluding with a current portfolio of eight different abroad locations and three different away locations. Presenters will provide contexts for the development of experiential freshman seminars away/abroad, share practical strategies with regard to designing an effective program by attending to active learning instructional/curriculum design, the process of faculty/staff selection and development, integration of student affairs functions into the programs, student marketing and enrollment management. Assessment evidence will be presented that supports increased self-efficacy and engagement among first year students who have participated in the freshman seminar abroad/away programs drawn from demographic data, surveys, evaluations, as well as student and faculty focus groups.

Feeding Hungry Caterpillars: Transformative Learning for At-Risk First-Year Students

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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, build critical thinking skills, and refine study strategies. 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. A continuous performance matrix along with 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. The presenters will discuss progressive implementation of changes in the course curriculum based on analysis of three year's assessments and students' needs.

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.

Retention! Retention! Retention! Where are we?

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Summary: None

The Magic Is in the Method: THINGS THAT WORK in Multiple Models of First-Year Seminars and Beyond

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After 23 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, 1-credit-hour First-Year Seminars on topics of the faculty’s choice, 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: models/courses/programs that have worked well on our campus; selecting and training faculty; optimal and feasible class size and lecture/discussion mix; tactical tips for the classroom; aids to student time management and monitoring same; “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; successful referral of students to campus resources; sex education tips; innovative approaches to teaching cultural literacy and cultural diversity; and an inexpensive system of faculty-parent contact that generates enormous institutional goodwill. Assessment results of our various programs and courses will be briefly summarized. As a special bonus, we will share our handout of “250 Not-So-Random Acts of Kindness Toward College Students.” There will be many ideas from this session that participants may try out on their own campuses, and with a lengthy, detailed handout, participants will not go home empty-handed!

Many of the FYE principles and teaching techniques we present can be extended into upper-level courses, too. Quite often, what is good for first-year students is good for upperclass students, as well. Moreover, these methods contribute to significant faculty development.

Serving Those Who Have Served: Veterans in the First-Year Seminar

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This session focuses on the creation, implementation, and successful outcomes of a first-year seminar designed for veterans at Montana State University. Realizing that our number of incoming veterans was on the rise and partly based on comments of the vets themselves, MSU Veteran Services identified a need to engage this population in a meaningful experience that would connect them with other vets as well as university faculty and staff who have common experiences and an interest in the success of this unique cohort. Through collaboration with Veteran Services and the Dean of Students Office, The University Studies Department created a specialized section of the first-year seminar for veterans. The department continues to collaborate with student affairs to offer this course (currently in its fourth year).

Presenters will identify obstacles that veterans face in their integration into the university and highlight some of the differences between veterans and traditional first-year students in a discussion-based seminar. Additionally, the presenters will discuss how the class structure of the veteran's seminar engaged these students in a meaningful academic experience that focuses on critical thinking. Presenters will also share results from course evaluations and data provided from the university's Office of Planning and Analysis demonstrating that veterans who enrolled in the special section have higher persistence rates than other veterans at Montana State University. Additionally, presenters will discuss challenges faced in offering the course as well as some of the unexpected benefits that emerged from their experience. Course reading lists and sample assignments will also be shared.

Supporting Veteran Success in Education

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Summary: None

Creating Access through Inclusion: Addressing the Needs of our Increasingly Diverse Campuses

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This session will discuss the importance of infusing diversity into transition and persistence initiatives for first-year students. The session will review why it is critical to student learning and retention that transition programs acknowledge all forms of student diversity to truly support persistence. The session will also review how New Student Experience at Montclair State University has made diversity a priority as it designs and implements programs and collaborates with campus partners to foster an inclusive campus. The goal of these efforts has been to promote a validating and supportive learning environment at which all students regardless of their race, ethnicity, sexual identity, gender, or disability have an equal opportunity for success.

MSU is becoming increasingly diverse. In fall 2009, the Office of Institutional Research 48% of Montclair State's undergraduate students self-identified as being students of color and that 16% of the undergraduates indicated that English was not their first language. A LGBTQ Center opened this fall to serve this growing population on campus and the Disability Resource Center has reported an increase in the number of documented students seeking services. These demographics create a rich campus environment with which NSE has worked closely to promote the transition of all first-year students to the University community.

Diversity has become a buzz word on many college campuses, often referring more to the number of students of different racial groups enrolled at an institution than a characteristic possessed by an institution. Viewed from more of a multicultural approach, Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, and Allen (1999) assert that diversity is expressed at higher education institutions structurally (representation of different ethnic/racial groups, gender, disability), behaviorally (interaction between groups), attitudinally (perceptions and campus climate), and historically (legacy of inclusion or exclusion). This framework serves as a useful tool for conceptualizing how a transition program can have a powerful impact on affecting campus climate and creating affirming learning environments for first-year and transfer students.

New Student Experience has made diversity a priority in the programs and initiatives it designs and implements on its campus. Very strategically, the department has infused diversity into Orientation, Red Hawk Days events, the New Student Seminar curriculum, the First Year Success Series, the Peer Leadership Program, and its Learning Communities. Moving beyond the department's initiatives, New Student Experience has collaborated with campus partners to develop and implement programs addressing diversity and access issues and has intentionally integrated them into the first-year experience.

A Little Mentoring Can Go a Long Way

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Montgomery County Community College is a two-year college with two campuses, located in 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 first-year students, especially those who are first-generation and academically and financially disadvantaged. 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 these 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 discuss in detail how they used their participation in these three national initiatives to develop a culture of mentoring on campus, not only for students but for staff as well. Recognizing the value of mentoring on student success, the College has also recognized the impact that mentoring can have on the successful transition of new faculty and leadership development. The presentation will provide a brief overview of each mentoring initiative and discuss how, both individually and collectively, they work in concert to form the foundation for a College-wide Student Success Initiative for at-risk first-year students, and are enabling the College to create a culture focused on student and faculty engagement. The specific mentoring programs to be discussed during the presentation will be: Peer Mentoring, Minority Male Mentoring, New Faculty Mentoring, New Advisor/Counselor Mentoring and the Leadership Academy. Participants will be able to see the step by step framework used by Montgomery County Community College in undergoing its effort to form a comprehensive mentoring system at the College. Additionally, participants will learn more about the; a. Framework for developing the vision, goals and objectives of the Mentoring Programs, b. The critical role of utilizing a strategic planning framework in orchestrating cultural change within a community college, and c. Become more knowledgeable about the critical role of data driven decision-making to assess a Mentoring program's efficacy.

Using Assessment to Improve Programs, Accentuate Strengths, Dispel Myths, and Engage Critics

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The First-Year Seminar at Mount Ida College is arguably the most widely talked about course on campus. Students, faculty, administrators, and staff all have divergent opinions on what the seminar is or what it should be, opinions which vary not only across constituency groups but within them as well. In an effort to examine the accuracy of such divergent, often conflicting beliefs, a systematic assessment of the seminar was conducted following the fall 2008 semester.

In the fall of 2008, 433 students enrolled in 23 sections of the seminar which were taught by 15 different faculty members. Near the end of the fall term, new students evaluated the seminar and their seminar instructors. The college's faculty evaluations asked students to respond to items which were primarily related to teaching performance, while the in-house seminar evaluation asked students to respond to questions related to their own study behaviors, their satisfaction with the seminar, seminar rigor, and the achievement of learning outcomes. Grades in the seminar and other college courses were available for all 433 new students, as were 316 new students' responses to the 19-item faculty evaluation and 44-item seminar evaluation.

The findings from the assessment have been instrumental in separating factual from fictitious claims pertaining to the First-Year Seminar. In the words of one Mount Ida College administrator, "these findings have certainly dispelled some myths." Based on the assessment findings, the College now has greater insight into:

- the extent to which seminar learning objectives were met in the fall of 2008.
- how interesting, valuable, enjoyable, and rigorous students found the seminar.
- the amount of time students spent weekly studying for the seminar and their other courses.
- the relationship between students' study time and their anticipated and actual grades in the seminar.
- differences in instructor grading practices, instructor evaluation ratings, and seminar evaluation ratings across all 23 seminar sections.

The implications of these findings for practice resulted in the following changes to the seminar for the fall 2009 semester:

- raising faculty expectations in terms of the quality of student work and the amount of time students commit to the seminar,
- expecting faculty to provide more frequent and timely performance feedback to their first-semester students,
- creating Individualized Teaching Plans for returning seminar instructors based on their relevant seminar strengths and weaknesses, and
- choosing alternative instructional materials to enhance the acquisition of learning objectives.

Peer Learning Assistants are Powerful Agents of Change

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Each year, college teachers try to balance their research interests with departmental, organizational, and committee work along with community service initiatives, student research supervision, and faculty development pressure to stay current with best practices. The Academe has changed. These administrative demands have squeezed the time from their schedules and consequently, it has become increasingly more difficult for them to meet individually with students.

At the same time, students with disabilities are attending colleges at greater rates, expecting individual support and guidance during their first year. Additionally, many students who arrive on campus are under-prepared for the demand of independent learning.

A Peer Learning Assistant program is a win-win option. Based upon sound research in Supplemental Instruction, student development theory, cognitive science, and educational psychology a program, we use these talented young people to mentor and assist their peers as they learn to develop better navigational strategies and a more positive mindset. Peers are powerful agents of change and engagement for a faculty member's class.

Peer Learning Assistants are undergraduate tutors certified by the College Reading and Learning Association and then nominated by faculty members to become partners in gateway-to-major classes. These classes may include Chemistry I, Biology I, Physics I, Calculus I, Introductory Social Science courses, etc. Simultaneously, these Learning Assistants enroll in a full credit Psychology course titled Adult Personal and Cognitive Development: Implications for Instruction.

During that same semester, they begin a collaborative partnership with a faculty member. Both faculty and Peer learning Assistant are learners in this process. Both learn about current research and its implication for his (her) class and the student learns the complexities of teaching and grading. Each is working towards an increase in student-engagement with the material, better classroom performance, learning confidence, and self-reliance.

The purpose of this session will be to disseminate the assessment results, to share materials and ideas, and to discuss course content for training Peer Learning Assistants.

Welcoming Students in From the Cold

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Recent high school graduates, military veterans, career changers, adults of all ages--community college freshmen would seem to defy categorization. However, if there is a single characteristic that most new community college students share, it is uncertainty about the educational experience that lies ahead. Unlike students at competitive four-year colleges and universities, community college freshmen seldom arrive on campus brimming with confidence, ease, sophistication, and swagger. Indeed, many enter college unsure of whether higher education will be a good "fit," uncertain about whether they will like college (or be successful here), and in some instances doubtful that college will be different--better--than high school.

Through its freshman seminar, freshman orientation program, new student learning communities project, and various academic and student service initiatives, Nassau Community College attempts to make the first year experience a welcoming one. Despite its size--approximately 20,000 students (including 6000+ freshmen who arrive each September)--the college endeavors to let students know, early on, that they matter. During the new student orientation program, for example, faculty visit classrooms to welcome freshmen and offer advice about the differences between high school and college and the expectations of higher education. Many faculty share telephone numbers and email addresses during orientation and encourage students to contact them if they have questions or concerns or simply want to talk. The same spirit characterizes the college's freshman seminar, which, while not required of all freshmen, nevertheless enrolls more than 2000 students each year. Many seminar faculty see the experience as an opportunity to connect with students and to guide them through the sometimes challenging maze of the first year. Even after the seminar has ended, many faculty keep in touch with students for the duration of their Nassau career.

Underlying these and similar initiatives is a recognition of the importance of early outreach to new community college students--some of whom, studies suggest, will decide by late September that college is (or is not) for them. Often, the factor that tips the scale one way or the other is a contact, an adult who has taken an interest in a student and whose concern provides a steadying influence. For faculty, counselors, advisers, and other student affairs professionals, making such contacts can be a challenging task. But there can be little doubt that attending to freshmen early in their college careers not only makes students feel valued but increases the likelihood that they will give college a longer look.

Early contacts with students have clear academic benefits as well. Faculty and student affairs professionals who have connected with students are in an infinitely better position to point out the need for freshmen to change behaviors, especially those that may undermine their success in the classroom. And because students have come to trust them, they are far more likely to hear this advice and act on it. For community college students, especially those still uncertain about their decision to enroll in college, a welcoming environment and a caring adult can make the difference between a successful college experience and an abbreviated one.

How Deaf Students' Personal Factors Influence Their First-Year Experience and Beyond: Data on Three Cohorts 2007, 2008, 2009

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Today in the United States, colleges use academic readiness to determine college readiness. We have reason to believe, however, that other factors may predict college success for Deaf and hard-of-hearing (D/HH) students. Across the US, “Around 35 percent of deaf students graduate from two-year programs compared to about 40 percent of their hearing peers; and around 30 percent of deaf students graduate from four-year programs, compared to about 70% of their hearing peers (Marschark et al., 2002). Research in reading scores (e.g., Cuculick & Kelly, 2003) also indicates that deaf students’ academic skills alone do not assure graduation. While the NTID/RIT graduation rates for D/HH students is comparatively positive compared to D/HH graduation at other post-secondary institutions — for two-year programs it is 49% compared to 31% nationally; and for four-year programs, it is 70% compared to 40% nationally (NTID Annual Report, 2006) — improvement is still critically important given the cost of extensive support services required. At NTID/RIT it takes D/HH students 5 years on average for an associate degree and 5-6 years on average for a baccalaureate degree

Initiated in 2007, this study examines personal factors of D/HH students relative to college performance. Two nonverbal visual reasoning assessments and two personal inventories were administered. These assessed personal factors such as intellectual interests, academic motivation, dropout proneness, coping, anxiety, attitudes, confidence, study habits, time management, and sociability. Three cohorts of entering D/HH students at NTID/RIT have participated (n = 132 in 2007; n = 167 in 2008, n = 248 in 2009) for a total of 547. Students’ personal factors are then statistically analyzed with their quarterly and cumulative academic GPA and program status through to attrition or graduation. Also, at the end of their first- year

experience, a follow-up survey assesses the students' self-perception of their academic performance and their support strategies used.

Results are consistent across all three cohorts. The personal factors that influenced academic GPA and performance were: drop-out prone, predicted academic difficulty, predicted educational stress, desire to finish college, study habits, attitude toward educators, attitude and interest, motivation, diligence, self-discipline, willingness to work, time management, use of support techniques, and anxiety. In terms of nonverbal visual analytical reasoning the findings show that 95% of the D/HH students are average to below average compared to normative data. The students performing at or below the 50th percentile on GPA consistently overestimated their academic performance for their first-year in college.

Engagement Calibration: Gaps between College Expectations and Experiences of First-Year Students

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Engagement calibration is defined as the degree of consistency between incoming students' judgments of their engagement in effective educational experiences in the college and their actual involvement in such experiences by the end of their first college year (cf., Bembenutty, 2009). Inaccurate calibration negatively affects students' self-efficacy (Chen, 2003) and self-regulation learning abilities (Winne & Jamieson-Noel, 2002) and is a common characteristic of first-generation students who lack knowledge about college experience (Gupton et al., 2009). Educators have long reported anecdotal evidence that expectations and hopes of incoming students often do not translate in actual behaviors. Such engagement mis-calibration has been identified as an important reason for student attrition and institutions have been called to take intentional, data-informed steps in aligning student and institutional views on the college experiences (Kuh, 2005; Miller, Bender, Schuh, et al., 2005; Schilling & Schilling, 2005).

The suite of student engagement surveys – National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), and Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) – presents the institutions with a structured approach to collect data to study the phenomenon of engagement calibration on a number of specific dimensions of college experience from perspectives of incoming students, freshmen completing their first semester, and faculty teaching first-year students. Our institution participated in nine NSSE, five BCSSE,

and two FSSE administrations. The data accumulated over the years clearly demonstrate a number of areas with significant gaps between student expectations and their actual experiences. Further, and more troubling, the direction of the gap is typically negative, i.e. actual levels of student involvement are significantly less than what students expect when entering the university. Many of our colleagues who administered BCSSE and NSSE in other institutions report similarly disturbing findings.

The purpose of this session is to engage participants in a substantive, data-informed discussion on whether the observed gaps between expectations of incoming students and their actual experiences are a factor of unrealistic personal plans or a result of institutional inability to meet student expectations. In other words, engagement calibration will be discussed as the degree to which incoming freshmen's perception of college experience are free of errors as well as the degree to which the institution has created a campus environment designed to effectively meet the expectations of incoming students.

Further, session participants will examine a sample cross-walk matrix between BCSSE, FSSE, and NSSE data and explore faculty perceptions as an important mediating factor in student engagement calibration processes at both individual and institutional levels. Finally, based on the guided analysis of the matrix, participants will identify major sources of inaccuracies in engagement calibration and will share effective approaches to minimize the gaps between students' expectations and their actual experiences.

Deciding What's Included (and What's Not) in Orientation and Transition Programming

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The facilitator will introduce himself and explain the reasons behind the development of this roundtable discussion, including the challenges he faces as the director of New Student Orientation at NC State University. He will explain that over the past 5-6 years he has been involved in exploring ways to ensure that his programs provide a good balance between what students want and what his university thinks they need. To help begin and focus the discussion, he will provide a couple of detailed examples, including his experience with inviting groups/offices to an Information Fair during Orientation, as well as describing the process of restructuring the orientation program at his institution.

To begin the discussion, the facilitator will ask the participants to introduce themselves with their name, institution from where they come, and the role they play on their campus. He will then pose the following questions to the group: "How do you decide what messages are in your orientation and transition programming for students? Does your institution have established guidelines? Do you have criteria by which you make your decisions? What role does politics, sponsorships, mandates, historical remnants, and 'topics of the day' play in what is included?"

The facilitator will continue to provide summaries of what presenters are saying and providing additional follow-up questions to the group to encourage involvement throughout the discussion. Special attention will be paid to keeping the conversation on topic and to allowing participants to feel free to pose questions to the group as they arise.

The Many Faces of Learning Communities

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Summary: None

Using Web 2.0 Technologies to Foster Community and Encourage Collaboration

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Many campuses across the country are encouraging faculty members to abandon the idea that valued knowledge is created individually and use collaboration in their classroom. In addition, many campuses across the country are encouraging faculty members to continue to explore and use emerging technologies in their classroom. In her presentation, Melissa Vosen argues that faculty members can use technology to aid students who are assigned collaborative projects. Vosen will outline Robert T. Johnson and David W. Johnson's five principles of cooperative learning as well as draw on the work of Michele Eodice and Kami Day. Both teams argue that in order for collaborative experiences to be positive experiences, collaborators need to feel accountable to one another and feel part of a community and vested into the relationship. Melissa Vosen will share how she uses Web 2.0 technologies to build classroom communities, communities which are crucial for a successful collaborative writing experience. By building classroom communities, students are able to develop personal and professional relationships, leading to an increased desire to work collaboratively. In addition, many of these Web 2.0 technologies can be used in distance education courses to help foster a sense of community for students who could potentially be hundreds of miles apart. Vosen will share several assignments that can be used in any classroom to help students to get to know one another, setting the foundation for successful collaborative projects. Vosen will examine glogs, blogs, and Facebook.

Developing Partnerships and Library Lifelines for First-Year Students

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Academic libraries, with their ability to support both curriculum and some social aspects in the lives of first-year students, are perfectly poised to make unique contributions to first year experience initiatives. Four librarians, Jonathan Kirsch from North Park University, Breanne Geery, from the University of South Carolina Upstate, Joseph Sanchez from Red Rocks Community College and Courtney Bruch from Front Range Community College, examine collaborations and strategies involved in transitioning first-year students at their home institutions. Different perspectives on the librarian's role in the transition of first-year students are offered, highlighting the library's unique strengths for enabling educators to fulfill their role. Presenters emphasize the library's potential for contributing to information literacy instruction as one of those services.

Speakers discuss their institution's fiscal and strategic goals or constraints that affect their library's role in the first-year experience. Speakers discuss challenges in evaluating the skills and needs of incoming first-year students.

Best practices and recommendations are presented from strong first year learning programs, course instruction, projects, and research in which panelists have been involved. Speakers examine the transformative impact of successful collaborations in the current literature. Speakers summarize effective strategies for educators to consider when collaborating with their academic libraries to deliver first year programming or to facilitate learning in first year students.

The panel arranges a small group activity so that audience members can interactively pinpoint clearly defined applications for presented practices and ideas. Session attendees are asked to analyze their place-based situations in order to recognize ways in which they can build library partnerships in order to begin planning collaborations at their home institutions.

Developing a Set of Shared Learning Outcomes for the First-Year Experience

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This session will allow participants to understand the rationale, development and implementation of a shared set of Learning Outcomes (LO's) for the first year of college. Commonly, most individuals involved in the first year experience are responsible for the coordination of one or more programs. Each of these might typically have a set of goals or learning outcomes and an assessment plan. However, these program plans don't always crosswalk to each other or to their unit's or institution's strategic plans. This session will focus on how to move from the individual program to a shared collective.

First, the importance of having a common, shared set of articulated LO's for the campus will be discussed with focus on the rationale for how a set of LO's can create both collaboration and fiscal efficiency across the campus. A brief overview of terminology will be included in this segment to help participants move from visions, missions, goals, strategic plans, and objectives to Student Learning Outcomes. This lays the foundation to discuss institutional processes. Two major questions will be explored, 1) How are LO's developed? and 2) What model of development is the right fit for my campus? Both inductive and deductive process for LO development will be presented and examples from both theory and practice will be demonstrated.

By design, LO's allow for accountability. Therefore, this session will also focus on how LO's can be tied to both unit and institutional strategic planning and assessment. Examples of LO's will be used to demonstrate how synergy can be created between the strategic plan of the individual program, the unit, and the campus. Similarly, the presenters will demonstrate how, once articulated, LO's can facilitate assessment plans which seamlessly provide evaluative information for the program, unit and campus community.

Finally, the session will conclude with an overview of how to implement a set of LO's on their campus (aka I have to go home and do what?) This will include a discussion of the critical features of a campus roll-out and implementation, how to identify stakeholders, the inclusion of vetting processes and the identification of key institutional resources.

Learning Outcomes

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Summary: None

New Student Convocations: Creating Connections, Conveying Values, and Celebrating Community

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"A college or university is a celebrative community, one in which the heritage of the institution is remembered and where rituals affirming both tradition and change are widely shared." These words of Ernest Boyer (1990) epitomize the concept of Convocation, a formal assembly of college faculty, administrators, and upperclass students gather to welcome, honor, celebrate, and induct the newest members of the academic community. Convocation is one of the first experiences for all beginning students, and it has the potential to make a strong first impression on them. It is the first time the entire class meets together, and it provides a "bookend" to the Commencement ceremonies that students in which students will participate in future years. An institutional benefit of Convocation is that it brings together various divisions of the college/university to plan and implement a celebrative event which conveys the traditions, values, expectations, and beliefs of the campus community. Convocation can be linked to several key student success and retention principles. It is a meaningful rite of passage (Boyer, Tinto, Manning). It validates first-year students and makes them feel significant to the institution (Rendon, Schlossberg). It is a community-building ritual which helps students form connections and engage with the institution (Kuh and Associates). It encourages new students to become involved on campus (Astin). It is also a proactive process that "front-loads" resources to reach students early in their college experience. This presentation will establish the significance of Convocation for first-year students. It also will promote the benefits of these ceremonies for faculty, staff, families, and community members. Models of ceremonies from a variety of institutions will be presented and best practices will be shared. If it is possible

to access the Internet, video clips from 1-2 institutional Convocation ceremonies will be presented. Ample time will be offered for discussion, questions, and sharing of Convocation examples from institutions represented in the audience.

A Phenomenological Study of the Lived Experience of First-Year College Students

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This poster presentation will provide data of the pilot study of assessing the lived experience of first year students attending the university. The study will be completed at Northern Michigan University (NMU).

Subjects: Subjects for this study will be students participating in the FYE and successfully completing UN 100 and continue to be enrolled at NMU.

Research Design: As noted earlier phenomenology will be the research design. The specific method to collect the data will focus groups. Student enrolled in UN 100 College Success course as part of the FYE experience will be invited to participate in a focus group regarding the feelings experienced when entering college. These students will have also graduated from high school within eighteen months prior to enrolling in college.

Data collection and analysis: The focus group interview will be audio taped in a room which is designed for this type of research. Additionally, a second small recorder will be in the room as a backup system for making sure the interviews are taped. A systematic analysis of the data will be obtained.

Discussion of results: The results will be preliminary from a pilot study approved by the university.

The poster presentation will include a historical overview of the First Year Experience at Northern Michigan University. This will include a summary of the data generated from extensive quantitative research done with students attending NMU.

Battling the Behemoth: Strategies and Tools for Enhancing Student Success at Large Multi-Campus Institutions

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An analysis of student success data using the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) indicated that some groups within our student population struggle with their college experience more than others. Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) developed and implemented a First Year Experience (FYE) program that focused on recent high school graduates and continues to implement the program. The goal is to standardize New Student Orientation (NSO) and implement an First Year Experience program over six campuses and ease the high school-to-College transition.

The NOVA portfolio of FYE programs includes New Student Orientation sessions, First-Year Convocations, Student Success courses, learning communities, supplemental instruction opportunities, student success workshops and programs, and civic engagement/service learning offerings.

This workshop will present qualitative and quantitative data to support the need to create comprehensive NSOs with common elements. Additionally the workshop will present the essential framework for implementing a standardized FYE Program at a multi-campus institution which include First-Year Convocations, Student Success courses, learning communities and peer mentors. The overall goal is to provide the essential framework for students to move successfully through the socialization process of higher education.

Student Engagement and Critical Thinking: Strategies for All First-Year Students

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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 texts, readings, lectures, and classroom discussions. The experience provides students with an opportunity to learn strategies in a "user friendly" environment and then apply the strategies across the curriculum.

Creating Bridges at the Community College in a New Economy

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Oakland Community College, a large five campus system, has had an 18% increase in enrollment this fall for a total of 28,000 full and part-time students. Students have enrolled for 200,000 credit hours. This increase has occurred in part because of new economic challenges in Michigan that have pushed enrollees to our community college to train for new careers, retool skills, or save money that would otherwise be spent at higher-priced four-year institutions.

At OCC there is an institution-wide commitment to student learning; in fact, the Mission Statement reads "Learning is our only priority." While this statement boldly speaks to institutional change and initiatives, we are now addressing new questions about the learning

support programs and services that must now be made available for a more diverse, broader range of learners -- many of whom are first-year students.

Over the past ten years, both quantitative and qualitative assessments of our core programs including SI and CRLA-trained tutors have provided invaluable insight into the effectiveness of our services for first-year students. Emerging programs such as new student orientation, student ambassadors, along with increased section offerings of paired courses continue to be developed and integrated into our college culture.

However, new questions regarding learning support for a broader range of first-year students have arisen. These questions still need to be addressed:

- What more can be done institutionally to create an environment of student/instructional readiness?
- How can we know that cognitive and behavioral changes have occurred?
- How can program effectiveness be gauged? Are current measures sufficient? Will more need to be developed?
- How can programs and services be modified to serve a wider range of first-year learners from developmental to advanced?
- What can be done to maximize outcomes of existing programs?

- What are the missing links?
- Which best practices should be put into place to create positive outcomes in future challenges?

In this poster session, over ten years of assessment results will be shared highlighting programs and services unique to the environment of a community college. A model will be presented that showcases Oakland Community College's intent to create a bridge for a very diverse population of first-year students from assessment to college success.

"Community" on NBC and the Reality of Community Colleges

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Because it is organized around a panel discussion, the content of this session is not fully known. To create a context for the panel, however, the session will introduce "Community" through a very brief summary of the history and development of community colleges, an overview of "Community" episodes aired to date and a video excerpt from the show. The moderator will then ask panelists to respond to the following questions, as well as appropriate follow-up questions:

1. What was the response to the first episode of "Community

on your campus? in your community?

2. In what ways is your campus similar to or different from Greendale Community College (in the show)?
3. How does this sitcom influence the public perception of community colleges?
4. The college's motto is "You're Already Accepted." What does this mean?
5. What key issues facing community colleges are reflected in "Community?" What issues might have been reflected that weren't?

Following panelists responses to these questions, participants will be invited to add their comments, challenge those of the panelists, or make additional observations about the current state of community colleges. The moderator will close the session with a summary of key issues facing community colleges.

Clicking Our Way to Learn From Our First-Year Students

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Prior to our student success session, the first session with our new students was a Math Placement exam -- their first collective experience as students on our campus. The student success session, or "clicker session", allowed for 45 minutes to share expectations in a student-only format. Students entered the room with popular music playing and were given a "clicker" to register their responses to our questions. Twenty questions were asked the first year and

twenty-five the second, which made for a very quick-paced session. Between each question asked, information was shared regarding resources on campus to best address the topic covered. Questions covered topics such as where students were from, hours spent studying, whether they had their own room (or bathroom), employment, most popular methods of communication, getting to know faculty, and openness to diversity. Engagement in the session was quite high and students reported high satisfaction on evaluations with the session. Units on campus have been able to plan their activities based on information shared. Learning community classes addressed areas of concern. Faculty and staff are more prepared in addressing student needs. Students were introduced to university expectations and these were reinforced throughout their orientation visits and our welcome activities.

The EQ Factor in Student Success: Theory to Practice

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A growing body of evidence suggests emotional competence plays a key role in students adjusting to the first-year of college. This time of transition presents many personal challenges such as learning to live independently of parents, learning to manage priorities associated with time and studies, developing new relationships and establishing personal goals, values and self-concept. This session will address how social and emotional competencies contribute to achievement and persistence during the first-year and how FY programs can respond.

Reuven Bar-On (1997) defined emotional intelligence (EI) as “an array of non-cognitive (emotional and social) capabilities, competencies and skills that influence one’s ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures.” Several studies in the academic literature have suggested a connection between emotional intelligence and academic achievement in first-year students. Parker et al (2005) found adaptability and stress management skills, as well as interpersonal abilities, were strongly associated with academic success in over 1400 first year students.

This session will not only discuss why emotional intelligence in students is important, but also how campuses and first-year programs can respond. Participants will learn about the most recognized models of emotional intelligence, their operational definitions and the tools created to assess emotional competencies in students. Sample profiles identifying emotional strengths and opportunities will be discussed. Best practices for feedback and awareness when working with students in groups will also be presented.

Get Engaged with Low-Tech, No-Tech Active Learning Strategies

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After a short demonstration of a no-tech or low-tech engagement strategy with the audience, the presentation will begin with an overview of current research on the importance of engagement as a retention tool, especially for students of color and other at-risk populations. This research will include not only the broader research studies (e.g., Kuh) on student retention and persistence, but also the more focused research studies on student engagement strategies in the college classroom. Then, the presentation will highlight and demonstrate specific instructional approaches that can easily be added to existing methods or can be adapted to meet professors' immediate needs. The presentation will conclude with pointers for making small changes and with planning tools for revising curriculum. Participants will leave with several strategies as well as a full bibliography of additional readings.

First-Year Experience (The Black Male Focus)

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In summer 2009, African American male students were recruited for the First Year Experience class through the campus' orientation program for all first-time entering degree seeking students. Staff from the Predominately Black Institutions (PBI) grant assisted with orientation

and recruitment. The Dean of Academic Success division scheduled and hired faculty. Two of the staff from the PBI grant agreed to teach the course. One benefit of this relationship includes a modeling opportunity for the student with a black male instructor, both conscious and unconscious. Classes were scheduled in state-of-the-art SMART classrooms. The Dean of Enrollment Services ensured that activities under the PBI grant were available to students enrolled in the classes. Instructors and staff within the PBI grant involved students in the activities under the grant to promote engagement on campus. Those activities included: monthly success coaching; case management services; education & career goal development; access to networking and mentoring activities; exposure to cultural events and lecture series; character building workshops on self-esteem, communications, leadership development and other topics. Another strategy that has assisted in improving retention of Black Males is the ability to assist with “non-academic/personal issues” such as: housing, employment, transportation, relationship problems and managing how to handle legal issues. We have been able to reach the “hard to reach” students by employing a technique called Cross Coaching. Cross Coaching involves two Success Coaches working in tandem to motivate and navigate a student to success based on each coach’s area of expertise, personality and relationship with the student. In the classroom, the same book as the one used in the traditional First Year Experience course was used for instruction. However, chapter topics were rearranged and selected in priority order related to African American male issues. Also, alternative resources were chosen as the Common Academic Experience for these particular sections. Strategies and techniques were specifically developed for the class such as: study groups, scaffolding, field trips, guest speakers, and class projects. In addition to the coursework, instructors focused on connecting the students to tutoring and other campus services. Instructors for the classes served as the academic advisor, and students were able to change their schedule, drop or withdraw without meeting with a regular advisor. However, staff from the Advising and Career Center was assigned to each class to serve as a resource. Instructors also connected and served as resources for the student’s instructors in other courses.

Co-Curricular Activities in Learning Communities: The Importance of Doing Cool Things!

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Learning communities have earned a recognized position of value in helping facilitate and ease the transition of students into their new college and university homes. Research repeatedly

bears out assertions that in general, students participating in learning communities earn higher grades, interact more readily/comfortably/frequently with peers and administrators/faculty, and report greater satisfaction with their overall college experience as compared to students who do not participate in learning communities. One of the most important factors in the impact that a course-based learning community makes is the extent to which theories and concepts introduced in class are connected to the activities and events explored outside of class. This roundtable will focus on specific examples of well-made connections, explore what makes them well-made, and how to encourage instructors to pursue such qualities in their planning. A well-made connection demonstrates careful thought and coordination in taking what is introduced in class and creating an out-of-class activity/event that reinforces the theory or concept in an ideally hands-on, practical experience. Two of many examples from learning communities at Purdue University include:

Cardboard Canoes: the Engineering Honors Learning Community studies the engineering design process, teaming, planning, testing, controlling for environmental factors, and working within constraints (budget, time, materials, etc). Then they work in teams to design and build full-size one-person canoes made of cardboard that are then tested through races in the pool. Materials are limited and the test includes performance predictions based on modeling (not guessing) as well as calculations regarding weight, water displacement, and the like.

Hotel/Restaurant Chicago Trip: students with a Hotel and Tourism Management major take an introductory overview course of the field, wherein they begin to learn about the logistics and processes of the industry. Through the trip to the Drake Hotel and Uncle Julio's restaurant in Chicago, students explore the experiential aspect of the industry through the eyes of a service provider as opposed to the perspective that they know – that of the customer. Students are exposed to tours of all the behind-the-scenes elements, interact with professionals in a variety of positions, and observe hospitality processes from beginning to end: supply arrival to served meal, pre-check-in to post-check-out.

Roundtable participants will be invited to ask questions and share their own examples. Hopefully this is a springboard to the sharing of ideas and leads to plans of action regarding how to encourage faculty members to explore and establish well-made connections.

Research Questions: Exploring the Intersection of First-Year Composition Courses and Academic Libraries

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At many institutions, first-year composition courses (“freshman English”) provide a forum for students’ first encounters with college-level research and academic libraries. The relationship between these courses and their library-related content can take a number of forms, with

numerous related issues to consider, such as relationships between librarians and composition instructors and methods of assessing students' learning.

A common pairing of first-year composition courses and academic libraries is “one-shot” instruction, in which a librarian teaches students about the library during one class period. This instruction is frequently designed to help students complete a research assignment, but in other cases it only presents students with an overview of library resources without the context of an immediate need. Among other issues with this format is whether one class period is enough to convince students of the relevance of the library's resources.

The “one-shot” model also precludes in-depth discussion of the issues regarding information use, such as plagiarism and the economics of information. To alleviate this, some first-year composition courses involve librarians to a fuller extent. They may do library instruction over the course of several class periods or even grade course material; some librarians read students' bibliographies in order to assess the quality of information found in relation to what is available.

Inherent in any discussion of the intersection of first-year composition courses and academic libraries is the rapport between the instructor and the librarian. A close association undoubtedly benefits the students, but developing such a partnership can be challenging when the instructors are often graduate assistants or adjunct faculty.

Other issues common to both first-year composition instructors and librarians are how much new students need to know about library resources, what kinds of assignments will produce the best outcomes, and how to assess students' learning. Scavenger hunts, annotated bibliographies, and research papers all have their advantages and disadvantages, and all require different levels of familiarity with library resources and commitment from the instructor.

Finally, is first-year composition the right venue for teaching students about the library? Some students test out of first-year composition, and some institutions require courses such as “University 101” to have a library component. However, in these cases the library information may be presented without the students' having an immediate need to know the material.

Participants in this roundtable will explore these questions and offer solutions and success stories so that instructors, librarians, and students can all benefit.

Emotional Intelligence and the First-Year Experience

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Summary: None

First-Year Seminar Instructors and Peer Leaders Supporting Student Success and Retention

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“The freshman seminar is enhanced when it is part of a broader conversation about how the first year of college should be structured to best promote the retention of students.” (Tinto, NACADA Journal, V19, 1999)

To paraphrase Tinto’s comment, first-year seminar (FYRST) instructors and peer leaders can be used to directly impact student success and retention. A successful transition to college is imperative to students’ long-range goals of graduation. Institutions have developed various first-year seminars, learning communities, and early start programs to ease that transition. As institutions focus on student success, it is important that university constituencies share responsibilities, provide timely feedback, and initiate interactions to support the learning process.

The specifics of how a campus chooses to support first-year students can vary dramatically depending upon that campus’ organizational structure, culture, staffing, and population of students they serve. Slippery Rock University has a long history of success in FYRST Seminars. Currently 95% of the first-year students are enrolled in 62 sections of FYRST Seminar, of which 59 include peer mentors. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) state, “that student involvement will be greatest if new students can be immediately linked with people who are already invested in the institution, whether faculty members or other students” (p.650). As a university, we have decided that FYRST Seminar instructors and peer leaders were the perfect resource as a front-line approach to intervene with at-risk students and to educate all students on successful behaviors. To help support efforts, SRU is participating in MAP-Works, a student success and retention project used by over 80 colleges/universities.

MAP-Works identifies students struggling with their transition to college and provides information to faculty/peer leaders who are directly connected to them. MAP-Works also educates the student on behaviors, via a customized student report, which is consistent with success.

FYRST faculty/peer leader use the information provided by MAP-Works in two distinct ways. First, they identify students potentially at-risk and meet with those students one-on-one to

discuss how to overcome the student's transition issues. Second, they use aggregate analysis provided for each class on common transitions issues to discuss, as a class, how these issues can impact their success and possible graduation.

This presentation will focus on SRU's efforts, training structures used, intervention techniques used by FYRST instructors/peer leaders, aggregate analysis used as seminar curriculum, and the lessons learned as they plan for future interventions. Open discussion and questions are invited throughout the session.

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

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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.

Retention Up, Engagement Up, But Are They Really Learning?: Step Three in First-Year Experience Program Assessment

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While more and more institutions develop FYE programs based on institutional goals such as retention, and while others focus their assessment heavily on determining levels of student engagement, it is important to be cognizant of the undetermined extent to which engagement leads directly to enhanced student learning, especially as it relates to specific outcomes, such as academic competencies. Although most studies acknowledge positive correlations between engagement and learning, it is noted that even positive correlations are “relatively weak,” especially as they relate to critical thinking skills and “underscore the fact that learning outcomes stem from a variety of sources, of which student engagement is only one” (Carni, Kuh, & Klein, 2006).

At Southern Connecticut State University, we are in our third year of a comprehensive FYE program, with outcomes that include intellectual competencies, and although we are pleased with the clear effect of the FYE program on retention (a rise of 7.6% in two years) and of startling spikes in student engagement, we are less confident in the correlation between those gains and our learning outcomes, especially those related to the competencies involved in the process of intellectual inquiry, including critical thinking, reading and writing.

The danger for us, and we believe, for other institutions, would be to limit our assessment process to one that measures only retention and engagement, as well as relies too heavily on student perceptions of learning as measured by student surveys. This is not to say these measurements are not valuable, especially when the analyses include multiple instruments. At SCSU, we already have in place a comprehensive assessment process, which combines results from BCSSE and NSSE surveys, institutional data, formalized internal student surveys, as well as informal feedback from faculty, staff, peer mentors and first-year students. However, our presentation will focus on the need for the next step in our assessment: the development of a collaborative, interdisciplinary direct assessment process that involves measuring first-year learning, as evidenced in both written and multi-media work produced by students in our first-year seminar, INQUIRY 101: Intellectual and Creative Inquiry.

We are developing our direct assessment process based on an rubric-based model created by the SCSU English department, intended not only to assess student work but to focus faculty development efforts. We will present both the model and our initial results. Faculty from

across the disciplines as well as staff and peer mentors will be involved in this process, which we believe will not only help us assess the intellectual work of our students, but also determine the extent to which our understanding of “intellectual work” varies depending on disciplinary and other contexts. Like all of our assessment processes, we intend for this one to have faculty development as one of its primary objectives, and so we will also present initial feedback from faculty, staff, and peer mentors in relation to their participation in this process.

Peer Involvement Advising: A Strategy for Freshman Engagement

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This session will be an interactive mix of engaging lecture with exercises and will follow the general outline below:

Statement of the Issue (5 minutes)
Generational Differences in Involvement Preferences (10 minutes)
Considerations in the Development of the Involvement Center (15 minutes)
Exercise: Reaching across silos to create a holistic experience (10 minutes)
Considerations in the Development of the Peer Advising Program (15 minutes)
Exercise: Developing the Advising Rubric (10 minutes)
Question and Answers (10 minutes)

Goals/Learning Outcomes for the Program

- The participant will understand the importance of adapting traditional approaches to encouraging student involvement to the preferences of millennial students.
- The participant will learn a new approach to developing seamless program delivery methods which demystify the organizational structures of institutions of higher education to provide easier access to involvement opportunities.
- The participant will be able to articulate the benefits of peer involvement advising for both the student-advisee and student-advisor.

- The participant will understand the role of peer involvement advising in a comprehensive retention-management and student-engagement strategy.

The College Success Program: Helping the At-Risk Student Achieve Success

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We will begin our presentation with a brief overview of this multi – campus community college followed by the vision for the development of the program.

Suffolk County Community College is a two year institution consisting of three campuses with a total enrollment of 21,000 full-time and part-time students. Since its inception, the college has been guided by a philosophy of educational access and opportunity and thus provides open enrollment to accommodate students of all academic backgrounds. As a result, we attract a large number of students who are unprepared to face the challenges and demands of college life and are at risk of failing courses or dropping out of college.

In 2004, our then college president, Dr. Shirley Robinson Pippins, strengthened the commitment to at - risk students by adding a component of increased support to promote true academic success. This concept was implemented through her leadership which became known as the College Success Program.

The College Success Program, now in its sixth year, has helped students successfully manage the demands of the first year college experience. During the development process, our main perspective was to establish a summer session that would introduce our students to college life and help them become acclimated to the challenges and demands of the first year experience prior to the start of the semester. With this intense fourteen day learning experience, the students are better prepared to approach the academic requirements of their first semester. An early modification, which we will explain at length, was the addition of a weekly fall component for the purpose of adding to the continuity of the program and improving student retention.

One of the major characteristics of our pedagogical approach for this program is the inclusion of increased mentoring from instructors, counselors and peers. Students are required to take part in bi-weekly, one-on-one sessions with their counselors in order to discuss any issues that

may arise. This allows us to identify difficulties that may prevent a student from achieving success.

Program Specifics

The following topics will be communicated at length during our panel presentation:

- Vision
- Development
- Entrance Criteria
- Recruitment of Students
- Testing and Advising
- Implementation
- Modifications
- Progress Report
- Club membership
- Success Indicators
- Assessment

The panel members will explain the successful elements of this program and discuss the achievements of the program to date, as well as program modifications that were added to improve the quality of the program.

Challenges and Solutions for Enhancing Student Success and Retention

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Our presentation overlaps the themes of Expanding first-year initiatives past the first semester and Using assessment to build better programs. Our session will have three main components, along with an opportunity for participants to share what's happening on their campuses.

The first section of the presentation will summarize what we know as a profession about student success and persistence. We will introduce leading theories, promising practices, and initiatives linked to positive results. Much of the literature relates to engagement, involvement, integration, and a sense of mattering among students. We will focus on programs related to

first-year experience courses, academic support, and early identification of risk for student success. We further know that many students do not receive the same attention and support after the falls semester of their first year, and we will discuss the concept of the ‘sophomore slump’, which may actually begin in the spring semester of the first year.

The second part of the presentation will challenge the participants to consider what we don’t know, but think that would be beneficial to our efforts if we did. We will consider any gaps or shortcomings of theories or models. Some researchers, such as Alan Seidman, discuss how we have conducted a lot of research about student success and retention, but we haven’t really developed a working model for policies and procedures to better support students. We will also consider what assessments and data would be helpful. A group of college presidents recently told us, “We get a lot of data, but not much useful information to better serve students.” We will discuss how information about student performance needs to be collected beyond the first semester, and how information may be effectively shared with appropriate campus partners.

The third section will encourage participants to consider a comprehensive plan to unify campus efforts, and to provide continuity beyond the fall semester and throughout the first year. We will provide worksheets for participants to consider their campus culture of support for first-year students, as well as for evaluating the general performance of various campus initiatives which are focused on first-year student success. Although time constraints prohibit a thorough analysis of each participant’s worksheets, we feel these will be valuable tools to begin an evaluative process back on their campuses.

We will conclude by asking participants to briefly share promising practices or challenges they are facing on their campuses.

G.P.S.: Gaining Perspective Systematically

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SUNY Cobleskill was chartered in 1911 and is an accredited, polytechnic, residential college offering more than 50 baccalaureate and associate degree programs.

Many changes have taken place in name, organization, instruction and academic programs as SUNY Cobleskill has evolved to meet the needs of an ever changing society and some of the world's most dynamic fields of study.

Most recently, new leadership has provided the impetus to reevaluate the institutions mission and strategic plan in an effort to position SUNY Cobleskill to move forward into its Second Century. To this end, the college has developed a number of task forces - the Foundations of Excellence, the Middle-States Self-Study, and the Coby 2011 Futures Group - to address what appeared initially to be a variety of distinct initiatives. Financial support for aspects of these initiatives is being provided over 5 years by a Title III grant secured by the college in 2008.

This presentation focuses on the intersection of Foundational Dimensions, strategic priorities, and Middle States Standards. As SUNY Cobleskill embarks on the process of launching the Foundations of Excellence initiative, it is also conducting a Middle States self-study and reevaluating the Institutional Strategic Plan. Unanticipated opportunities presented themselves through this 'perfect storm', and this presentation showcases those opportunities and provides insight into how other institutions may intentionally use a similar process to chart their courses.

The presenters hold various positions among three separate task forces and will speak to the challenges and opportunities inherent in meeting individual goals while also fostering a shared commitment to supporting common institutional goals.

Presentational materials will include charts which show where the overlap of Foundational Dimensions, strategic priorities, and Middle States Standards occur.

Non-Teaching Faculty and Professional Staff as First-Year Seminar Instructors

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Two academic librarians who have been active participants in first year seminars will moderate this interactive round table. The focus of the discussion will be on the involvement of non-teaching faculty and professional staff in thematic first- year experience seminars. Topics for discussion include:

1. What are the pros and cons of non-teaching faculty and professional staff teaching first-year seminars? For the University? For the instructors? For the students?
2. What kind of preparation is needed to ensure that non-teaching faculty and professional staff are successful?
3. What challenges are there for non-teaching faculty/professionals and how to overcome them?
4. How does participation impact other job responsibilities?
5. What kind of support does the University offer in such cases?
6. Do colleges and universities support this?
7. Examples of personal experiences from the facilitators and the participants.

As a result of the discussion above, this session will offer practical options for implementing first year seminars that teach thematic content from a broad range of professional experiences.

Theatre as an Agent of Change: From Audience to Action

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Theatre as an Agent of Change: From Audience to Action will begin with the presenter providing a short synopsis and video clips from the new, full-length play, *In the Company of Sinners and Saints* which was performed nine times on campus at Texas State University-San Marcos over the course of a two-week run in the fall of 2009. In an historic collaboration between the University Seminar Office and the Department of Theatre and Dance, the play was developed and performed for all 3,600 incoming freshmen as an integral component of the University's 2009 -2010 Common Experience curriculum: "The Whole Mind: Crossing Boundaries of Discipline." Selected for its relevance to freshmen and its timely topic, the award-winning play's plot and theme address issues of responsibility and moral ambiguity in the world of online social networks --- where accountability is often blurred by anonymity, where the cyber line between appropriate and inappropriate is not always clear, where Wikipedia is the default authority and Photoshop serves as the questionable arbiter of truth.

Following the plot summary, the presenter will offer a brief explanation about how the plan to use theatre as an agent of change in the First Year Experience came about and will discuss the value of harnessing theatre in the service of education. Next, the presenter will discuss the process of implementing such an innovative initiative, identify some of the challenges and triumphs of interdepartmental collaboration, and share both the methods and the results of her research in which varying degrees of success are reported from the various perspectives of everyone involved in this experiment. With both qualitative and quantitative data as evidence, the presenter will summarize the degree to which the freshmen, the University Seminar instructors, the Department of Theatre and Dance, the University Seminar program administrators, the Texas State University President and Provost, the cast members and the playwright herself deem this project a success. The session will conclude with a question and

answer session and opportunities for participants to learn more about the possibilities of utilizing theatre as an agent of change on their own campuses.

Bringing it All Together: Peer Mentoring and the First-Year Experience

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Peer mentoring at The College at Brockport was first introduced through the Honor's Program in 2001 and was implemented for the traditional freshman population in 2002. A peer mentor training manual was created and the students met briefly prior to the fall semester. The traditional mentoring program was initially optional to students and, in its first year, comprised 63 students and 10 mentors.

Two thousand and seven was a pivotal year. We introduced a two-part mentor training (including more development of self and leadership skills; not just "how to be a mentor") and embedded mentors into each of our 50-plus freshman seminars. Seventy-five percent of mentors are placed in a freshman seminar that matches their academic discipline. Peer mentors act as an academic resource, complementing their academic advisor's role. Mentors first contact freshmen through email in early August, followed by weekly emails throughout the semester. Face-to-face contact is established the first weekend of the semester during a campus-wide scavenger hunt. While mentors are required to attend at least three freshman seminars, most attend many more. Mentors are also required to plan small activities and participate in Summer Reading events.

Certain aspects of Brockport's peer mentoring program have worked well, while others have been redesigned. We plan to share both our successes and failures.

The things that work:

>Being cognizant of the transitions first year students encounter; training the mentors to meet their needs, interacting with them in a well-planned, well-timed fashion.

>Rooting mentors' contact with mentees in their freshman seminars – assigning mentors to a class where they share a common academic major and/or interest.

>Establishing regular face-to-face contact between mentors and mentees.

>Rooting mentor interaction with students in meaningful and/or required activities (study groups, freshman Summer Reading events, mandatory Welcome Weekend activities, etc.).

>Establishing support from faculty. Their assistance in identifying mentors and giving us feedback on how they utilize them in their freshman seminars has driven this program.

>Helping mentors understand their place amongst other student leaders: as academic source of information for students, from students (much different from RAs, club/organization leaders, etc.).

>Mentors help students bridge the gap between high school and college, post orientation.

>Mentor recruitment strategies: requiring an early, solid commitment from mentors (an application and interview process is necessary).

>Offering a credit-bearing mentor course and other mentor “perks”.

>Marketing the program to mentors and mentees as an opportunity for both parties.

Retaining Community College Students: The Classroom is Where it Happens

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With rising unemployment and troubled economic and social times, people are enrolling in or returning to community colleges after years in the workforce. President Obama's Community College Initiative will positively alter the enrollment numbers even more. Many of the students entering community college are academically unprepared to handle college-level work and do

not understand the individual motivation, academic prowess, constant sacrifices, and personal responsibility it will take to be persist and be successful. Some will not understand why they have to take certain classes and many more will not understand the demands and expectations of college professors. Some will have trouble understanding how to engage with the material, other students, or how to effectively study and retain information. Some will drop out because they simply cannot understand and successfully navigate the cultural shift from "the outside world" to the community college atmosphere.

However, with caring and informed advisement, effective mentoring, and dynamic, engaging classroom instruction, students stand a better chance of success and graduation. Unprepared and unmotivated students also need to know how to embrace positive, useful change and incorporate it into their lives and how to utilize effective study techniques. Without these tools, their adjustment to college is likely to suffer. The classroom is the place to help them make these changes.

During the course of this highly interactive, useful workshop, participants will be engaged in compelling activities, exercises, and discussions that address each of these areas. Participants will learn how to help students:

- understand the expectations of college instructors.
- understand what to expect in a college classroom and how to adjust to college life.
- overcome learned helplessness.
- understand and use self-motivation techniques and develop enduring personal success skills.
- learn how to bring positive change into their lives.
- master basic study techniques.
- learn the importance of self-responsibility.
- cultivate an appreciation for life-long learning.

This is a workshop for educators who want to engage in learning some new, exciting, and useful exercises, tips, and strategies that can be implemented immediately in the classroom. It is a "doing" workshop, not a "listening" workshop.

Providing Direction and Impacting Retention: GW's Guide to Personal Success (GPS) Program

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Introduction:

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 18 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

-The session's facilitators will:

- o Enable participants to gain a better understanding of first-year student needs
- o Offer participants tips on how to introduce an innovative program designed to respond to first-year student needs on an individual basis with personal attention
- o Discuss GW case study as a means of similar opportunities on other campuses.
- o Discuss benefits of program not only to the incoming student but to the entire campus community at large
- o Share best practices in incoming student transition and mentoring efforts.
- o Provide hands-on, tangible examples of cross-community partnerships

Method of Presentation and Session Outline

The presentation of this program will be facilitated by the GPS Program Director, a University Guide, and a GW student program participant. Interactive exercises include discussions on first-year student needs and programs in place at audience members' institutions. The session will feature tips that audience members can use to decide whether and how to introduce a guide program at their institutions.

Session Outline:

I. Introduction

- *Introduce presenters, attendees
- *Discuss attendees' goals for session
- *Overview of session agenda
- II. Identifying the Problem
- *Brief Review of Divisional Self-Study
- *Stating the need for the program
- *GW specific needs
- *Global needs of first year students
- *From need to acting
- III. University Guide to Personal Success (GPS) Program
- *Program Concept
- *Creation of Program
- *Program Implementation
- *Trainings and Preparation
- *The GPS Experience
- *Ongoing Professional Development of Guides
- IV. Review and Reaction
- *Initial Data Review from 2008-2009 academic year
- *Quantitative and Qualitative assessment review
- *Moving Forward: Modifications Made After Year One
- V. Lessons Learned and Tips
- *Lessons from Administration
- *Lessons from Student Participant (student presenter)
- VI. General Question and Answer

The Freshmen Life Cycle and A Comprehensive First-Year Experience Program

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This session will highlight GW's comprehensive first-year experience by outlining several programs that GW has found to be successful. We will share assessment of individual programs as well as the effect a strong first year experience has on student growth and development. This presentation will be outlined in timeline format beginning in June with student orientation and ending the culminating day of their freshman year. Below are five of the events/programs that will be discussed as part of this comprehensive presentation.

The University's 2.5 day orientation experience is a collaborative effort in welcoming and acclimating the student and family to the University community, student life, the academic mission and goals of the institution and the campus and city community through small group student-lead discussions, skits, academic advising and socials with staff and student organizations.

The University offers 3 co-curricular programs prior to the start of the fall term for students in the areas of community service in the local community, outdoor education and adventure on the beach and in the woods and rapids of West Virginia and city exploration and discovery in the Washington metropolitan area. Trips are lead by current undergraduate students and are based around small group interactions.

GW Housing Programs has themed housing for all residence halls where freshmen reside. Students choose their housing based on the following themes: Arts and Culture, Education and Public Service, Politics and Public Policy, Global perspectives and Diplomacy, Environmental education and sustainability, Sports and Humanities, Honors and Engineering, Business and entrepreneurship. All first year students receive an email prior to move-in from their house proctor explaining what exciting things they should be looking forward to experiencing at GW their freshman year. During the first floor meeting the house proctor also explains what their role is going to be throughout the year and the type of assistance they are going to provide first year students along with the valuable resources we work collaboratively with (University Counseling Center, Career Center, Study Abroad, Tutoring program). GW housing programs provides two leadership opportunities for first year students. The first is Residential Advisory Councils in collaboration with the Residence Hall Association. The second is Living Learning Cohorts - we encourage first year students to form groups related to their house themes to explore areas they are interested in.

Students are transitioned to their individual mentor through the Guide to Personal Success Program. All 2,600 incoming freshmen are assigned a University Guide to assist in transitioning them to campus, acclimating to their new home, and helping them with personal, professional, and experiential needs. Guides connect with first-year students before they even arrive on campus, and help throughout their entire freshmen year providing support and connecting them to the GW and Washington, DC community.

Freshman Day of Service (FDoS) provides first year students an opportunity to give to the community that has become their new home early in their college careers. Given that many incoming students at George Washington are already service and advocacy oriented, this event serves to commence their GW service experience and underscore/punctuate the culture of service at the University. For those students who may not be inclined to participate in service, the FDoS could spark a desire to get involved in and around the campus and city. It is also a goal of this program to initiate new community partnerships, strengthen existing relationships, and encourage students to participate in on-going service after this initial experience.

Identifying and Supporting Leadership Potential in First-Year Students

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First-year students come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences, all of which may shape their leadership potential. Some students were the Class President who served on various committees and were constantly empowered by the student body and administration to take initiative. These students may enter their first-year ambitious and ready to take on the world, but many need guidance in understanding their role on campus. Other students come into their first-year with no previous experience, but look forward to opportunities available to them. These students may require more support and guidance. Regardless of the experience a first-year student has had, every student requires guidance from finding the right opportunity to recognizing their potential as a student leader.

This session will focus on three different topics regarding first-year student leaders. The first is identifying current leadership opportunities available to first-year students. The second will focus on identifying potential student leaders within the residence halls and classrooms. The third will focus on how to support student leaders and empower them in their current position and into their sophomore year.

Success of this roundtable discussion will be achieved through conversation and sharing of current practices by the facilitators and participants.

A Recipe for Improved Retention: A College Success Course Plus Advising

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The Lone Star College System in Houston started a pilot college success course in the fall of 2008 with the goal of improving student retention. The college success initiative which was funded through an Achieving the Dream grant, began as a pilot program with students who placed in 2 or more developmental courses based on entering college placement exams. These developmental students were enrolled in a comprehensive college success course including topics from college, career and lifelong success. Faculty focus on engaging students in learning through the use of interactive teaching and learning strategies. College success topics include time and money management, note taking, basic writing skills and test preparation strategies. Students also explore their learning style and develop learning strategies to cope with new and difficult material which they encounter in college.

Choice of a college major and career planning are some of the most important outcomes of the course. Career success topics begin with an assessment of personality types and related careers. Based on these personal assessments, students explore careers that match their personal strengths. Students also assess their values and vocational interests. Career assessment is followed by educational planning to complete general education requirements, preparation for the major and the requirements needed to transfer to four year universities.

Lifelong success topics prepare students for future success in education, in the workplace and in their personal lives. Topics include communication and relationships, critical and creative

thinking, maintaining a healthy lifestyle and appreciation of diversity. Lastly students examine their life stage and topics relating to positive thinking and lifetime happiness.

Technology is used extensively in the course including an online portfolio where faculty can view student work, communicate with the student and monitor student progress. The portfolio includes personality and learning style assessments along with careers that match student interests. As students read interactive online materials, they apply this knowledge gained through writing in an online journal. Other interactive features include quizzes with immediate feedback and interactive online assessments and checklists.

During the second semester of the program, retention was further improved when advisors were paired with the college success course in order to help students with career and educational planning. Advisors meet students on the first day of class and students are required to attend at least two advising sessions during the semester.

Based on the success of the pilot program, the Lone Star System plans to phase in the requirement of the college success course for all entering full-time college students by fall 2012.

Virtual vs. Face-to-Face Diversity Activity for First-Year Students

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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 course supports the university's General Education objectives include tolerance and regard for the rights of others, and the ability to describe and explain difference in civilizations and cultures.

Students in one section of the FYE course were given the option to participate in a face-to-face activity or an activity in Second Life (SL). The face-to-face activity was for students to find a group or activity they would not normally attend or interact with. The SL activity basically was to create their avatar like themselves and experience interaction with others "inworld" then as something different than they are and again experience interaction with others. Reaction papers for both assignments asked students to react to questions such as, What was it like to be 'different'? How did they treat you?

Since it is a ‘self-selection’ and due to the small number of participants, this is considered a pilot study. However, some comparison will be made to other sections of the FYE course as a type of ‘control group’ for this using the required end-of-term evaluations. Data on student preparation (high school GPA, ACT scores, etc.) will be compared to see any differences between student groups. Content analysis on the reflection papers and comparisons on questionnaire and end-of-course evaluations will be conducted to see if there are any differences in approaches.

Discussion and Q&A during and after the formal presentation of the study is welcome.

The House is on Fire: An Effective Early Alert Program to Increase Retention

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Early Alert programs stem from the origins of developmental education and serve as a mechanism to improve retention on college campuses. Early alert is a program whereby faculty members, normally around mid-term, will refer students, who are having academic difficulties, refer students to reverse their currently failing status. Historically, early alert programs serve as dropout prevention tools that have deep roots in attrition and retention. The necessity for improving student retention is especially paramount in college settings where the diversity of students represents cultural, socioeconomic, demographic and economic challenges (Dowaliby, Garrison, & Dagle, 1993). These factors negatively affect students’ desire to attend college. Researchers agree that students fail to persist if there are inadequate academic, personal, and career supports (Choitz, 2006; Cushman et al., 2003). They fail to persist if they are not integrated into (Tinto, 1993), involved in (Astin, 1987), and engaged in (Kuh, 2005; Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005) college academic and social life.

Some reasons students give for leaving college include family, work, and personal-related issues (Choitz, 2006) such as inadequate finances, negative stereotypes, public apathy (Cushman et al, 2003). Many students need assistance with healthcare, childcare, transportation and housing (Cohen & Brawer, 1996).

The theoretical framework of this study is based on four theorists who founded their theories on either proactive or reactive methods of student identification: Tinto developed the student integration model; Astin conceived the theory of student involvement; Bean extended Tinto’s

theory to include attitudes because nontraditional students do not fit the intention and commitment highlights of Tinto's interactionist theory; and Kuh defined the theory of student engagement. All four modes address retention and persistence and, therefore, indirectly influence retention initiatives such as Early Alert.

According to Berger and Lyon (2005), differences in retention rates result from multiple factors. Types of students, college campus environments and how well their design fits the needs of the student body, roles of faculty, student services and other personnel, socioeconomic and political perspectives, types of policies and interventions, and knowledge of retention all affect retention in various contexts.

Community colleges and universities have tried a number of intervention strategies to increase student retention. According to Tinto (1993), many various types of retention programs are successful even though they differ in structure, forms, means of operation and structure. Conducting a comparative analysis of successful programs in many colleges, Tinto found that colleges were similar in thoughts about retention, the importance of its role and their efforts to improve it, and in expenditure of its energies. Tinto refers to the communalities as "principles of effective retention" (p. 141). These principles embody two themes: (a) a balance between student and institutional "needs, interests, and goals (p. 141) and (b) the overall educational mission of colleges and universities. Tinto posits that successful retention depends on understanding these principles of effective retention and applying them to the complexities of retention of each individual student in each institutional setting.

The Five-Year Journey to Success: A Comprehensive First-Year Experience

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This presentation will follow the history of ULM's First Year Experience coordinated by the Student Success Center beginning in fall 2004. ULM now offers a holistic First Year Experience to incoming freshmen, beginning with summer orientation, advising, Summer Reading, Learning Communities (LCs), University Seminar, Convocation, and Week of Welcome.

ULM's Learning Communities were first piloted by the Student Success Center in 2005 in conjunction with the College of Business, and are now required of all incoming freshmen. The

LCs pair University Seminar and a beginning freshman section of a core class determined by students' majors. The LCs have facilitated the integration of all first year programming, which will be outlined in the presentation, together with an explanation of the logistics that have enabled ULM to effectively administer the program. An integral part of the program is the development of core classes designated for incoming freshmen only (Beginning Freshman Initiative), resulting in increased success and the development of ULM's Quality Enhancement Plan for SACS accreditation.

Five years ago the Student Success Center began a redesign of University Seminar, which at that time was not required of all incoming freshmen. There was institutional support to make the seminar a degree requirement of all students, to be taken the first semester. The presentation will explore the development and implementation of the redesign and all of the components forming part of it, culminating in current examples with handouts of materials and technology. Currently University Seminar is primarily taught by advisors who are connected to the Learning Communities and assisted by a Peer Leader. The creation of the Peer Leaders and their duties as part of the class and of the Learning Communities will be shared with attendees. The impact on academic advising, its five-year progression in the Student Success Center, and advising logistics will also be outlined as well as materials used for this purpose.

All programs that are part of FYE will be presented with examples highlighted. Materials such as lesson plans, surveys, and resources will be shared with attendees. Data will be presented to demonstrate the effectiveness of all FYE programs, and their impact on the increased persistence and retention rates for the institution.

Orient Your Students to Their Major

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After teaching the general orientation course, University Studies, at UNCG for many years in a general advising office, two advisors later relocated to varying academic units where the student populations were more targeted by major, and thus the advising populations of those advisors changed as a result. What then occurred was an opportunity to utilize the existing orientation course to offer a more customized format to better meet the needs of students within those respective departments, and to strengthen their connections to the respective academic programs those students were associated with as an opportunity to more fully recruit and retain students within their field of study.

In this presentation, the audience will learn about the University Studies program at UNCG, and how through the program other modified orientation courses are being piloted to target specific populations in select academic disciplines. Additionally, we will see the advantages

and disadvantages of having an orientation course customized for a more targeted audience, and what recruitment and retention strategies have occurred as a result.

Additionally, the audience will be given a chance to build their own orientation course to both challenge and enhance one's thinking and planning when creating a first-year experience course for specific academic disciplines. Samples of syllabi will be shared as the discussion comes to a close with a question and answer period.

Improving the First-Year Experience: Innovative Computer-Aided Learning and Hands-on Peer Mentoring

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Two key initiatives have been implemented in our First Year Program at a large research-oriented university in Australia. One involves a sophisticated online learning tool to enhance the academic integrity of our students and at the other is a hands-on peer assisted study program, which aims to build core academic skills and facilitate social learning and interaction and also to provide a network of support for students new to the university system.

The aim of the online tutorial is to raise understanding of academic integrity and good academic practice and to do so in a supportive teaching and learning environment. Plagiarism is a widespread issue in many institutions, and students are demanding appropriate action. However, institutional responses have been largely reactive and punitive, addressing the consequences of these practices, rather than focusing on improving understanding. The tutorial addresses: 'Academic Integrity' (clarifies aspects of good academic practice); 'Acknowledging Sources' (addresses referencing styles); 'Working Together' (raises awareness of when group tasks are collaborative or collusive); and 'Good Writing Habits' (information on the writing sequence and key tasks, and the procedural consequences of plagiarism). Students must achieve a 100 percent pass mark. Technically the tutorial has an interesting interface design, is easy to navigate and has web advantages. Pedagogically the design incorporates: relevant contexts

which help learners to construct new knowledge from existing knowledge; demonstrating new knowledge to the learner; enhancing learning by doing; student application of the new knowledge; self-paced learning; and equity and diversity issues. Our evaluation results indicate a significant decline in the incidence of plagiarism and enhanced understanding of good academic practices among our first year students.

The transition of students into the first year at a new institution can be a difficult process. Our school has alleviated many of the early difficulties faced by students, through the establishment of a First Year Coordinator (FYC), who plays a key role in the development and implementation of Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS). In consultation with course coordinators, the FYC interviews and appoints student leaders, assists with the production of learning materials, monitors and analyses student attendance and grades, and surveys attendee's PASS experience. PASS is offered in all of our large first year classes. External evaluation of PASS has led to the program gaining both institutional and national recognition for its outstanding teaching and learning outcomes.

Professors May Hold the Key but Peer Mentors Unlock the Door to Student Persistence

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The University of Tampa's Peer Mentors known as Gateways Mentors are housed under the Associate Dean for the Baccalaureate Experience, making it one of only two student programs reporting directly to academic affairs. These Peer mentors aid faculty in delivery of UT's mandatory, year-long college success course (Gateways) during both fall and spring semesters.

Because of the alignment among the faculty who deliver the course and where the peer mentors report, the discussion leaders will include a full tenured faculty member, who is an Associate Dean and whose responsibilities include the direction of the First Year Program, the program administrator and a current peer mentor.

Participants will have the opportunity to interact with and gain a unique perspective from three distinct sides of academia (faculty, administration, student) all working together to achieve first year student success.

This roundtable discussion will focus mainly on topics such as; how to develop, fund and maintain a peer mentor program. How can you attain and maintain faculty buy-in and involvement in a student program. How a committed peer mentor can be a vital tool in achieving student success and persistence.

The discussion leaders will have PowerPoint slides, assessment data and handouts highlighting the Gateways Mentor Program and material that will help other participants begin their own peer mentor programs. The discussion will also benefit participants that have an established peer mentor program but would like more faculty involvement and a stronger institutional commitment.

The Accelerated Student Support through Integrated Success Teams (ASSIST) program at the University of Texas at El Paso

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The Accelerated Student Support through Integrated Success Teams (ASSIST) program was administered as a 4 week intensive instructional curriculum in Math, Reading, Writing and, study skills to first year college students at UTEP. The program was administered to 28 first year college students who had a less than 2.0 GPA and less than 30 Semester Credit Hours at the end of their second semester (spring 2009). The program implementation team comprised of the program director, coordinators, evaluator, an instructor from the local school district, peer leader program coordinator, a graduate assistant and, 4 peer mentors. The ASSIST 2009 participants were divided into 4 teams and each team was guided by a peer mentor who was available during and after program hours for aiding participants.

The program curriculum pertaining to reading, writing and, study skills was designed by the program director, coordinators and a high school instructor from a local school district. The math instruction was delivered through ALEKS for 11 program participants while the rest of

the participants who did not test into the ALEKS program participated in an alternate math curriculum. Each student received 68.75 hours of instruction overall. Positive thinking pertaining to achieving college success was reinforced in all program activities and each program day commenced with a meeting for all ASSIST 2009 groups participating in an activity which emphasized motivation and positive thinking.

Program evaluation data indicate that participants perceived gain in knowledge and skills pertaining to strategies necessary for college success and had initiated positive behavior change as a result of participating in ASSIST 2009. The peer mentoring component of the program which allowed for continued networking with peer mentors through fall of 2009 was considered one of the main strengths of the program.

This presentation will focus on the best practices and lessons learned pertaining to success in the first year of college from the pilot program of ASSIST. In addition, 2 ASSIST 2009 participants will present the ASSIST 2009 “PhotoVoice” group project which informs incoming freshmen and policy makers about potential challenges faced by students in the first year of college and strategies to deal with the same from the participants’ perspective. The immediate and intermediate outcomes achieved from ASSIST 2009 and their implications for delivering interventions for students who struggle to succeed in the first year of college will be examined.

With a Little Help From Our Friends: Creating Campus Collaborations

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The Entering Student Program (ESP) at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) works in collaborative partnership with key university offices to help provide a solid foundation for the success of entering students. These collaborations include instructional support, faculty development, and shared programming. Through these collaborations, a campus-wide network of support is created to help entering students form campus connections and achieve academic and personal success.

The ESP 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 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. To help ensure program quality, ESP develops campus collaborations.

The campus collaborations are important for a variety of reasons. These partnerships help address the needs of the whole student rather than focusing solely on the students' academic needs. The collaborations also help to reduce what Ernest Boyer (1990) in *Campus life: In search of community* refers to as "bureaucratic fiefdoms" (p. 4). Stated simply, campus collaborations benefit all involved. While the collaborations provide students with an opportunity to gain increased knowledge and support, the partnerships also help faculty with the integration into their academic theme topics related to transitional issues and academic success skills. The campus units forging partnerships with ESP benefit from the opportunity to educate large numbers of incoming students about the services their offices provide.

This presentation will examine the various ways the ESP collaborates with other campus units. Examples will include partnerships that address academic advising, career exploration, information literacy, and financial planning. Also included is the collaboration that supported a Global Learning Community linking a University 1301 section at UTEP with a comparably themed course at Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia. Additionally, the presenters will address the benefits of forming campus collaborations and provide recommendations for developing such campus partnerships.

Finding a Perfect Fit: Designing a Campus-Specific First-Year Seminar Textbook

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At The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), the majority of students are Hispanic, first-generation college attendees, financial aid recipients, commuters, and on- and off-campus employees. In its first-year seminar, the Entering Student Program (ESP) needed to consider UTEP students' cultural and economic background when identifying a textbook that would help to engage them in campus life, inform them about resources, and address their academic and lifestyle challenges. The price of books was a major consideration. As a result, the ESP undertook to develop its own university-specific, custom-published textbook. While other campuses may have a different student profile, cost and a book relevant to students' needs are universal concerns. This session will address both.

The presenters will provide the steps UTEP followed to develop *Borders: Crossing into Your Future*, the transition issues and academic skills textbook created for UTEP's first-year seminar. They will share how to survey and assess the needs of specific student populations. For example, research revealed that most of UTEP's first-year students 1) are under-prepared academically; 2) attend classes and then leave campus immediately; 3) cannot afford mass-marketed transition/academic skills books; 4) have families unfamiliar with the demands of college life; 5) fail to adequately utilize campus resources. These characteristics negatively impact GPA, timely graduation, and retention. Next, the presenters will address how to determine content and create a book that reflects campus mission. At UTEP, the ESP formed a committee of faculty and staff from both Academic and Student Affairs to establish the topics the book should address. The committee chose such topics as UTEP's campus history and traditions, general academic skills, UTEP students' most common academic pitfalls, information literacy, financial literacy, dealing with friends and family unfamiliar with college life, healthy lifestyles, campus safety, and UTEP campus resources. The committee then invited campus experts (directors of campus units, librarians, faculty who teach the seminar, academic advisors, etc.) to write specific sections. Additionally, the committee held essay contests for students to submit work with their perspectives on transitional challenges and strategies for success. The presenters will also address the process for establishing a timetable for writing and editing, creating an engaging visual style, and finding a publisher that can provide a high-quality product at an affordable price. The presenters will close with a description of how they have continuously surveyed faculty, students, and campus units to improve and update the book's content in its subsequent editions.

Educating First-Year Students about Healthy Romantic Relationships: The WiRE (Wisconsin Relationship Education) Project

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A recent study of college students revealed that 24% of the variance in GPA can be predicted by the nature of students' romantic relationships (Bartell et al., 2008). Unplanned pregnancies among college have increased significantly over the last few years (NCTPUP, 2009), and 21% of current relationships among college students involve some form of dating violence (Sellers & Bromley, 1996). In addition, problems in their romantic relationships are a common source of stress and concern for first year students (Bartell, 2009). In sum, these data point to the necessity of providing information to students to assist them in having healthy romantic experiences. Unfortunately, few first year programs do much to address these very significant issues in students' lives. In this presentation we will provide information about an initiative being undertaken as a collaborative effort within the University of Wisconsin System to address this topic. Specifically, faculty, students and staff at UW-Green Bay, UW-Madison, and the UW Colleges have been working together for the last two years to provide information through electronic resources and on-the-ground programming, with a special focus on first year students. The WiRE project (Wisconsin Relationship Education) includes an informational website for college students about healthy relationships. This website is different in an important way from most other online sources to which students turn for information about relationships in that the content on WiRE is empirically-valid, and based upon research in the scientific field of personal relationships. Specifically, it was co-created by two experts in the field, Dr. Denise Bartell and Dr. Linda Roberts (University of Wisconsin-Madison). Accessible to all students, it will also include a section with programming resources that faculty and staff can use to develop programs on their own campuses. In conjunction with the development of this website, the WiRE project has sought to increase the amount of on-the-ground programming on healthy relationships at UW campuses. In this presentation, we will (1) provide an overview of recent research we have conducted on the influence of college students' romantic relationships on their academic success, (2) discuss the foundational elements for healthy romantic relationships among college students, as well as overview the most common problems students encounter in their relationships, (3) introduce the WiRE website for the audience, and (4) discuss ways in which the audience can use these resources in their work with college students at their own colleges and universities.

Student-Centered Learning: First-Year Initiative for Chemistry Success

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Tougaloo accepts students with a wide range of readiness for undergraduate school. Historically, the success (passing General Chemistry I with a grade C or higher) has been approximately 50%. Tougaloo College designed its pre-CHE 115 General Chemistry I course, CHE 104 Chemical Problem Solving, to improve student success using the POGIL method; however, adding the components: basic math for chemical problems and content reading for understanding chemical knowledge. Students who are eligible to take CHE115 General Chemistry I take Math 103, College Algebra II or higher (ACT score 20 or higher). Therefore, CHE104 Chemical Problem Solving targets first-year students interested in chemistry or biology, but are only eligible for math 102, College Algebra I (ACT scores 16-19).

Results showed that three of the four classes who took CHE 104 performed better in General Chemistry I than students who did not need to take the course. The ACS Toledo Exam (undergraduate placement test) also showed significant gains in content knowledge by students taking CHE 104 Chemical Problem Solving.

The Reading Component provides a redesigned study skill method (P3Q4R), modified Cornell Note Taking and Writing Lab Experiments aimed for success in content knowledge, critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation of that content. P3Q4R allows students to systematically engage in thoughtful methodical of chemical knowledge. Thus students increase scientific skills as well as reading comprehension.

The Mathematical Component uses a basic skill-driven, action approach. Essential aspects of understanding mathematical principles are introduced: Algebraic, Graphical, Metrical and Numerical Problem-Solving for chemistry. Application of all mathematical concepts needed for chemical problem solving.

The Chemical Problem Solving Component provides understanding chemical concepts through in-class, hands-on activities where the chemical experiment is guided through an inquiry learning process. This emphasizes learning and participating in small group collaborative efforts to create curiosity, observing, questioning, evaluating and grasping the scientific method. Thus, the lecturing is replaced by facilitating and designing experiments enhancing the learning/teaching process, creating teachable moments.

PowerPoint Activities:

Background/Course Development

Components: Math, Reading and Chemistry

Audience Participation

Course Results
Conclusions

The First-Year Experience at University College Dublin (UCD)

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In the last decade, government education policy in Ireland has favored the introduction of more flexible frameworks for learning. UCD has responded by completely redeveloping its undergraduate education programme and introducing both modularization and semesterisation across the entire system. This study was thus undertaken within the context of a rapidly changing institutional structure where staff and student expectations of university life are increasingly challenged, a context that made research into the first year experience particularly crucial.

The presentation will focus on the areas UCD students identified as central to their first year experience, their evaluation of the transition to university and the difficulties encountered, the time spent on different activities and their level of engagement with the university. Differences between the first semester and end of year findings will be investigated. The paper will also deal with the different experiences of students across different degree programmes and in different size classes. The impact of sex, gender, and age on the student experience will also be explored.

A key finding of this study is that lack of engagement and poor attendance across many programmes are not solely attributable to students' spending most of their time in paid employment. Student misconceptions of what constitutes 'full-time' study may be a more important factor as indicated by the low estimates of the time students expect to spend on academic work each week.

Another interesting finding is that students taking programmes with small classes had a very different experience of UCD to those in large first year classes, and that they perceived this as affecting their transition to university, their learning, and their engagement.

Finally it will be argued that the adoption of a modularized and semesterised curriculum has a range of implications for the first year experience. One of the advantages of a modular curriculum is argued to be increased student choice (Morris 2000). However an unintended consequence of this choice is increased individualization which can impact negatively on the student experience, particularly during the first semester of first year (Nathan 2006).

Morris, H. (2000)'The Origins, Forms and Effects of Modularization and Semesterisation in Ten UK-Based Business Schools', *Higher Education Quarterly*, 54(3): 239-258.

Nathan, R. (2006) *My Freshman Year: What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student*. Penguin.

Peer Advisors in Educational Initiative

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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.

The Perfect Storm: A State Wide Conference on Retention

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Arkansas is more successful at enrolling students in college than at retaining them through to graduation. Arkansas State Legislative ACT 570 (2007) required a legislative task force to develop a set of written recommendations for the Arkansas General Assembly and the Governor that would improve remediation, retention, and graduation rates at the state's colleges and universities. One of the task force recommendations was for the Arkansas Department of

Higher Education to hold a joint annual statewide conference on college retention and graduation to share best practices of the two and four year colleges and universities. Eight Arkansas two- year colleges and four Arkansas four- year universities have recently completed the comprehensive Foundations of Excellence guided self study designed to enhance learning and retention of students. The proposed session will share this process in a presentation entitled “The Perfect Storm: A State Wide Conference On Retention.”

This session will discuss the planning process and implementation of an Arkansas state wide retention and graduation conference, The Student Success Symposium, provide participants with a brief historical overview of higher education in Arkansas and focus on the sobering statistic that led to the development of this statewide initiative. Additionally, the presenter will review in detail the collaborative efforts of the two and four year institutions, stakeholders, and sources of funding. Assessment results from the symposium as well as implications for future growth and planning will be shared.

Risk Taking: Advocating for Students

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Summary: None

Learning and Interacting with New Knights: Incentivizing the First-Year Experience

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The LINK program at UCF is a unique student engagement program for all First Time in College students (FTICs) with proven success. FTICs attend programs, gain LINK Loot (offered at 500, 1000, and 2000 points) by swiping their student ID card into electronic card-readers, and use their points to bid on prizes at an end-of-semester auction.

In Fall 2008, 6,243 out of 6,353 FTICs (98.3%) attended at least one LINK Program compared to 5,736 students in Fall 2006 (no data for Fall 2007). Of Fall 2008 FTIC LINK participants, at least 6,138 (98.3%) attended 2 or more LINK-affiliated programs. In Fall 2008, students who obtained at least 5,000 LINK Loot points had a 5% higher GPA (3.0732), on average, than the average GPA (2.9245). LINK helps students get involved and connected to UCF which, we believe, has a strong correlation to students' academic and overall collegiate success. At the time of the FYE 2010 conference, we will have Fall 2009 data to compare, which will further highlight the correlation between program attendance and GPA.

Additionally, LINK Fall Auction attendance has grown significantly and steadily, showing a higher focus on LINK for freshmen, which students have become increasingly knowledgeable and enthusiastic about. Between 2006 and 2008, Auction attendance has increased over 77%. At the Auction, students bid on prizes such as a \$1,300 tuition scholarship, computers, iPods, televisions, DVDs, gift cards and more. Since its inception in 2003, LINK has awarded over \$14,000 in tuition scholarships, \$45,000 in other prizes, and \$8,200 in donated prizes. Each semester, prizes cost less than \$1 per student.

In order to best serve students, the LINK website is the centerpiece of the LINK program (www.link.ucf.edu). Our staff are able to enter program information, track students' attendance, and monitor program topics through our website. Students can track how many Loot they have earned and can find upcoming events through a simple log-in process.

By presenting at the FYE conference, we will be able to share our successes with other institutions looking for innovative ways to engage their first-year students. Each year, our program grows, we increase student participation, we create new learning outcomes, and we collaborate with more departments on campus. In our presentation, we will share tips for building the program, methods of tracking programs and participation, assessing program information, challenges within our system, and engaging students at a critical time in their university careers.

How a Summer Bridge Program Can Increase Your Retention Rates for At-Risk Students

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The Seizing Opportunities for Achievement and Retention Program (SOAR) is supported through the Student Development and Enrollment Services division at the University of Central Florida. This program is designed to assist and help retain academically and economically disadvantaged African-American and Hispanic students who were admitted by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions to the University. Students, who accept the offer to join the SOAR program, must successfully complete the six-week summer bridge program in order to receive full unconditional admission into the University for the fall semester. This workshop will address how we prepare our students for the challenges and obstacles that accompany college life. We will discuss how we develop our programming, academic skill building, leadership development, social enrichment, and career exploration during the six-week summer program, as well as the student's first year at the University. Students complete a maximum of three (3) courses during the summer and must pass each class with a minimum of at least a 2.0 (C) average.

Also being discussed in the workshop will be the role our peer tutors and various departments have in preparing our students for the academic year. We have found that by raising student's awareness of the resources during the summer, they are more likely to visit those departments/offices during their freshman year. Another phase of our program is the intensive and intrusive academic advising that extends through the first year. What we discuss in our advising sessions will be mentioned. Students are required to attend a minimum of two academic workshops and meet with their assigned SOAR academic Advisor at least twice per semester for advising and schedule planning. Over the past five years the SOAR Program has averaged a 96% summer to fall retention rate and a 90% fall to fall retention rate for students in the program. The presenters will explain what has led to the successful retention rates of its students during that time frame.

Disappearing Act: How to Keep Minority Men from Disappearing from Your Campus During the First Year

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Across the nation a growing trend shows that females, regardless of race or background, are graduating at higher rates than their male counterparts. In particular African Americans and Hispanics are having the most difficult time. The Brother to Brother Program (B2B) supported through the Student Development and Enrollment Services Division at the University of

Central Florida and staffed through the Multicultural Academic and Support Services office strives to address this trend.

As such, this presentation will begin with discussion about the need of a program such as Brother to Brother. We will also explore who these students are (demographically and academically), seeking to identify some common needs and methods your institution can use to address those needs. Workshop attendees will have an opportunity to hear the stories of students in the B2B program and how the program has affected their personal development and overall success at the University of Central Florida. This workshop also covers some creative programming ideas that will capture the attention of students.

In particular, this workshop will address the first –year experience of African American and Hispanic Males at institutions of higher education. The workshop will help participants identify possible departments and offices they can partner with on their campus to offer a cost efficient and meaningful program for their students. Attendees will leave the workshop eager to begin the work of designing new programs and initiatives to implement during the first-year experience that will address the retention of African American and Hispanic males on their campus.

Retention of Students of Color

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Summary: None

Supporting and Developing Powerful Peer Leaders

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Research (and gut level common sense) affirms that peers have tremendous impacts – empowering or otherwise - on each other’s commitment and involvement in various domains of learning. Moreover, many institutions are exploring how they can expand or enhance the ways in which they involve peers in efforts to impact student development and achievement. Peers may indeed have special capacities to relate to and connect with each other but inspiring,

touching, challenging, supporting and impacting first year students is tough work on any turf. Those of us who coordinate large or small scale efforts to “deputize” peers must establish and support a multi-faceted and meticulous set of infrastructures and networks – in effect “learning organizations” - to help our peer leaders impact students and develop as coaches and leaders. And veteran peer leaders are vital in these efforts! And we must assess our structures carefully and continuously (and listen) so that we keep learning and improving.

The (fairly large scale) Learning Community Peer Leader program at UC is maturing, evolving and learning – perennially but getting better all the time. Peer Leaders play integral roles in UC’s LC’s – leading 70 FY Learning Communities and serving 1300+ FY students. Over the past six years, we have grown substantially and developed/enhanced various support structures for peer leaders - a veteran PL co-leadership team, initial four day training, an extensive handbook, structured mentoring by veteran PL’s, required small group weekly PL meetings (led by veteran PL’s), required weekly PL reflections, LC observations, extensive PL “tool kits”, faculty and advisor “partners” for LC’s and a “PL buddy” program among them.

Each of these structures has been helpful in some manner and we are “tracking and tuning” each via ongoing formal as well as informal assessment and feedback. We will share descriptions of these structures, resources pertaining to them, and assessment tools and outcomes. The session goal is to share ideas and practical resources with colleagues utilizing or interested in utilizing peer leaders (or mentors) while establishing an open space for collective sharing of practices and Q&A.

Getting ALL Stakeholders on the Learning Community Bus

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LC’s – well crafted and well implemented – have profound effects on student development and achievement. In vibrant, vital and impactful LC’s, broad networks of stakeholders collaborate to enhance student learning and depth of experience across boundaries – academic, student life, disciplinary, etc. In the best of all worlds, an LC experience – particularly a FYE LC – serves as a means of academic enrichment AND as exposure to and interaction with a broad array of students, faculty, advisors and experiential opportunities. The student connects, imagines possibilities, and emerges with skills and dispositions that provide a foundation for meaningful and diverse involvement during the first year and beyond.

But how do we get stakeholders on the LC bus? Everybody is so busy. Everybody wears multiple hats (especially at research institutions) and fields countless demands. It can be done – even without mandate from above! Stakeholder involvement can be influenced “from the trenches” as well. At UC, we realized that we needed to step up staff efforts – both formal and informal – in communicating with, appealing to and involving actual and potential LC

stakeholders. Artful and strategic communication and appeals from student leaders (and from us as colleagues) can have powerful impacts. Accordingly, we instituted some new structures and tweaked some existing ones. We have instituted a new faculty and advisor LC partners program, improved clarification of our communication and outreach expectations of PL's, enhanced training for PL's as regards effective communication and outreach, enhanced best practices resources for utilizing stakeholders in LC meetings, improved tracking of PL quantity and quality of PL communication with stakeholders, regular informal meetings with deans and advisors, coffees with various subsets of actual and potential stakeholders, aget-togethers between peer leaders and stakeholders, etc. We will share real world structural and "in the trenches" strategies used to involve stakeholders in UC's 70 peer-led LC's, artifacts and resources tied to these efforts, and assessments on extent and impact of stakeholder involvement. Our 08-09 data suggests that the LC's were already functioning as a positive structure for exposing students to stakeholders, but we were well aware of variations in these regards across LC's. Very recent data - PL communication with stakeholders, PL weekly reports (and planning sheets) and feedback from stakeholders - suggests that the quantity and depth of LC involvements with stakeholders is increasing substantially as is stakeholder involvement and responsiveness. There will be TIME for collegial sharing and Q&A.

Leading Peer Leaders - Let's Just Talk!

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Summary: None

Using First-Year Seminars to Fulfill Core Curriculum Credit

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The University of Colorado Denver utilizes a 3-credit hour, First-Year Seminar (FYS) format that is content-focused with integrated skills. The FYS courses at UC Denver are encouraged,

but optional, for incoming freshmen. Currently, between 30-35% of the 1200 incoming freshmen register for a FYS course.

In trying to increase the percentage of incoming freshmen in FYS courses, it became evident that academic advisors were not encouraging students to register for a FYS course in majors that have few elective credits, such as engineering, sciences, music, etc. After considerable discussion on how to improve new student participation in the FYS program, we decided to seek general education credit for FYS courses so that the FYS course would no longer only satisfy elective credit, but would now apply to the general education Core Curriculum.

The impact of using FYS courses for general education Core Credit is not yet known, but under initial assessment. Issues being investigated are given in the assessment section above.

Using a FYS seminar for general education has advantages for the student and has received support from academic advisors. However, there are some inherent disadvantages for instructors of the FYS seminars in that the syllabus must be prepared months in advance in order to be reviewed and approved for Core credit, the FYS content must meet strict guidelines for general education credit, and students registering for the FYS course may be more interested in general education credit than the integrated content and skills typically associated with FYS seminars.

The presentation will examine all aspects of using FYS courses for general education Core credit. Initial assessment data will be provided and discussed.

Early Alert - Is it for Everyone?

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College/universities are continually reviewing and examining best practices and strategies to improve their retention and persistence rates on campus. This session will actively engage participants in an action planning process to explore the “pros and cons” of starting an early alert system. Presenters will provide an overview of the process that the University of Colorado Denver (UC Denver) has experienced in the design and implementation of an electronic early alert system. The experience will serve as a model for discussion as well as a framework for session participants to create their own development plan of an early alert system.

Session will provide an overview of early alert systems and the evidence that supports early interventions as best practices for academic advising and student success. Presenters will highlight ACT’s 2004 Policy Report on the Role of Academic and Non-Academic Factors in Improving College Retention (<http://www.act.org/path/policy/reports>) as important factors to consider in the design and implementation of retention programs and initiatives.

Presenters will discuss the collaborative process that has taken place to design and implement the new Early Alert System. Session will include a demonstration of the UC Denver Early Alert electronic system and provide assessment data that articulates the impact of the system in relationship to campus culture, student outcomes, faculty input and academic advisors’ role.

Participants will have a hands-on experience to examine whether an early alert system is appropriate for their campus by working through a list guiding principles to design and/or enhance an early alert system. Participants will be divided into small groups to discuss current campus retention programs, tools, and interventions along with sharing what is working and what is not working on their campuses. Participants will brainstorm potential purpose, goals, and learning outcomes of a new or enhanced early alert system. Groups will develop a timeline for proposal development and implementation.

Academic Integrity: Creating a Campus Culture that Serves the Diverse Needs of First-Year Students

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Academic Integrity is a fundamental value of a college degree; however, Institutions across the nation have recognized that there is a need to teach students about academic integrity. Utilizing the first-year experience as a means to set the tone for campus culture and values is important. We must learn how to teach academic integrity to a generation of students that has access to up-to-date information at their fingertips, students who are constantly under pressure to get good grades, and students who have been brought up in a society full of scandal.

This discussion will center on exploring how campuses are dealing with educating first-year students about academic integrity. We will focus on campus culture and infrastructure. First, we will discuss how campuses disseminate information about academic integrity amongst students, faculty, and staff. For example, how accessible is the campus policy regarding academic integrity, and who is responsible for reinforcing ethical practices. Next, we will discuss the impact technology and distance learning have had on the increase of violations of the academic honor code. Specifically, the focus will be on detection and prevention. Finally, we will discuss who is responsible for dealing with violations of the Institution's academic honor code. We will explore campus infrastructure and outcomes assessed if a student is found guilty of violating the school's academic honor code.

They're Just Not That Into You: New Teaching Strategies to Engage Today's New Students

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Participants will receive a set of handouts containing brand new class activities and exercises taken from the presenters' own repertoires of highly successful classroom experiences in first-year seminar courses. They will also have an opportunity to exchange ideas with other participants and receive substantial bibliographies and materials on new "best practices" in teaching. Topics will include a discussion of questions such as these: Who are today's students? How do they learn? What are the most challenging aspects of teaching them? What does the research say about current best practices? How are these principles used creatively in the FY classroom? How are results measured? Why does it matter? What is "Inside-Out Teaching" and how does it work? Activities will include new ideas such as "OTB Presentations," "Human Wiki's," "The Amazing Race," and new teaching methods using cell phone technology. Participants will network with colleagues at other institutions, enlarge their repertoires of teaching tools, and learn new ideas about teaching and new outcomes to aim for in today's first-year classroom.

Raising the Bar: Lower Expectations and Higher Learning

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The "Oh, well... Syndrome" may be gaining on us. Many of today's first-year students enter college expecting to work hard and do well. But soon thereafter, they settle for less. Mediocrity becomes not only the norm, but the goal. Lowering their sights helps them willingly accept B's and C's, or even D's, because A's take so much time and effort. According to recent NSSE and CSSE results, many new students accept disengagement over engagement and less academic investment over more. For example, only 24 percent of 2008 full-time community college students reported always coming to class fully prepared. When faced with a killer class, the easiest solution is often to give up or change majors. What can those of us who value higher learning do to help students with lower expectations dig in and grapple with the challenge? How can we raise the bar? This session will explore these complex issues and generate potential teaching strategies to counteract them.

Inspiring Integrity: Chasing An Authentic Life

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PROGRAM OUTLINE – 60 minutes total (this program can be lengthened to 75 minutes)

Introduction (5 minutes) – The introduction begins with a brief sketch of my background and then moves into a few interesting stories about ethical dilemmas circulating in the popular press. The motives underlying these dilemmas are explored (i.e. greed, a desire for career advancement, pure stupidity). The discussion then focuses on statistics about unethical behavior on college campuses (i.e., the fact that over 70% of undergraduate business students have admitted to cheating in college or that over 30 students turned in the same plagiarized paper at a top five graduate school). This introduction sets the tone as audience members begin to interact and connect with similar occurrences in their own lives.

Defining Authentic Success: Chasing Real Rabbits (5 minutes) – This part tells the story of Cash the greyhound. Cash was world-famous and had won millions of dollars for his owner. One day, he decided to give up racing as he finally realized that the little white rabbits he had been chasing around the track his entire life were fake. Attendees are encouraged to ponder the fake rabbits that they have been chasing in their lives – i.e., excessive wealth, popularity and fame. Attendees are then encouraged to focus on the “real rabbits” worth chasing in life – i.e., contentment, relationships and character. This part emphasizes the seriousness of the topic and sets the table for people to ponder how to change their focus and chase a life filled with integrity.

Honing Character via a Virtuous Life (15 minutes) – Living a virtuous life is one of the keys to authentic success. This concept goes back almost 3,000 years to Aristotle and his concept of “The Good Life.” The presentation moves through Aristotle’s ethical framework of Virtue Ethics and the concept of the Golden Mean – basically the ideal location between the deficiency and excess of any given virtue. For example, the virtue of honesty has its deficiency (being a liar) and its excess (being blunt). A virtuous person seeks the middle ground or Golden Mean. Liars must cut down on their lying – even their white lies – in order to achieve the virtue of honesty. Blunt people need to bite their tongues a bit more in order to achieve the virtue of honesty. The presentation goes over five key virtues (honesty, compassion, patience, pride and humility) and analyzes their deficiencies and excesses. Attendees are encouraged to think about where they fall on each virtue’s spectrum. The idea is for people to make their self-analysis and then strive to practice moving towards the Golden Mean via habitual action in the professional and personal lives. As mentioned previously, campus professionals are people who students inherently look up to and admire. They not only need to pass on the importance of being virtuous but they should strive to be virtuous themselves.

Honing Character by Adopting a Big-Picture Perspective and Setting Priorities (15 minutes) – This part stresses the importance of having a big picture perspective on life. Seeing the forest

through the trees is especially important to campus professionals whose job duties continually expand. In these jobs, perfection is not an option. Attendees are encouraged to do the best they can in all aspects of their career considering their commitments and resources. They must become recovering perfectionists. Additionally, attendees are taught the importance of setting priorities and sticking to them even when workplace pressure is applied. A priority conflict test is administered whereby attendees are encouraged to make a list of their top ten priorities as they desire them followed by a list of their top ten priorities as they actually live their lives. The goal is to have a priorities match. For instance, if a person desires that their family come first, then their family should actually come first on both lists. If their family actually comes fourth on their reality list, then they have a priority mismatch. Attendees are encouraged to align their priorities at home and at work.

Honing Character by Laughing A Bit More Every Day (10 minutes) – This part discusses something that every person should do a lot more of every day – laugh. University and college professionals have serious jobs and face serious issues. Budget cuts, added responsibilities and student issues have the potential to create a stressful and tough work environment. Professionals must make an effort to not let these stressors completely remove humor from their workday. Not only does laughter have proven health benefits, laughing helps people remember not to take themselves too seriously. This part discusses the health benefits of laughter and then asks attendees to recall the various stupid things they have each done in their lives. I add my stupidest moments – ironing my own neck before a job interview and throwing my wallet out the window of my car while swinging at a bee – to explain how it is hypocritical when we take ourselves too seriously.

Conclusion: Shine and Pay It Forward (10 minutes) – This conclusion discusses what happens when a person achieves an integrity-filled life – they shine! When a person shines, people will approach him or her and give one of the biggest compliments they can give – “You seem truly happy, tell me why?” A great response to this question is to discuss Cash the greyhound, real rabbits and what really matters in life. Attendees will leave with an enhanced ability to talk about authentic success and chasing contentment, relationships and character instead of the things that the world oftentimes equates with success.

Under the Influence . . . of Stress

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PROGRAM OUTLINE – 60 minutes total (this program can be lengthened to 75 minutes)

Introduction (5 minutes) – The introduction includes a brief sketch of my background and stories/quotes about the effects of stress on the lives of different individuals. This part sets the

tone as audience members begin to interact and connect with similar occurrences in their own lives.

Defining Stress and its Mental and Physical Manifestations (5 minutes) – This part includes the dictionary definition of stress as well as a discussion of the medically-verified effects of stress on a person's mind and body. Audience members are asked how many nights of sleep they have lost to stress or how many times they have ignored other relevant stress symptoms. This part emphasizes the seriousness of the topic and sets the table for people to provide honest answers to the questions from the stress test to come.

Interactive Stress Test (10 minutes) – This stress test includes twenty questions. Audience members answer either Yes or No to questions probing whether they frequently engage in various stress causing activities. For example, typical questions ask whether a person is frequently disorganized, frequently tries to do everything by herself, or frequently neglects exercise. After the last question, individuals add up their scores and receive a stress rating of: (1) A-Okay / (2) Just Breathe / (3) Over-Stressed or / (4) Watch Out.

Interpretations and Analysis of Stress Scores (5 minutes) – This part discusses what each stress rating means and how to analyze the effects of being placed in a particular categorization. Attendees are instructed to draw a line in the sand of their life and then categorize each of their stressors as either major or minor. Minor stressors are worries that could be eliminated by apologizing to a friend, re-setting priorities or adopting a big-picture perspective on life. Minor stressors should be placed on the left side of the line. On the other side of the line are life's major stressors consisting of worries surrounding a family member with cancer or overall underperformance at work or school. These major stressors should cause stress and individuals should worry about managing them. An individual's minor stressors, however, do not merit as much worry as we currently allocate in their direction. Instead, minor stressors should be eliminated as quickly as possible.

Twenty Stress Management Tips (30 minutes) – This part forms the heart of the message. I created twenty different ways for attendees to eliminate left side, minor stressors from their lives. For example, minor stressors are easily eliminated when a person makes better decisions, adopts a big picture perspective, does something nice for someone else or sets / follows a list of priorities. Around one and a half minutes is spent on each de-stressor. This is the most interactive and fun part of the presentation. Longer time allocations allow for more time to be spent on each specific tip.

Conclusion: De-stress from your Distress (5 minutes) – This conclusion revolves around the objectives of a person whose stress score is reduced from double to single digits. These people are now better able to chase after the truly important things in life (i.e. contentment, relationships and character) instead of worrying about the minor things that had previously wasted too much of their time.

Strengthening Peer Leaders

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In Spring 2009, we decided to incorporate the Strengths Philosophy (StrengthsQuest The Gallup Organization, 2006 Princeton, NJ.) into our First-Year Florida (FYF) Peer Leader training course curriculum as an effort to increase our Peer Leaders effectiveness in the classroom as well as improve their leadership and mentoring skill sets. All 60 Peer Leader took the assessment prior to course. Our intended outcome for this almost complete overhaul was simple: We wanted our student leaders to more fully understand their talents and learn to maximize those talents in the classroom. In doing so, students would not only learn to articulate their own strengths but also how to improve their already existing strengths. This presentation will discuss how we implemented Strengths within the Peer Leader experience. We will also discuss a pre and post assessment used to determine the Peer Leaders knowledge and skill levels in the following areas: diversity, leadership, communication, and self-awareness and the relationship between the development in these areas and the understanding of their own strengths through the strengths based training.

Implementation

Implementation of Strengths began during the training course, during which strengths were incorporated into almost every assignment such including facilitation and presentation activities as well as guided weekly journals that discussed how they saw their strengths used in their daily life. (Sample activities will be provided and discussed in detail).

During our end of the semester mini-conference, all peer leaders and instructors learned additional strategies for maximizing individual and team strengths during our keynote presentation by Leslie Hahn, former Assistant Director of New Student Programs, who spoke about using strengths in partnerships. This session created a common language for Peer Leaders and co-that was revisited and used during the semester.

The third-part of our strengths implementation is follow up. During the first half of their teaching semester each Peer Leader meets with a staff member to reflect on their teaching experience and how they have seen their strengths play out in their teaching experience. In addition, teaching teams (peer leader + instructor) meet weekly during the term that they teach, we provided strengths prompts to use at these meetings.

Week 3 Sample Prompt: Pick one of your top 5 strengths. How does this strength affect the way you see your co-workers, people around you, and your own performance? How does this strength affect your decision-making?

We will conclude our presentation by discussing the pre and post assessment used to measure the development of certain knowledge and skill levels of our peer leaders.

Implementing Successful Student and Parent Orientation Programs

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Summary: None

Net Generation Students: Why They're Different, and Teaching Strategies That Work for Them

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Are today's students different in some fundamental ways from prior generations of students? Do their extensive experiences with technology, g-chatting, Twittering, and multi-tasking make them perceive the world, and even think about it, in ways that are dissimilar from traditional students?

In this hands-on presentation, based on a growing body of research, we will address the issue of who Net Generation students are, and how that impacts the nature of First Year Experience courses and student success more generally. We'll first examine the key characteristics of Net Generation students, considering their independence, emotional and intellectual openness, and their readiness to innovate. We'll review research showing that they have thinking styles that may differ from students in earlier generations, and why multitasking is the norm. We also will look at how they use technology and their preference for courses that include technology.

We then will examine general principles for teaching Net Generation students, based on research findings that show the importance of education being learner-centered. We will discuss the role of traditional lectures in educating Net Generation students and how Net Generation students prefer to discover information on their own rather than passively absorbing teacher-generated content. We also will discuss the importance of student collaboration, and that ultimately the education of Net Generation students revolves around not what students know, but what students can learn.

Finally, we will examine how, specifically, to deal with the needs of Net Generation students in First Year Experience courses through the use of technology. We will consider a number of technologies from the perspective of novice instructors, reviewing "smart" presentation media

and the use of interactive technologies such as blogs, wikis, and podcasts. We will consider the overall benefits and disadvantages of the use of technology, addressing the practical—and philosophical—issues of how its use is changing the nature of education. We'll close the session with a discussion of how we encourage success in Net Generation students.

Excellence for All: Integrating Student Learning and Development

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Research is increasingly attentive to the positive impact for all students of conceiving “diversity as a process toward better learning rather than as an outcome—a certain percentage of students of color, a certain number of programs—to be checked off a list” (Bauman et. al, 2006, p.iv). As a result of this shift in attention, faculty and practitioners within post secondary institutions are increasingly attending to how specific curriculum design and pedagogical practices support and benefit under-represented as well as majority populations within the classroom as well as within the larger institution.

One such initiative is the first year experience (FYE) in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota. FYE has two required components, a first-semester freshman seminar, “First Year Inquiry” (FYI), and a second-semester learning community (LC). The FYI course is designed to embed advising and academic content and supports in a 4-credit required course for new first-year students. The course is organized to provide a multidisciplinary approach to a common point of inquiry, “How Can one Person Make a Difference?”, and includes a common book, as well as common design and instruction principles (active learning; collaborative learning; writing-intensive curriculum) across distinct sections and multiple disciplinary lenses.

The main question that was asked of the data was, broadly, how did these two populations of students’ express their growth and struggles with respect to student learning and development

outcomes and what did this look like across different student groups? Knowledge that informs our inquiry is focused in two main areas: Baxter- Magolda's (2001, 2007) work on self-authorship, George Kuh's (2008) work on inclusive excellence and minority retention. In our research, the overall findings suggest that while there are differences between how students' perceive growth in SLOs and SDOs, in both groups there was perceived growth. Findings from the survey show statistical differences between the two groups on several SLOs and all SDOs. Finding from the journals suggest that students in the top 10% grappled with the notion of difference and collaborative work; while special admits grappled in more depth with the notion of self-awareness and responsibility and accountability. In this session, we will give a brief overview of the FYE model. The remaining portion of the time will be spent on discussing with audience members the findings and implications of the research. Facilitation of participant interpretations of journal submissions from both groups of students will be a key part of the presentation.

Making the Connection: Improving Collaboration between Academic and Student Affairs

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First-year experience programs are not inaccessible “silver bullets” but are integrated into a larger institutional philosophy and strategy (Barefoot, 2008). The First-Year Experience program (FYE) in the College of Education & Human Development at the University of Minnesota embeds student services into the year-long program, utilizing many manners

including adviser check-in appointments, programming about common issues experienced in the first year of college, and career counseling. Now in our second year, there is evidence, from student journals, surveys, and faculty and academic advisor involvement, to suggest the collaboration between faculty and student services has had positive impact on students in their first year of college.

Our model was informed by two important works: intrusive advising, inclusive excellence practices (Kuh, 2007) and seamless learning environments in which students learn, develop and persist in college (Kuh, 2001, 2005 as described in Neisheim et al, 2007). Intrusive advising techniques, when paired with inclusive, personal collaboration between student services personnel and instructors incorporating effective educational practices, such as including greater academic challenges, active and collaborative learning, increased student interactions with faculty and advisors, as well as enriched educational experiences, all contribute to the overall success of first-year students.

During the 2008-09 academic year, the initial run of the FYE program linked academic and career counseling with classes to provide more consistent contact and communication with advisers during the first semester. The sessions also sought to provide students with information on additional campus resources and programs, courses of academic study, as well as required sessions about topics such as studying abroad, financial planning, and the language of responsibility. Feedback from students, faculty, and advisors suggested that the programming was not as engaging and effective as intended.

As part of programmatic revision, increased collaboration between faculty and student services was facilitated through the addition of a strengths-based approach curriculum to the required First Year Inquiry course. Within this four-credit, team-taught course that focuses on the overarching question “How can one person make a difference?”, the strengths-based curriculum increased the amount of time that students spent in the classroom with an instructor and academic adviser. From those participating in this new model, several important trends were observed.

During this session, three perspectives related to the year-long collaborative programming will be shared. Student voices, as expressed in reflection journals, as well as instructional and advising viewpoints will be used to describe the benefits and challenges of such programming.

The National Orientation Directors Association (NODA): Orientation 101

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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.

Food for Thought...and Action: A Multidisciplinary Approach to the First-Year Inquiry

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Introduction and Overview of the FYE program:

We will begin the presentation with introductions of the three faculty members and an overview of our disciplines. An overview of the FYE program at the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities will be provided. In particular, we will discuss the learning objectives and intended outcomes of the 4-credit FYI course, Multidisciplinary Ways of Knowing. We will share how the food section came in existence; how we decided on the topic; and the initial collaboration that occurred in our team.

Course Overview and Multidisciplinary Process:

We intend to share content-related details about the course with participants. However, the process of this collaboration will likely be more worthwhile. How did we make decisions about content? How did we intend to weave in the multiple disciplines around a central topic? What did we do when disagreements surfaced in the planning process?

Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Philosophy:

As faculty members from three different disciplines, we inevitably have varying viewpoints about pedagogical philosophy, curriculum design processes, and student assessment and evaluation. We intend to talk about how we made decisions, compromises, and maintained a sense of independence while working collaboratively together. Decisions about texts, evaluation of written projects, and topics will be included.

Collaboration with Student Services:

Our program includes a partnership with the student services unit in our department. This is a vital component of the FYE program. Both academic advisers and career counselors are directly and intentionally involved in the student engagement process. We will outline how this worked specifically during the past two years. Currently, all of our students completed the tool, StrengthQuest, published by Gallup. Advisers are working collaboratively with faculty and students to provide a StrengthQuest curriculum designed to help students understand and apply their top signature themes based on the tool (Lopez & Louis, 2009).

Evaluation of Class and Program:

Any sustainable program need to have ongoing evaluation. We will highlight the features of our FYE assessment and evaluation process. In particular, we will share excerpts from student journals that were completed throughout the semester. Additionally, we will outline future objectives, new ideas, and possible collaborative efforts as we move forward.

Participation and Discussion from Participants:

We intend for this program to allow some time near the conclusion for participant dialogue and exchange of best practice ideas. We would like to hear from other participants.

Partnering Academic and Student Affairs to Support Students in a Scholarship-Funded, Two-Year Learning Community

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This panel will describe the approaches taken to partner Academic Affairs with Student Affairs in the creation of a new, two-year learning community for recipients of a scholarship from a donor outside of the University. All of the students are Pell-eligible and more than half are first-generation college students. At over 300 students, this learning community is larger than most and consists of students from all of the eight undergraduate colleges at the University. Nonetheless, a high percentage of students report that the learning community has made them feel more connected to the University and retention data for the pilot year of the program was high (93.38% continued into their second year).

This new program was designed to foster connections across units from the start. Personnel were chosen not only because of the expertise they brought to their specific areas, but because of their track records as team players. While lead coordinators are primarily responsible for his or her area (programming, tutoring, and mentors; faculty orientation and development), they determined early that it was important to share information, invite input from the whole team, and trouble shoot problems together. Their work and coordination was facilitated by a third staff member, by the Dean who oversees the program, and by regular, frequent conversations.

Presenters will describe aspects of the program that are designed to meet the needs of the students and discuss how they connect these portions of the program to work being done in other areas. All members of the learning community co-enroll in 2 courses each semester of their first year and 1 course each semester of their second year. All students are expected to

participate in academic, life skill, and social programming. Free tutoring is provided for academic subjects that are in high demand by first and second-year students. Staff facilitate the formation of study groups for the co-enrolled courses. First-year students are supported by well-trained student mentors, most of whom are second-year members of the community. Students who struggle with their courses are given additional support from staff.

Developing, Implementing, and Assessing an Early Alert System

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Early alert systems offer institutions systematic approaches to identifying and intervening with students exhibiting at-risk behaviors. Many of these systems rely on a common format for student referral to central receiving point. Systems at larger institutions often use web-based technology to allow for a scalable (available campus wide) approach to at-risk intervention. This presentation describes the development and implementation of a web-based, fully integrated early alert referral system at a large, public university in the Southwest. After a brief review of the academic early alert concept, the presentation describes the development of the system from a conceptual perspective, including how administrative, faculty, and student service input guided development. The next section details the technical aspects of system design, presented from the end-user perspective, emphasizing the integration of the system into the campus student information system. The following section includes a thorough description of the first term's experience implementing the system, including aggregated descriptive data for those using the system, the students referred, and the follow-up to the referrals. Initial analysis indicates a modest positive relationship between personal follow-up to referral and student success. The presentation concludes with recommendations for research and practice.

Using FYE in a Dual Enrollment Program

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Using assessment from the first year of the First STEP (Seamless Transition Enrollment Partnership) program, the state institution worked with the community college to determine direction for the second year of the program. This presentation will outline the results of that first year assessment along with lessons learned and implications for the future of the program. The first year program result yielded a 22% matriculation rate. While not as high as originally anticipated, provided a benchmark for future programming.

Details will be shared about the selection process from year one to year two of the program, how course work was adapted to incorporate a formal First Year Experience and Learning Communities at the state institution and how the usage of support services, such as tutoring and advising impacted the student population and their successful transition.

Implementing Assessments that Yield Practical and Specific Program Improvements

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This workshop will discuss the selection and implementation of assessments useful in driving program improvements. Program development backed by empirically-supported evaluation measures benefits from more methodologically rigorous methods that can instill greater confidence in the specific improvements implemented. Often more reliable and trusted guides, evaluation measures can be used to yield practical and specific changes to a program's curriculum, teaching quality, and core goals.

We will discuss our FYE course evaluation research project, demonstrating its success in identifying key areas of student experience and how we address those key areas through the FYE 108 class. On this assessment, students rated how well the FYE program improved or enhanced their experience in the following domains: academic, social, goal-commitment, satisfaction with UNC, and plans for future enrollment. A multiple linear regression analysis showed that student responses on the academic, social, and goal-commitment subscales explained over 51% of the variability in responses on student satisfaction with UNC. Essentially, student perceptions about how UNC's FYE 108 course addressed their academic and social experiences, as well as their level of goal-commitment, could explain over half of the variance in perceptions of how well UNC fits students. This suggests that these areas of student experience impact student satisfaction with UNC. These results demonstrate that our program

and its FYE course are significantly impacting students' perceptions of important aspects of their experience at the university.

We will discuss how we designed and implemented our program evaluation measure to capture the FYE 108 course elements that have the most influence on student satisfaction and persistence. Without this assessment, we would only be able to address course elements that have face-validity, or seem to be linked with our program goals and outcomes. However, by using a sound assessment instrument, we have been able to design practical program improvements that we are confident will influence our program goals.

We selected our instructor evaluation measure based on extensive research of the scholarly education and psychology literature. With this detailed assessment, we will be better able to address specific aspects of teaching through consultative feedback interventions, thereby improving the quality of teaching in our program and ensuring that our core curriculum is presented well in the classroom.

Capstone Scholars Program: A Recipe for Success

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The Capstone Scholars program includes opportunities that are specific to both freshmen, and/or sophomores, as well as quite a few that are offered equally to both. Additionally programs are offered specific to semester with all being categorized under the headings of the three pillars of success for our programs which are "Academics. Social & Service. Leadership". The Capstone Scholars program encourages students to take advantage of the many opportunities that exist within the program and by doing so will be enabled to fulfill our program motto which is "Dream Big. Impact the Community. Leave a Legacy". This presentation is designed to share the creation, development, and ongoing components of the Capstone Scholars program from its' development in 2005 to present day status.

Marketing is an essential component of the Capstone Scholars program and begins with its' exposure to potential students and parents at a wide variety of functions to include the USC Open House Recruitment events, Scholars Day, Carolina Junior Preview, the University Presidential High School Student Reception, and of course the daily drop-ins that occur on a frequent basis. Discussed will be the development and distribution of program materials, as well as the continual update of the program website.

Housing is another integral component of the program and discussed will be the specifics of this living/learning community with all its' collaborative relationships. Reviewed will be the role of the Resident Life Coordinator, the Resident Mentors, and the implementation of learning community programs which support the Carolina Core.

Programmatic details specific to semester will be reviewed as this presentation will follow the student from first semester through fourth semester of a two year program. Additionally, a review of the programs will be undertaken as they are categorized into the three pillars of success; "Academics. Social & Service. Leadership". Included in this aspect of the presentation will be a review of individual programs, the successes and failures, as well as the assessment tools utilized to gauge success.

Academic success is gauged through participation in University 101, special themed sections of English 101, the Emerging Leaders program, as well as the Discover program. Social & Service success is gauged through participation at the Welcome Luncheon, Hot Cookie Friday, Everybody's Birthday Party, and the Service Friday and Saturday opportunities. Leadership success is gauged through participation in the Conversation and Cinema Series, as well as the high ropes course and through personal challenge.

Spirituality, Authenticity, Wholeness, and Self-Renewal in the Academy

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The session will open with the presenters providing context and background on this important topic. Then in a small group, participants will be invited to discuss the following questions:

1. In your institutional life and work, can you think of specific times or situations in which you have experienced a clash between your personal values and institutional values and practices? Give specific examples of times or occasions in which you felt compelled to compromise your values and beliefs.
2. What kind of collegial behavior or administrative policies generate value conflicts for you or create inauthentic behavior?
3. In what ways are the beliefs and values of your department or institution congruent or incongruent with your own?

4. Are there times when your interactions with students have offered opportunities to discuss issues of spirituality, authenticity, and wholeness? How have you reacted to the opportunity?
5. Does your institution provide safe structures or opportunities for the sharing of values? Would the process used for this session facilitate such sharing on your home campus?
The session will conclude with the presenters facilitating a processing of the discussion and a sharing of resources on the topic.

The Role of First-Year Seminars in College-Level Writing Instruction

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In 2006, nearly three times as many respondents to the National Survey of First-Year Seminars indicated they offered an academic seminar as those responding in 1991, the first time the question was asked. Since the late 1990s, academic first-year seminars, especially those with variable content across sections, have replaced required first-year writing courses or filled an integral role in writing across the curriculum programs on a handful of campuses (Bamberg, 1997; Runciman, 1998; Moon, 2003). Yet, the National Survey of First-Year Seminars provides limited insight into how widespread this phenomenon might be. Since 2003, the survey has asked whether writing skills is considered an important course topic. Responses suggest that writing may be a very important component of academic seminars, with 37.3% of common content and 56.5% of variable content seminars reporting this as an important topic (compared with 5.1% of extended orientation seminars) in 2006. To date, the survey has not provided a clear picture of how writing might be used in the course. That is, whether writing activities are primarily designed to develop college-level writing skills or whether writing is used primarily as a vehicle to process other course topics. For the fall 2009 administration of the National Survey of First-Year Seminars, additional questions have been included to help us develop a fuller picture of where and how writing instruction is incorporated in first-year seminars.

This session will offer a brief literature review examining the possibilities for and problems with the first-year seminar as a site for college-level writing instruction. The presenter will attempt to construct a national picture of the role of writing in first-year seminars, drawing on data from the 2003, 2006, and 2009 administrations of the National Survey of First-Year Seminars. While writing appears to be most heavily embedded in academic seminars, the presenter will examine its uses across a range of seminar types. Finally, the presenter will explore the ways that writing instruction becomes embedded in the seminar through links to other courses. With this information in mind, participants will be invited to explore several questions related to the role of writing instruction in first-year seminars:

- What kinds of faculty development initiatives are needed to support writing instruction or the use of writing in first-year seminars?

*What is the relationship between the seminar and the writing program on campus?

**How does the seminar support the larger institutional goals related to student writing?

**How can the writing program administrator support writing instruction in the seminar?
*What role might writing play in a variety of seminar types—not just the academic seminar—and how might students benefit from its inclusion?

Focusing on What Matters: Using Assessment to Create Effective Faculty Development

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Instructors play a large role in the success of a first-year seminar. At the University of South Carolina, the quality of instruction and use of engaging pedagogies are the top predictors of overall course effectiveness in University 101. Thus, ensuring a successful first-year seminar requires a high level of quality faculty development. This session will focus on how to use relevant assessment evidence to make decisions about faculty development efforts.

This presentation will consist of two main parts. First, various assessment tools used at the University of South Carolina will be shared and data from these various assessments will be highlighted in order to make connections between data and resulting initiatives. Examples of various instruments will be provided for participants.

The remaining part of the presentation will discuss resulting initiatives, including the creation of 1) an annual teaching conference for University 101 instructors as a method of ongoing faculty development and 2) a new faculty resource manual with ideas for best practices that were identified during our assessment process.

First, the Building Connections Conference is an annual conference for current University 101 instructors that focuses on engaging pedagogies and teaching and learning techniques. Last year's inaugural event featured sessions on active learning strategies, how to present on various course topics, and how to appropriately utilize various resources including the course textbook, additional readings, and campus partners. The presentation will discuss how the agenda was

shaped by the findings from our past year's assessment results. The conference program highlights and conference evaluations will also be shared.

Second, utilizing assessment data we were able to identify instructors who showed evidence of successfully achieving course outcomes. These top performing instructors were invited to help create a newly developed 500-page Faculty Resource Manual for all instructors. This manual provides information on broader topics including teaching and learning techniques, classroom management, syllabus preparation and working with a peer leader, as well as chapters to address each of the courses' 13 learning outcomes. This manual is shared with instructors via an online network, which also includes a discussion board, training information, and a place to share activities and ideas with other instructors. This session will share strategies that will help institutions develop a similar manual for their programs.

Resources and examples will be provided related to various assessments and initiatives discussed throughout the presentation. The end of the session will also allow time for participants to ask questions and engage in discussion as a way of gathering more information to take back to their individual institutions.

Academic and Engagement Planning: Coaching First-Year Students to Success

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First-year students arrive on campus with many new academic and social challenges. Academic success coaching and planning assists students in identifying their goals and interests.

The Academic Centers for Excellence (ACE) at USC offer free academic success coaching to all students in four locations (three residence halls and one in the main campus library). Twenty-two graduate students serve as Academic Success Coaches assisting students with study skills, time management, and goal setting. An essential component of these ACE meetings is individually assisting the students to complete an Academic Plan and/or a Student Engagement Plan. The Academic Plan is a written document that helps students reflect on their current abilities and motivations in college; identify successful study strategies and potential challenges; establish a plan for future courses; and set strategic academic goals. The Student Engagement Plan includes an inventory of current involvement on campus, reflective questions,

mind-mapping techniques, and defined learning outcomes. The Student Engagement Plan pays special attention to service learning, undergraduate research, and study abroad opportunities.

Specifically, this session will provide: 1) the philosophy and importance of academic success coaching its influence on student engagement 2) Information on how to coach students through academic and engagement planning 3) Using assessment, reflection, and goal-setting as tools for student success.

Ensuring Relevance and Effectiveness through Course Review

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University 101 at the University of South Carolina is now in its 37th year. Over that time, like many other first-year seminars, the course has accumulated a great deal of content. As student needs arose on campus, UNIV 101 was charged with addressing each particular issue. As a result, instructors were asked to cover more content than they reasonably could do well. In order to determine what the course should cover and accomplish, especially in light of what students need on our campus today, a course review process was implemented in 2008-09.

This session will provide an overview of this process and outline a model for conducting a similar review on participants' home campuses. Steps in this process included: 1) appointing an inclusive committee (advice will be shared on identifying the right players on a given campus); 2) learning about first-year students on our campus, including who they are, how they've changed over the past several years, and how they compare to students nationally (we will share examples of how to find this information on their campus); 3) conducting a needs activity to determine what topics or goals the course should cover; 4) developing manageable and measurable learning outcomes; 5) mapping the outcomes with curricular processes and content; and 6) setting parameters and recommendations for each outcome. Portions of this process will

be demonstrated as interactive components of the session and sample materials will be provided.

In addition to sharing and modeling the steps in a course review, this session will discuss issues that underlie the process, such as:

? What is the appropriate balance between insuring consistency across sections and providing individual instructors with enough flexibility to make the course interesting and exciting to teach?

? What is the appropriate level of rigor and workload for the course?

? How do we customize the course to meet the diverse needs of the 3000+ students who enroll?

? What are the political implications for rebuilding and changing the requirements for an established course?

The results of the dialogue on our campus yielded a new set of learning outcomes and a common course requirements document, which will be shared with participants of this session. Whether your campus has an existing seminar or if you are just starting (or hoping) to create one, this session will provide ideas and issues to consider when designing course content, policies, and requirements.

What is the “First-Year Experience”? Discussions and Definitions for Practice

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Summary: None

Transitioning from Dual Enrollment to the First-Year

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The presentation will begin with a summary of the research conducted, including research questions, interview protocol, research sites, and sample populations, including demographic information related to research sites and populations. To give context to the environments involved in the study, a background of the history and current status of ECHSs will be given. Additionally, the presenter will share contextual information about the traditional high school sites to help give a framework to the data produced. Findings from the presenter’s Master’s thesis, *Perceptions and Expectations: A Qualitative Investigation into Early College High*

Schools, will be shared, focusing on the self-identified perceptions of college readiness in the following areas: (1) academic/subject matter preparedness; (2) key cognitive factors, including the ability to think critically, analyze, and synthesize; (3) academic behaviors; and (4) “college knowledge,” or the students’ contextual understanding of the social and organizational transition to college. Student quotes, thoughts, and summaries in each of the areas will be provided. Findings and themes from both high school types will be compared for similarities and differences. The research findings will serve as a foundation to discuss students enrolled in dual enrollment programs and their transitional needs. Audience members will separate into small groups to discuss the implications of the research in several key areas of student affairs, including academic success, advising, peer leadership, and social transitions and engagement. Each group will discuss their thoughts and conclusions with the larger group, opening each area up to large group conversation. Finally, the presenter will end with a discussion focused around ways to identify and reach out to this student population at the institutional and individual level.

Third-Culture Students: An Exploratory Study of Transition in the First Year of College

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The presenter will begin by defining third culture students (e.g., general characteristics, challenges associated with a mobile lifestyle) and will then offer an overview on the current research on this population of students. The presenter will then discuss the research questions that guided the study, the significance of the study, participants involved, and methods used. Finally, the presenter will discuss the preliminary findings and implications for further research. The presenter will allow time for session participants to engage in discussion/ask questions about the research at the end of the session.

Findings from a National Survey of Peer Leadership Experiences and Outcomes

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Summary: None

Publishing on the College Student Experience

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The session will provide an overview of the three main vehicles for publishing on the college student experience through the National Resource Center, including the Journal of The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition, E-Source for College Transitions (an electronic newsletter for practitioners), and a topical book series. The editors for each publication will discuss the general guidelines for writing for these different outlets and highlight topics that are of particular interest right now. Other possible publishing venues will also be described. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and to pitch ideas to the editorial staff.

Civic Engagement in the First-Year Experience

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Summary: None

Primer for First-Time Attendees

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Summary: None

In Their Own Words: Using Student Narratives to Understand What Matters Most in First-Year Seminars

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Many of the contemporary first-year seminars are examples of institution-specific types of courses, with some content relating to aspects of a particular campus or its history, academic skills (e.g., critical thinking, time management, study skills), institutional resources, and some provide introductions to academic majors or advising (Griffin, Romm, and Tobolowsky, 2008). Because first-year seminars are often interdisciplinary and are sometimes part of a larger set of programs created specifically for first-year students, it can be challenging to isolate the impact of course participation on students, leading many institutions to conduct campus-specific assessment (Keup & Barefoot, 2005). Data about the impact of first-year seminar participation on retention are helpful to institutions, but do not provide an understanding of what aspects of the course have the greatest impact on students. The purpose of this study was to use first-year student narratives to determine what aspects of the first-year seminar have the greatest perceived impact on students while they are enrolled in the course.

The major findings of this study include: a) the first-year seminar helped facilitate the transition to college because it provided an opportunity to learn about campus resources and customs; b) students gained academic confidence from participation in a first-year seminar; c) through the course, students developed a sense trust for their first-year seminar instructor; d) and students developed friendships with peers in the first-year seminar.

During this session, the presenter will share information about the study design, methodology, and data analysis, but much of the session will be devoted to a discussion of the findings and the implications and opportunities related to these findings and first-year seminar policy and practice. Participants will leave the session with information and resources (e.g., study

protocol) that they can adapt to understand student perceptions concerning aspects of the first-year seminars on their campus, and examples of pedagogies to enhance first-year seminar instruction.

Timing is Everything: Librarians and Faculty Connect to Create Effective First-Year Library Instruction

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First Year Writing Faculty regularly bring their classes into the library for instruction, but oftentimes the timing and information are not optimum for the students' experience. There are several reasons for this. First, research has shown that students tend to overestimate their information literacy abilities and research skills, so they may incorrectly believe their current knowledge is sufficient for their research needs. In addition to student over-confidence, instruction is frequently scheduled before the students have chosen a topic, or after they have created full thesis statements and outlines. For library instruction to be successful, it is important that the timing is correct and the information is relevant. Finally, it is crucial that students understand how this process will benefit their writing and improve their grades. The main function of library instruction is to support the faculty's curriculum and to assist students in their research goals. For a First Year English research paper, library instruction is one of the necessary first steps in the writing process. Timing the visit as such is important, so students are prepared with topics to research. As they start the process, they begin to understand that the decisions they make as they search—narrowing, focusing, note taking, and evaluating—will comprise the foundation of their paper: the thesis statement, the introduction and the outline. The optimum time is after they have a topic they will research, and before they've written a thesis statement and an outline. It is, after all, the research that will guide the body of their papers.

When faculty and librarians collaborate before instruction, students benefit from having a clearer understanding of the faculty's assignment and an expectation of how the library's resources will help them to write a successful research paper.

Discovery: A High School Summer Camp Leads to College Major Decisions

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In a time when students are bombarded with images of professions, how do they decipher between their desire for the idealized image and their actual desire to follow their passions and talents?

"Design Matters" is a weeklong in-residence summer camp in the College of Architecture & Design at the University of Tennessee where students develop a curiosity for design and a better understanding of their possible career paths as architects and interior designers. A very important aspect of the camp provides students with time to ask professors, counselors and student affairs professionals' questions. Information is discussed about classes and the appropriateness of those classes in regards to the architecture and interior design programs as well as portfolios, career choices, materials and the creative process.

The poster will reflect statistical survey data gathered from the following populations: high school students that attended "Design Matters", incoming freshmen students that attended summer orientation prior to entering the College of Architecture & Design and students that completed the first year in the College. Summer programs such as this one helps simulate a first year college experience in a major to help high school students determine their choice of a major.

We believe that this poster crosses disciplinary boundaries, raises important questions, and presents useful information for advisors and teachers in all degree programs. This poster could be seen as an important addition to the 29th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience. It will speak to advisors of high achieving students, professional degree students, first year students, counselors working with high school students, and the advisor assisting students with career planning.

Implementing Multi-Level Assessment Results: Year One and Year Two of a Summer Bridge Program

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In 2008, the University of Tennessee developed a summer bridge program for at-risk students. 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. Variables to identify at-risk students included racial/ethnic minority status, low-income, and first generation, among others. The five week program required participants to enroll in two academic courses and engage in several experiential activities throughout the first summer session. A comprehensive assessment plan was developed and implemented using a concurrent mixed methods approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). The results of these assessments of Year One were used to further develop the summer bridge program during Year Two. Information at the student, course, and program levels guided changes during Year Two. For example, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach & Jackson, 1996) was administered to assess the burnout level of students participating in the summer bridge program.

“But, I Didn’t Know I was Plagiarizing!” Teaching Students about Ethical Information Use

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As Stephen Wilhoit noted in his 1994 article “Helping Students Avoid Plagiarism,” “Few students enter college fully understanding the relationship between plagiarism and the rules about quoting, paraphrasing, and documenting material.” Many students enter college never having written a lengthy research paper. Others may come from countries with academic cultures that differ from the United States regarding the rules about information use. To address this knowledge deficit, UT Arlington Library has developed multiple approaches to teaching students about plagiarism.

Academic Integrity 101

Academic Integrity 101 is an active learning curriculum used to teach first-year students about plagiarism. This curriculum is part of UT Arlington’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). As a part of the QEP, we are assessing student learning by applying a critical thinking rubric to student post-test survey responses. At the time of this proposal, we have collected and evaluated two-years of data. Data indicate that those students who attend the library’s active learning session have a better understanding of what constitutes plagiarism, the consequences for plagiarism, and the ethical standards for information use.

Online Tutorial

Professors value their class time. In a recent in-house survey, 79% of professors preferred that their students learn about plagiarism online. Since 2004, UT Arlington Library offered a plagiarism tutorial online. The tutorial covers why acknowledging sources is important and how to quote and paraphrase correctly, then gives students the opportunity to test their knowledge. After passing a randomized quiz, students can email the results to their professor, providing proof of completion.

Office of Student Conduct

The Office of Student Conduct (OSC) requested the creation of the online tutorial for students referred to their office for plagiarism violations. Before that time, OSC did not feel there was a site that adequately taught plagiarism prevention. Since this initial collaboration, the library and OSC have participated in Academic Integrity Week, which seeks to educate students about academic honesty. Most recently, the library and OSC are developing an in-person plagiarism workshop with an online component.

Throughout our session, we will discuss how we have addressed the problem of plagiarism, what choices we made in our plagiarism curriculum, and where we are headed with future development.

Gateway to Information Literacy: Bridging the Gap for Provisionally-Admitted Students

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Assessment in Libraries

Over the past decade, assessment in academic libraries has moved beyond just quantitative measures such as volumes owned and questions asked to outcomes based assessment. This shift parallels the assessment trends throughout higher education. This new way of assessing and collecting data in libraries not only includes evaluating collections and internal processes but also contributions to student learning. The creation of the Association of College and Research Libraries' Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education and the surge of outcomes based assessment in higher education have empowered libraries to see themselves as partners in the academic endeavor, sharing the responsibility of student learning in the classroom.

History of Information Literacy Instruction for Gateway Advantage Students

At the University of Texas at Arlington Library, we are fortunate to collaborate with the Gateway Advantage program to provide in-depth information literacy instruction to the University's provisionally admitted student population. While library instruction existed for this population prior to 2000, it was not until the Library's creation of its Information Literacy Program that our paradigm began to shift. We, as well as the University, began to see library instruction as more than just a one-time, 50-minute field trip on a course syllabus. The Library now aligns its instruction to the first-year population in a coordinated program of curriculum.

Assessment

Our assessment of library instruction for the Gateway Advantage program has evolved over time. Starting as simply counting students in the room, we have transitioned through pre/post tests and reflection papers, finally to arrive at articulated learning outcomes that are measured through students' course work. In 2006, we began a Unit Effectiveness Project which sought to document student learning in four areas: developing research questions and strategies, and evaluating and citing sources. Each learning outcome was assessed using data collected via a librarian-graded annotated bibliography and homework assignment, in combination with an analysis of students' final project reference lists. Data collected from this assessment has significantly changed the curriculum for our library sessions.

Partnerships

Some may look at the performance indicators of the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education as a faculty domain while others may see it in the realm of libraries. However, once library jargon is removed from the equation, it is easy to see that information literacy is actually a shared domain that encapsulates an issue all of higher education shares: critical thinking. Recognizing this opens the door to unlimited partnerships between all academic and non-academic units on campus.

Attendees can expect to leave our session with examples of learning outcomes, assignments, rubrics, and understanding of how we implemented and changed our instruction.

It Takes a Campus: Developing Collaborations across Student and Academic Affairs

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Summary: None

First-Year Student Success and Retention: An Intervention Project

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“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.

The specifics of how a campus chooses to support first-year students can vary dramatically depending upon that campus’ organizational structure, culture, staffing, and the population of the students they serve. While some campuses have a static set of residence hall students which gives opportunities for one-on-one interventions, other campuses serve large populations of commuter students which make one-on-one interventions more difficult. Similarly some campuses offer first-year seminars while some campuses don’t have first-year seminars at all. The presenters of this presentation represent a variety of first-year experience programs.

This program will focus on two campus’ efforts to support student success and retention through one-on-one interventions between faculty/staff of various departments and first-year students. Each campus utilized MAP-Works, a student retention and success project used by over 80 colleges/universities, to identify students at risk. Through a sophisticated predictive model, MAP-Works identifies students potentially at risk for poor academic performance or retention. Faculty/staff from various departments are directly linked to students; they form the basis of the intervention team.

This presentation will focus on these campus’ efforts, the collaboration across the various departments involved, and the lessons learned as they plan for future interventions. We will discuss how faculty/staff intervene with students, the referrals that were given, and follow ups that were done. Open discussion and questions are invited throughout the session.

Tinto, V. 1993. Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Adventures in Assessment: Innovations in First-Year Learning Community Assessment and their Implications for Women and Students of Color

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Although first-year seminars are very common on today's American campuses (with estimates of their availability ranging between 85 and 90% of institutions), roughly half of such institutions require the seminars of entering students. Because the University of Utah's first-year LEAP Program is optional, and because it is emphatically academic in content and aims to move students efficiently into majors and toward timely graduation, it offers an opportunity for a comparative study of the effects of learning community participation. We measured these effects by pairing students who were demographic "twins"-- matched for high school attended, gender, race or ethnicity, entering college cohort, ACT scores and high school GPA -- but only one of whom completed the two-semester LEAP curriculum. After examining close to 1500 such pairs, we discovered that LEAP students had higher first and second semester freshman GPA's than their non-LEAP twins, attempted and completed more credit hours, were more likely to be retained into their sophomore years, and graduated in greater proportions at both the four year and six year marks. However, when we added major to our matching criteria, these differences disappeared. In addition, all differences we discovered in the first year seemed to be much more pronounced for women students than for men. What to make of such complications? This presentation will present our assessment methodology and its rationale, discuss the results in some detail, and speculate on interpretive options. It will also lodge these interpretations in the context of the literature on learning communities and their associated educational outcomes, emphasizing the experiences within them of women and students of color. The presentation will also ask the audience to share challenges encountered in assessing their own programs or courses and to help us both to understand and make appropriate pedagogical and curricular use of the results of our study.

The High School Experiences, Interests, and Post-Secondary Expectations of First-Generation College Students: A National Descriptive Study

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Estimates suggest that approximately thirty percent of students entering their freshman year in 4-year colleges and universities are the first in their family to attend college (Choy, 2001.) Referred to as first-generation college students, some authors suggest these students may struggle to succeed academically (Gibbons et al., 2004; Harrell & Forney, 2003; Terenzini et al., 1996; Waburton et al. 2001). Unfortunately, although there is a growing interest in first-generation students, there currently exist few studies documenting the experience of these students at a national level.

In an effort to address the paucity of research in this area, the authors undertook the following nationwide cohort descriptive study. Specifically, data derived from the 2008 ACT examinee graduating class were obtained with permission (and without identifying information) from

ACT, Inc. in Iowa City. Data available in the ACT record, including new items that assess parental educational level, were analyzed in an effort to begin to answer the following questions:

- Are there demographic differences between first-generation and traditional high school students (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity)
- How do first-generation high school students and traditional high school students differ in their exposure to, and performance in, standard and accelerated coursework?
- Are there significant differences between the measured and expressed career interests first-generation and traditional high school students?
- Are there differences in levels of high school extracurricular engagement and out of class accomplishments between first generation and traditional high school students?
- What are the post-secondary aspirations of first-generation high school students and do those aspirations differ from traditional high school students?

High school seniors in the study were identified from 1,378,757 students who completed the American College Testing (ACT) Entrance Examination in 2007 and 2008 and who indicated a 2008 anticipated high school graduation year. Duplicated records were removed from the sample. The sample consisted of 740,565 females and 607,076 males. The racial makeup of participants were White/Non-Hispanic origin (N = 699,871), Hispanic (N=18,966), Puerto Rican (N= 33,471), Mexican/Chicano (N= 46,260) African American (N =139,229), Asian (N= 42,247), American Indian (N = 10, 987), Multiracial (N =24,086) and “Other” (N = 21,580).

Results will be described from students responses on five primary sections of the ACT exam and registration process (demographics, Student Profile Section [SPS], self-reported academic and career interests, measured interests, and achievement test scores). The presentation will include more detail on the nature of these scales and how they were analyzed as well as the implications of our findings for both secondary and post-secondary educators and student support personnel.

Data-Driven Student Success Solutions: Notes from the Field

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Post-secondary institutions continue their efforts to understand, predict, and control the retention, academic performance, and graduation of their student populations. In our experience working with such institutions we are surprised by how few colleges and universities have coordinated and data-driven efforts in this regard. Whereas almost all post-secondary institutions now recognize the need to provide student support services (e.g., First-Year Experience, orientation, Supplemental Instruction, Learning Communities), few have coordinated their services and fewer still have developed a platform for assessing individual and aggregate student need.

Our presentation will highlight the adoption and use of a newly developed, brief, and customizable measure of non-cognitive/motivational student success factors in 5 post-secondary institutions and one early-college high school.

Presenters from these institutions will share their experiences utilizing the Student Strengths Inventory (SSI) as a tool to assess incoming first year students. Each institution faces locally specific challenges when attempting to address student persistence and performance. This presentation will incorporate experiences from a diverse group of schools, with different enrollments, student populations, and retention targets. The goals of undertaking data-driven efforts to address non-cognitive/motivational factors also differ for each institution. The presenters will describe their experiences assessing students prior to or upon arrival at college, efforts to develop interventions to provide customized feedback to students, as well as the creation of institutionally coordinated strategies to utilize the information about their students generated by the SSI.

An institutional decision to undertake the measurement of non-cognitive factors of incoming first year students is often a substantial undertaking. This action creates an opportunity for a campus-wide discussion on the provision of student services and systematic efforts to identify at risk students early in their experience and reach out to those students in order to connect the individual with available campus resources. The presenters will detail how the decision to assess students sparked discussion and debate about efforts to improve student retention and performance among many institutional stakeholders.

The program chair will also highlight experiences from other institutions and will provide attendees with a set of a guidelines for adopting and implementing data-driven student readiness assessment and developing institutionally coordinated use of those data.

A Dialogue on Evidence-Based Practices in Career Development Counseling and Advising

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Summary: None

Building Blocks of a New Student Orientation Program: Objectives, Partnerships and Innovation

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I will begin by introducing myself and sharing a little bit about my work with various New Student Orientation(NSO)and FYE programs. If the group is small enough, I will then have the participants attending introduce themselves and their expectations for the session. Since this program is targeted towards institutions with nascent to intermediate orientation programs, I will pass out a reflection sheet designed to help attendees informally assess what stage of development their program is in. I will then transition into a brief history of the NSO program at the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse over the past decade. This information will illustrate the evolution of the program from a series of random events into an intentional, focused program. I will describe how I came up with the five objectives of the UW-L orientation program and how I began to strategically form partnerships with key members of the campus community who were supportive of these objectives. I will then have members of the group brainstorm key members at their respective institutions. If the group fails to mention important but behind the scenes partners (i.e. grounds crew, maintenance staff, library personnel, etc.), I will discuss the importance of making connections with all campus FYE allies. At this point, I will pass out copies of the UW-L orientation booklet that is mailed to all new and transfer students. I will highlight some innovative programs we have tried and some of the lessons we have learned over the years. Some of these lessons include: 1) creative programs don't always have to cost a lot of money; 2) students can often help us rethink delivery systems that are more needs-based; 3) trying a new program is often better than being overly cautious and 4) while not always successful, innovative new programs yield hidden rewards. Next, I will ask for participants to share a few innovative programs on their respective

campuses. Then, I will briefly talk about our assessment activities in the area of new student orientation. I will talk about the shift we are making from satisfaction based surveys to learning outcome based assessments. I will end the presentation with questions, comments and a brief wrap up.

The Psychology of Active Learning: Theories and Strategies for Instructors of First-Year Students

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In this session, participants first will have the opportunity to compare the definition of the phrase “active learning” from two perspectives: the generalist approach of higher education, which focuses on the activity level of observable behaviors, and the specific approach of psychology, which focuses on the activity occurring within an individual mind. During this comparison, they will learn about cognitive processing as presented by both constructivist and information-processing theories.

Next, participants will engage in two simulated “experiences,” based on actual experiments from the field of psychology, designed to help them understand the theories and research that support a cognitive active learning approach to classroom instruction. The first experience focuses on the significance of schema (Ausubel, 1963; Picher & Anderson, 1977), or the effect of retrieving from long-term memory an abstract knowledge structure that can be used to better understand new information. The second experience focuses on the importance of working memory (Miller, 1956; The Cognition Lab, 1998), or the influence of the capacity and duration of the “workbench” of the mind to temporarily represent and store new information as it is being processed.

Finally, participants will be introduced to 16 different cognitive active learning strategies (adapted from Woolfolk, 2007, 2010) that they can use with and teach to their students. These strategies, which range from automatizing and chunking to practicing metacognitive awareness and using analogies, will be defined and exemplified. Additionally, the rationale for using each of these strategies to promote a cognitive approach to active learning will be highlighted.

Student Leaders: How They Impact and Engage in First-Year Initiatives

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In this program we will (1) describe the Student Ambassador program, and how the student leaders get involved in First-Year Initiatives on the UW-Green Bay campus (2) share the most relevant survey results from the student registration and orientation programs (3) describe the development of a Peer Mentor (PM) program for First Year Seminar courses at UW-Green Bay and (4) 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 PM's are different than Student Ambassadors –describe the different positions, funding, training and program goals

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.

(5) In the final part of our session we will share the qualitative data that we have collected (through focus groups and student interviews) from Student Ambassadors and Peer Mentors about what they learned by being involved student leaders throughout the many First-Year programs on campus. This part of the session will include short video clips highlighting student leaders. We will allow time for questions throughout the presentation, and at the end of the session.

Classroom Management in First-Year Seminars

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Summary: None

Engaging First-Year Students in Large Lectures: What Works, What doesn't and Why

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The presentation will begin with an introduction to the mission and goals of the Center for the First-Year Experience at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the rationale for undertaking the study. Presentation of the goals of the project will be followed by a description of the research methods, including the selection of the subjects, the interview protocol and the data analysis.

Next the themes, patterns and recommendations that emerged from the data analysis will be presented in three major categories. The first category will address the lecture experience and will review information about how faculty prepare to lecture, make the lecture personal, create interaction, address inappropriate behaviors, and use technology. The next category will examine faculty interaction with students outside of class including use of email and social networking media, review sessions, office hours and informal contacts. The third category is a summary of information gathered about teaching assistants, including their selection and training, mentoring and observation, and their role in grading, syllabus development and troubleshooting.

The presentation will continue with a review of the best advice from the interviewees. At this point the presentation will move from primarily descriptive data into a summary of recommendations for how to make large courses more engaging for first-year students. The summary will be presented largely in the words of the faculty interviewees, but will include observations about the role faculty can play in the socialization of new students at large universities.

The presentation will conclude with a reflection on the unexpected outcomes of the project, including the effect the interview may have had on the instructors and the unexpected benefits the project has had for the work of the Center for the First Year Experience. Finally, future directions for the research will be discussed.
Time will be left at the end for questions and discussion.

See How They Read! Emerging Trends in First-Year Student Reading Habits

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For many students, the transitional period during the first year provides little explicit reading instruction—at exactly the same time that students’ assigned reading is becoming increasingly complex. Much of the literature on reading habits and attitudes focuses on children; less has been established about college students and most of that has examined recreational reading (see Hughes-Hassell & Lutz, 2006). Other research has investigated college students’ academic reading activity, usually related to use of academic texts (Sikorski, Rich, Saville, Buskiss, Drogan & Davis, 2002; Surber, 1994) and general study skills. Much of this work has measured student ability to recall factual information (see Dyer, Riley, & Yerkovich, 2001). In general, though, few college-level studies have focused on reading as a practice of analysis and synthesis of ideas and creation of new understanding and knowledge. In order to support these students effectively, it is important that our practice is informed by close study of the reading communities we serve.

Our study seeks a more complete understanding of the reading skills, attitudes, and habits of incoming students. Specifically, our study investigated five interrelated topic areas: students’ reading attitudes, habits, and goals; reading environments; exposure to assigned and pleasure reading; online reading trends, and use of reading strategies. This understanding can help faculty and staff recognize students’ existing abilities and help them implement more adaptive reading strategies.

The presentation we propose will include an overview of the local issues at our research site and how we propose to use the findings. The bulk of the presentation will be devoted to reporting our results and the trends we found in the data.

Overall, many students reported exposure to a relatively broad set of reading strategies, including note-taking, outlining, summarizing, vocabulary exercises, and pre-reading activities. However, they perceived pre-reading activities as relatively less effective than other types of strategies—a fact which may indicate either that strategies such as skimming have become implicit/unconscious or that students may benefit from additional instruction in using these types of strategies, which have been shown to provide students with schema for acquiring and remembering new knowledge.

We will provide tables demonstrating cross-tabulations of scales measuring these attitudes and experiences with self-reported reading ability and discuss trends we see emerging from this data. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we will invite discussion and questions about our findings and their potential for application in other academic environments.

Connecting With Parents through Online Videos: WAY TO GO VIDEO

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Using email and website video as a helpful link to help parents of new students. The University of Toledo office of FYE in the UTLC produces a video blog that is sent out along with a family newsletter and in collaboration with student affairs. This is a presentation of how UT is using video blogs to help parents of new college students. There are books out about sending students off to college and preparation for that, but not on how “helicopter” parents deal with the loss of control. These short videos emailed out will guide them in how to parent from afar, let go, and encourage growing autonomy (Which is very hard for this generation’s parents) Videos will be shown and discussed. Colleges may encourage the use of technology as there is growing concern over intrusive, manipulate and overbearing parents. Student, academic and residence life affairs offices interaction with parents is becoming more combative and even litigious. As college educators we need to help parents let go and promote healthy burgeoning autonomy away at college sending a short video that challenges parents and family to work with us as a team to help their child gain autonomy. “Parents Can’t Go Away to College Too” Topics covered are Current trends anecdotes ? cell phones, living near campus, over parenting, nightmares of college professionals and how to reduce it. Now What? (Knowing What to Do) Was I Ready? What Do I Do Now? What Do They Need? How Can I Assist From Afar? What is a parent’s mission? Our Vision of partnership Crashing the Helicopter Encouraging Their Growing Autonomy Keep the Helicopter in the garage. Use only if there is an emergency How I learned to live on my own? What My Parents Did? Didn’t Do? What I want for my Child Critical Thinking ,Happiness, Fortitude, problem solving Healthy lifestyle Good Choices Independent Thinking Developing a communication Flow to support all this online.

A Personalized Approach to Student Retention

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We will present our current retention data, which will include a snapshot of our student body and then drill down to details on our freshmen students population. Briefly, we'll review the history of our office and how we started by discussing the support we've received on campus along with mentioning the lack of support in certain areas. We'll present how we have worked to create buy-in from all areas across campus. We will then present the initiatives that have worked for us and give details along with the initiatives that have not worked. Presenting data long the way and personal insights.

Uncorking the Bottleneck: A Campus-wide Approach to First-Year Success in Mathematics

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Brad Roundy
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Carolyn Hamilton, Math Department Chair, will give a brief history of Utah Valley University as an open-admissions, public institution which was a community college as recently as 1993. Math courses range from remedial arithmetic to graduate-level courses for math majors. Five years ago, a Math Success Committee consisting of math faculty, advisors, and administrators was formed to look into course offerings, placement, failure rates, instruction methods, and tutoring resources.

Kathryn Van Wagoner, Director of UVU Math Tutorial Services, will describe the following recommendations from the committee which were implemented successfully:

Math Orientation is a 50-minute presentation given to students in first-year math courses during the second full week of classes to educate them regarding course offerings, department policies, effective study strategies, and campus tutoring resources. Outcomes of Math Orientation include increased enrollment in Liberal Arts Math versus College Algebra and increased awareness of campus policies and resources.

Advisor Breakfasts are extended presentations to campus advisors and administrators of topics covered in Math Orientation. Additionally, a question-answer period generated many ideas for improved policies and procedures. The Breakfasts fostered increased communication and understanding between the math department and advisors.

Structured Learning Assistance (SLA) sections of highly failed courses incorporate a mandatory workshop for at-risk students. Workshops, taught by math peer mentors, help students learn effective study strategies and math content. Outcomes from SLA include decreased failure rates and improved attitude toward math.

Brad Roundy, SLA facilitator and UVU math major, will share insights from his experiences both as a teaching assistant in the Math Lab and a facilitator for SLA sections. He will also share his personal math success story that includes “swirling” through five different institutions and majors before becoming a math major at UVU.

Carolyn Hamilton, will then discuss policy changes implemented on campus including enforced prerequisites and two-year expiration for all placement methods into math courses. Math Refresher Workshops were offered before the beginning of each semester for “stop-out” students returning to mathematics after extended absence. Outcomes from the Refresher Workshops show participants had an improved chance of success in their course as compared to students with current placement.

Hybrid sections of many courses were implemented to serve evening and weekend students.

Several video presentations were commissioned and used during Math Orientation and Advisor Breakfasts, including Sound Advice for Math and Student Success Vignettes. Excerpts from these productions will be shared as time permits.

Assessment: Utilizing Data to Make Changes

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Summary: None

Is this Required Reading?: A Learning-Centered Summer Reading Program that Fosters a Campus-Wide Culture of Engagement

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The summer reading program at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) is the first of many common experiences designed to develop a sense of engagement for the entire VCU community and its newest members – over 3700 first-year students. Housed in the University College (UC), the summer reading program along with other first-year student initiatives promote and enhance student success. The development and implementation of a successful Summer Reading Program that draws on the experiences and expertise of campus-wide representatives and participants will be discussed in this session.

The theme of VCU's summer reading text follows the theme of the Focused Inquiry course, a 2-semester seminar required of all first-year students. The book is selected by a committee made up of administrators, faculty, staff, students, and members of the University Board of Visitors. In addition, the President and Provost both endorse participation in the program. Students are provided a copy of the book during summer orientation. At that time, they and their parents are introduced to the summer reading program and the expectations that are inherent in a learning-centered environment. The students are expected to complete the book prior to their return to campus in August. Following their arrival on campus, students residing in residence halls are accompanied to Summer Reading Discussion Groups by their Residential Advisors. Off-campus students receive information on available discussion groups via email and postcards. For the past 2 years, over 2100 first-year students have taken part in over 80 Welcome Week Summer Reading Discussion Groups.

One of the most unique aspects of VCU's program is the university-wide commitment to the program. In 2009, over 225 volunteers worked to ensure a successful summer reading experience. They included administrators, faculty, staff, students, and representatives of the Board of Visitors. The discussions not only introduce academic dialogue, but also offer opportunities to establish connections with faculty, staff, and fellow students. During the fall semester, students continue to exchange ideas on the text in their Focused Inquiry classes. Participants will explore ways to involve members of both the academic and student affairs communities in text selection as well as program planning and implementation processes.

The program is assessed through surveys and the collection of anecdotal evidence. Faculty, administrators, students, and staff demonstrate exceptional teamwork in introducing first-year students to the academic and intellectual culture of the University. Examples of the teamwork that has evolved from this format will be discussed.

Assessed Benefits of a Common Reading: Growing a Comprehensive Program

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WSU initiated its Common Reading Program in 2007 with goals that are similar to those of other institutions using a common reading: to introduce incoming students to the intellectual life of the university, to provide opportunities for interaction with other students and with faculty around a common topic, and to introduce students to a rich diversity of ideas. WSU also sought to find books that could be used in a variety of first-year courses across the disciplines and that could highlight research as a process.

In the first year of the program, WSU's common reading program was modest in scope. Use of the book was encouraged in the freshman learning communities program, and two main events were held: an author lecture and a campus visit by a former WSU faculty member featured in the book. Library exhibits and residence hall programming related to the book were also featured. Although the book selection, a nonfiction book on the 1918 flu virus, was unpopular with students, the assessment data indicated a statistically significant improvement in students' responses to first-year experience questions for students who reported that at least two of their classes used the Common Reading in some way. This assessment also indicated that the lowest scoring goal statement was students' understanding of "the types of research that go on at a university."

Using the results of the first-year assessment, the Common Reading program in its second year worked to increase the number of classes in which the selected book was used and also developed a semester-long series of weekly lectures on topics related to the book, designed to introduce freshmen to the faculty and research at the institution. These were attended by over 1300 students. In addition, the author lecture was developed to highlight the excitement and discovery of doing research. This more comprehensive approach to programming led to an overall rise in student responses to the first-year experience questions, with the greatest level of improvement being on "understanding types of research."

Now in its third year, the program has used the assessment data to expand further: the faculty lecture series has been expended to be a year-long series and use of the book in classes has tripled to 90 sections of freshman courses. The number of partners has also increased and includes related colleges and student services.

Connecting First-Year Students with the Library: Two Institutions' Initiatives

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Using presentation software, the session will report on two institutional initiatives for connecting first-year students with the library. The first project, situated in a research university environment, utilized technology to create a first-year webpage (<http://www.lib.wayne.edu/sites/fye/>) that brought together library information and resources with relevant university-wide services. The presenters will begin with a demonstration of the webpage, discussing the impetus for the project, the literature review and other research that went into the design and development. They will report on the findings of the usability studies conducted with the webpage. Using a think-aloud protocol reviewed by the university's institutional review board, students completed a series of tasks that were screen captured for later analysis. As they verbalized their mental processes they were recorded and investigators took notes on their actions and comments. The assessment revealed the success of the page in comparison to the existing homepage in simplifying students' information seeking. Also highlighted will be findings related to students' technological skills and abilities to apply the information-seeking process. The session will conclude with a look towards future plans for the page.

The community college project, involving formative assessment, is an ongoing effort that began in response to an Achieving the Dream initiative. The presentation will include a short summary of the collaboration that took place between librarians and the Directors of Assessment and Institutional Research, in order to develop an agreed-to student learning outcome based on the Association of College and Research Library's Information Literacy standards; a shared assignment; and a shared rubric. In addition, the presentation will demonstrate how library faculty use embedded student work to measure how well students are meeting these selected library outcomes in a First-Year Experience/Academic Success course. A hands-on activity will demonstrate the process by which library faculty explored evaluation habits and increased consensus to improve grading reliability, using a sampling of anonymous student work. While the ultimate goal of the project is to measure student learning and modify class instruction based on those results, a level of agreement is necessary in the grading process in order to analyze student work more reliably. In this way, modifications to class assignments can be based more consistently on the quality and success of student work.

Timing the Message: Talking to Students and Families about the First Year of College

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Wesleyan College has had one version or another of a first-year seminar for decades, but implementation of its 2005 Quality Enhancement Plan established a comprehensive First-Year Experience and demanded that leaders articulate the meaning and importance of the first year of college. At Wesleyan College, accomplishing goals for the first-year experience requires collaboration among many college departments: admissions, academics affairs, and student affairs. But how do we communicate those goals to prospective—and matriculated—students and their families? This session will focus on multiple points of contact with students and their families along the timeline of the first year of college and discuss the timing and the substance of our messages about the first year of college. We will begin with the importance of the recruitment process, a time when the words we use to describe the first year of college may attract or discourage a prospective student. The second important contact point is early-summer orientation, when the message changes, growing even more urgent when students arrive for the fall semester and engage in orientation activities. But there are also important points throughout the year when we must continue to communicate the goals of the first year—at a time when the message moves from hypothetical to real!

This session will 1) examine important points along the timeline of the first year of college; 2) explore talking points for communicating the goals of the first year to students and their families; and 3) consider modes of delivery of the message of the first year. We will develop a model for a progressive message about the first year from recruitment through the end of the first year of college. Participants will be encouraged to contribute to the discussion.

Through the Eyes of Africa: A documentary of the Readership WT Ambassador Experience in Zambia

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The 15 minute documentary, *Through the Eyes of Africa: A common reading experience for West Texas A&M University Freshmen*, is an important story about first year students, created and produced entirely by undergraduate students. West Texas A&M University freshmen students recently travelled to Africa to change the world. Three West Texas A&M University mass communication majors documented the entire experience in a short film. The documentary tells the story of first-year students travelling to Lundazi, Zambia through our common reader program, which has an international travel and service component. This project and documentary represents:

Curricular Innovation.
Global Education.
Intellectual Engagement.

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. For 2008, WTAMU developed curriculum assignments, projects, and services addressing the conflicts rocking Africa based on What is the What, by Dave Eggers. Core courses tackled domestic issues related to Africa through policy, politics and awareness. Readership WT Ambassadors tackled issues related to Africa through an extensive study-aboard experience where they supported existing efforts with their hands, hearts, and minds.

This session will show the documentary of this trip and talk about how to create a similar experience on your campus.

Incorporating Faculty as Advising Fellows in a Student Success Center

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Advising has changed from an impersonal, all-day registration process involving long lines and many stations, to a more individual and relational experience with a professional advisor. As enrollment of first-generation students rises and pressure mounts to choose a major (with few electives to allow for exploration), competent advising is imperative. Today’s advising goes far

beyond the practicalities of what classes to take, and ideally involves developing relationships and, perhaps, demystifying academia for incoming college students.

Sharing one university's experience, this workshop focuses on the successes and challenges of incorporating faculty advising fellows into the STARR (Student Advising, Registration and Retention) Center, which serves all students with 60 hours or less. Prior to implementing the faculty fellows program, each department was asked to send a representative to help with advising and registration during busy times. Not all departments were represented, and frequently the responsibility for working the STARR Center went to the newest faculty with little experience.

Currently, faculty fellows are hired to work 10 hours per week in the STARR Center, which is a core component of the university's recently opened Student Success Center. Faculty fellows are full-time faculty of varying ranks, who have demonstrated student-centered philosophies and represent varied academic disciplines. Fellows agree to a two-year commitment and receive a stipend or release time every semester and are trained in intrusive advising techniques. They agree to work during the summer, advising incoming freshmen during New Student Orientations. For many students, NSO is the first contact with the university and with faculty; having faculty integrally involved in the process may help students feel more comfortable with approaching professors in the future.

In the STARR Center, fellows supplement the work of full-time professional advisors. All students must be "greenlighted" prior to registering for each semester. Students with 60 hours or less must see an advisor in the STARR Center, but faculty fellows also develop relationships with students on probation, and follow-up on early-alert referrals from other faculty. Early alerts can signify academic problems or personal issues, and advisors can be proactive in helping students be successful. By developing relationships with faculty from outside of their departments, students may be more likely to seek assistance when struggling academically or personally. Students can begin to see faculty in a different light – beyond the classroom and outside of their offices, which may help students to enjoy their first-year experience on a much deeper level.

More than One Stop Shop: How to Build a Student Success Center for Student and Academic Affairs Programs and Activities

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This session will provide a step-by-step process for building, implementing, and executing a unique approach to student support program integration. At West Texas A&M University, we have recently designed and implemented a new take on the one stop shop with our Student Success Center (SSC).

The purpose of this endeavor is to provide an integrated student-centered support community. Programs operating within the SSC will deliver comprehensive and deliberate services to assist students in establishing, planning and accomplishing their academic, personal, and career goals. These services are provided by Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Enrollment Management offices with integration through technology, training, shared information about students and shared resources to truly produce a philosophy and execution that ensures no student falls through the cracks.

Because these support programs will be working intimately to provide multiple services to students, each program and its staff members must be willing to embrace the following as foundational principles:

1. Participatory Management. The SSC shall be operated in a manner that encourages and enables member programs to be involved in the decision-making process.
2. Student Centered. SSC programs shall seek to establish long-term relationships with each individual student served. Student needs will be addressed via the SSC/student relationship.
3. Team Work. SSC programs shall embrace unselfish cooperation among and within the operations of the SSC. SSC success is directly contingent upon team support and collaboration.
4. Open Communication. All SSC programs shall interact openly and respectfully with other SSC member programs.

5. Work Ethic. SSC member programs will possess high expectations of themselves and of the SSC team. SSC programs will strive to exceed the goals set for the SSC team and exuberantly celebrate team and individual accomplishments.

6. Shared Student Information. To the maximum extent legally and ethically possible, academically relevant information about the students we work with will be openly shared among all departments.

Programs participating in the SSC will be active in the decision making process for the operation of the SSC including reasonable access to the SSC records and financial information. Programs are encouraged to communicate constructive opinions regarding the operation of the SSC to the SSC council and management.

In order for the SSC to follow its mission and achieve its goals, participating programs will be encouraged to support and collaborate services with other programs in the SSC. SSC common training and cross training of staff and student employees will be encouraged, developed and implemented as needed to enhance effectiveness.

An Integrated Approach to Marketing your First-Year Experience Programs

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Though they may be an essential part of a university, there is still a need to market and promote FYE programs so that students find value in the programs. At West Texas A&M University, we have created a campaign that integrates all of the programs through the various promotional materials, publications, and presentations.

After three full years of this integrated approach, assessment results have shown that students understand the FYE Programs as well as feel more connected to the University due to the various ways of marketing our programs.

Increasing the Impact of Your First-Year Seminar

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First-year students face a variety of challenges, from dealing with new surroundings to taking on more personal responsibility. In order to help students adjust, WVU's experiential education

program incorporates group and personal challenges that focus on building self-confidence, leadership skills, trust, and acceptance. These experiences are similar to those that await first-year college students. WVU's experiential first-year seminar course takes place the summer before students begin college and continues through their first semester at school. The program is led by upper-class peer mentors. This approach helps students adjust socially. Peer mentors teach new students about university programs, services and traditions, and creating a strong sense of belonging. Fall classes continue to foster a connection to the WVU community, while also teaching time management skills and goal setting. The program also offers opportunities for upper-class students to develop leadership and teaching skills. Upper-class students serve as the trip leaders for summer experiences and help lead classroom discussions and out-of-class service learning experiences in the fall.

This session reports on research comparing an experiential based FYE to a more traditional FYE course at WVU. Utilizing an exploratory sequential design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) researchers used qualitative data to explain the quantitative differences. The results are applicable to all FYE courses. WVU's experiential first-year program is financially viable. The program's operating expenses are covered by program fees. WVU's experiential education program has grown from 14 students in 2003 to more than 620 students in 2009.

How do First-Year Assessment Results Tell Us What We need to do to Improve Sophomore Retention?

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Background of WVU Residential Education Assessment Efforts

WVU's Vice President for Student Affairs has emphasized the importance of Student Affairs program assessment by creating student affairs assessment council and by allocating resources to purchase Student Voice. Residential Education has also hired an assistant director for programming and assessment to assess programs offered to first-year students who reside in the

residence halls. Residential Education also teams with other student affairs departments who support first-year programs so that multiple categories of assessment occur.

Utilizing Multiple Categories of Assessment of First-Year Programs

WVU Residential Education works with several student affairs programs to assess first-year programs such as the first-year course and programs in the residence hall. Multiple models of assessment are beneficial in establishing patterns of student success that carry on past the freshmen year experience to their sophomore year.

In this session we will share the different methods of assessment that our used within our own unit as well as units that we work closely with in Student Affairs.

We will present information on how we utilize Residential Education assessment, University 101, a required first-year one credit course, Adventure West Virginia, New Student Orientation, Study Abroad, and the Office of Retention and Research all as major resources for freshmen student retention. The resources associated with each of these units/courses lead to the success of students in their freshmen year. We want to review how the assessment of these resources assists not only with retention during their freshmen year, but success in their sophomore year as well.

Residential Education Programs

We have recognized at our own institution that assessment with our residence hall programming is very difficult. We have a unique Resident Faculty Leader (RFL) program that is unlike any other in the United States. We will discuss the role of the RFL, how they implement academic and social programming with our freshman students, and what programs are effective in our residence hall system that should be continued into the sophomore year. We are in the early stages of our assessment. We will discuss how we started with a four models (academic, cultural, health and wellness, and social) approach several years ago and how that has evolved into seven models. We will discuss the implementation of our surveys of residence hall assessment that we developed to assess the effectiveness of our programming through the use of Apple I-touches, Student Voice, and EBIs. For example we ask ourselves: How do you begin to assess everything that is ongoing in residence halls and how do you being to understand what is effective and worth taking into the sophomore year.

UNIV 101 – First-Year Seminar Assessment

University 101, a freshman orientation course, helps both new freshmen and new transfer students become acclimated to University life and face new challenges. Our University 101 course is unique in that it is housed under Student Affairs. Residential Education works closely with this department for retention of our first year students. We will discuss how we use their current assessment methods to determine what should be used for sophomore students and beyond. For example we ask ourselves: Do we need to implement a sophomore orientation course?

Adventure WV

The Adventure WV Program is a unique outdoor orientation for first-year students at WVU. It offers participants diverse experiences and opportunities to learn about themselves, future

classmates, WVU, and West Virginia. Participants earn 3 credits upon successful completion of the program and course work, which is an alternative for University 101 (a required course). Residential Education works closely with this department for retention of our first year students. We will discuss how they used their current assessment methods to determine that there should be a sophomore Adventure WV program (SOAR).

Office of Retention and Research

The Student Affairs Office of Retention and Research coordinates the Academic Resource Centers, the Mid-Semester Help Center, and the Academic Probation program. In Collaboration with Residential Education and several other campus offices, they provide retention efforts for first-year students as well as upper classmen. We will discuss how Residential Education and the Office of Retention and Research are collaborating efforts to track our “At Risk” students through the use of simple forms, tracking of mid-term and final grades with our freshman residence hall population. We will discuss questions that we continue to ask ourselves: How do we provide the individual attention to our Sophomore (all off campus students) and beyond who struggle academically? What resources should we implement for our sophomore students and beyond?

New Student Orientation

New Student Orientation introduces our freshman students to campus. Freshman students learn about WVU's academic programs, meet faculty members, discover all of their student support services, and make new friends with other incoming students. Freshman register for their fall classes after discussing their options with their academic advisor. We will talk about how Residential Education collaborates with the Office of New Student Orientation on assessment methods. We will discuss questions such as: Does our current assessment of the New Student Orientation program provide data that we should have an orientation/resource center for our Sophomore students to help with longer-term retention?

Study Abroad

The Spring Break Study Abroad program consists of both classroom and travel components, through which students earn 4 credit hours. Multiple trips abroad take place during the Spring semester. We will discuss how these abroad trips are helping our freshman retention, sophomore year and beyond.

Utilizing the Assessment Results to Enhance the Sophomore Experience

It's important to review what's working and what's not working during the freshmen year so that educators can understand what kind of support is needed during the sophomore year. Educators need to develop programs from first-year assessment results and translate that into programs that will improve retention and graduation rates during the sophomore year. We want to discuss the best student affairs assessment practices that our peer institutions are implementing with their freshmen students to determine what should be repeated into the sophomore year and beyond.

Creating Ownership: Increasing Communication with Faculty and Peer Mentors through Multi-Media

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Context:

WIU requires approximately 1800 first year students to pass two FYE classes, from approximately 35 different entry level courses offered by various academic departments. Each semester approximately 100 students serve as peer mentors with approximately 80 faculty members. The academic (classes) component of the FYE program began in Fall 2005. From the beginning, students have been required to attend at least 3 co-curricular activities as part of their FYE class.

Previous Communication Practices:

The Associate Provost works with one part time Faculty Associate and one Graduate Assistant to oversee the program. In the first several years, the Faculty Associate provided training for faculty who teach in the program and sent out irregular email updates to faculty about program issues and co-curricular opportunities. The Graduate Assistant monitored paperwork completion for peer mentors, and sent information about co-curricular opportunities through emails.

Enhanced Communication Practices:

Faculty:

This year, the Faculty Associate has set the goal of enhancing faculty commitment to the program by establishing more open and direct channels of communication between the faculty

who actually deliver the program and the administration. Based on the belief that curricular matters are best managed at the departmental level, he meets directly and informally with FYE faculty to allow them to provide focused feedback on what works, what doesn't, and ideas for improvement. New monthly newsletters are distributed and a WebCT course site (for faculty) has been created which includes a continuously updated calendar and open discussion questions.

Peer Mentors:

Each semester the Peer Mentor Coordinator facilitates required training sessions including presentations by offices across campus (e.g. Counseling Center and Advising Center). A new Facebook group for peer mentors was created for troubleshooting conflicts and issues related to first year students, and classroom and co-curricular activities. Peer mentor evaluations have been updated. A newly-created survey was used this year to allow first-year students to comment on both their classroom experiences and performance of their peer mentors.

Implications for Future FYE Functioning:

As FYE faculty and peer mentors receive more information and take more ownership of the FYE classes, the "common" experience that students are expected to receive should become more and more "common." Increased communication and ownership help faculty (who often repeatedly teach FYE classes) develop a deeper understanding of the fundamental goals for FYE students, and help peer mentors (who turn over more often) participate more fully with their faculty member and freshmen.

Assessment of the Academic Impact of the First-Year Experience Program at Western Illinois University

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Western Illinois University has developed an FYE program in which the academic component is delivered via two courses that students must take in the first year. These courses are specially designated sections of existing courses, most of which are either in the General Education curriculum or introductory major courses (or both). As part of our ongoing assessment program of FYE, we have begun to evaluate the academic performance of students in these FYE sections with that of first year students in non-FYE sections of the same courses.

Since inception of the First Year Experience program at Western in Fall 2005, about 1600 first year students have enrolled in an FYE section in both Fall and Spring semesters; over the period from Fall 2005 through Spring 2009, the total enrollment in FYE sections was 12,949. Over this same period, non-FYE sections of the same courses enrolled 26,228 first year students, or slightly less than 3300 students per semester. (Courses for which there were no FYE sections offered were excluded from this analysis.)

During the four year period under consideration, we have found a fairly consistent pattern of superior academic performance by first year students in FYE sections compared to non-FYE sections of the same courses. In FYE sections, students earned A or B course grades 56% of the time; first year students in non-FYE sections of the same courses earned As and Bs 49% of the time. Similarly, first year students showed less frequent failure or lack of persistence in FYE sections, with grades of D, F, I (incomplete) or W (withdrawal) at 20% versus 26% for first year students in non-FYE sections of the same courses.

These findings are relatively consistent from semester to semester (Fall and Spring semesters show similar findings) and across years. We believe our analysis demonstrates that the FYE program is associated with positive academic outcomes for our students. In addition to a more complete demonstration of the relationship noted above between FYE courses and academic performance, our full poster presentation will also examine other aspects of academic performance related to our FYE program, including an analysis of first year student grades for the years before and after the adoption of our FYE program, to evaluate the effect of FYE on first year instruction and grades overall.

Into the Woods: How Wilderness and Adventure Programming Enhance the First-Year Transition

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1. Introduction: Wheaton College description, Northwoods Campus overview, Freshman program history
2. Wheaton Passage Program Design: program objectives, philosophy and research based foundations; 4 phase program model--setting expectations, separation, transition, integration; course themes--service, community, personal formation, critical thinking/worldview; faculty role and training; on-campus fall semester session topics/assignments; on-going support, mentoring, and training; program resources, reading assignments, peer-mentor training process.
3. Assessment: Assessment tools and process; lessons learned; future directions.
4. Q and A and discussion.

Understanding the Role of Group Cohesiveness and Shared Humor in Aiding Students' Transition to College

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The first component of the presentation will be establishing the need to study group cohesiveness as a variable in successful college transitions. While research has often focused on how individual partners (i.e. roommates, parents) aid in the transition process, Lee and colleagues (1998, 2000, 2001) argued that social connectivity and group identity ease adjustment and that connection with a significant group predicts individual well-being and adjustment. Theoretical and empirical evidence will be discussed which support the need to examine how students communicate in these transitional groups with special attention paid to Bormann's (1985) Symbolic convergence theory. This theory suggests that through fantasy themes and a common rhetorical vision, groups create a culture that is attractive and rewarding for its members and helps to create a sense of shared meaning, common values, and empathetic understanding. The second section of the presentation provides an overview of the Passage Program, a small-group, adventure-based orientation program for incoming students and describes the research methodology. The final segment examines research findings and will include a discussion of the implications for other such programs. The research findings will be

divided into two areas. First, demographic and structural factors will be discussed as predicts of cohesiveness and adjustment. These factors include such elements as gender, type of program (camp vs. wilderness-based), same vs. opposite-gender leader, and single- or mixed-gender groups. Next, findings focuses on the communication dynamics include their use of humor, inside jokes, communicator style, and conflict orientation. Overall, significant gender differences were found as well as differences between different program types. While specific programming choices appear to have considerable effects, the gender of the faculty member and the overall group composition did not, lending support to a position that peer-based group acceptance is a significant factor in the ease of transition. Group members who were able to recall a central inside joke were significantly more cohesive across all four measures (individual and group trust, openness, and interdependence) than those who could not recall a joke. Cohesive group members used significantly more positive affect humor and less negative affect humor. Participants in the study provided a central insider joke and interpretation which were coded into six categories and will be discussed as indicators of cohesiveness. A discussion will follow regarding how facilitators may aid students in their transition by helping them to create a unique group culture and the benefits of shared humor in establishing a sense of connectedness and belonging.

The Unique Issues of First-Year Programming at Smaller, Religiously-based Schools

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Summary: None

The Challenges and Opportunities of Outdoor/Adventure-based Orientation Programs

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Summary: None

Collaboration + Shared Responsibility + Holistic View of Learning: Our Recipe for a Successful FYE Program

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In 2007, Wittenberg University created an administrative model for the first-year experience (FYE) that fosters collaboration across campus and bridges the academic and social lives of students. As part of our new strategic plan, a 3-year initiative was started to develop an “engaging, student-centered, success-orientated, comprehensive first-year experience program”. Hoping to capitalize on the expertise at the “27th Annual Conference on the First-Year Experience”, a team, consisting of the Assistant Provosts for FYE and Academic Services, the Program Coordinator for FYE, the Faculty Development Coordinator and the Director of Multicultural Programs, went to San Francisco with the intent of identifying the core elements of a comprehensive first-year program. Shortly after their return they articulated the characteristics of effective administrative models: 1) shared responsibility and accountability for the design, implementation, and assessment of support and programming, 2) shared perspectives from administrators, faculty, and staff, and 3) a holistic view of student learning. These characteristics served as guiding principles to create our comprehensive and collaborative first-year program.

To increase the likelihood of collaboration and buy-in from all constituents, a FYE Implementation Team (FYE-IT) composed of faculty, staff and students was created. Administrators, faculty and staff attended a two day retreat to learn about the 3-year initiative and to discuss the challenges and opportunities to collaborating across organizational units. Importantly, retreat participants proposed program initiatives to the FYE-IT all emphasizing the importance of collaboration on campus.

Our administrative structure was designed with the responsibility and accountability shared between the Assistant Provosts for FYE and Academic Services. Having a faculty member as our Assistant Provost for FYE and collaboration with Academic Services has helped us facilitate conversations on serving students and engage the faculty in first-year initiatives. An Area Coordinator’s collateral assignment to FYE promotes collaboration with student affairs. Because of the collaborative relationships, programs were created that integrate the social, intellectual, and spiritual growth of our students, and reflect the dual citizenship of our students in both the curriculum and the co-curriculum. Two programs stand out as examples: Igniting the Spark and the FYE Support Series. Igniting the Spark involves teams that present in-class workshops that help students get started on the process of identifying who they want to be, their strengths and weaknesses, and what they wish to accomplish and contribute to the community. The Support Series offers workshops presented by faculty, academic staff and student development staff that address transitional issues.

A National Model for Engineering Mathematics Education: Increasing First-Year Student Success in Engineering

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The inability of incoming students to advance past the traditional first-year calculus sequence is a primary cause of attrition in engineering programs across the country. As a result, this session will describe an NSF funded initiative at Wright State University to redefine the way engineering mathematics is taught, with the goal of increasing student retention, motivation and success in engineering. The WSU approach begins with the development of a novel first-year engineering mathematics course, EGR 101 “Introductory Mathematics for Engineering Applications.” Taught by engineering faculty, the course includes lecture, laboratory and recitation components. Using an application-oriented, hands-on approach, the course addresses only the salient math topics actually used in core engineering courses. These include the traditional physics, engineering mechanics, electric circuits and computer programming sequences. The EGR 101 course replaces traditional math prerequisite requirements for the above core courses, so that students can advance in the curriculum without having completed a traditional first-year calculus sequence. The WSU model concludes with a revised engineering math sequence, taught by the math department later in the curriculum, in concert with accreditation requirements. The result has shifted the traditional emphasis on math prerequisite requirements to an emphasis on engineering motivation for math, with a “just-in-time” structuring of the new math sequence. This session will provide an overview of the WSU model for engineering mathematics education, followed by an assessment of student performance, perception and retention through its initial implementation. This will include significant updates since the approach was last reported, including the introduction of EGR 100/199 as a precursor to EGR 101 for initially underprepared students. Finally, this session will summarize the scope of our NSF CCLI Phase 3 and STEP Type 1 awards, which include pilot adoption and assessment by a total of 16 institutions across the country. These institutions (primarily university but also at the community college and K-12 levels) represent strategic pockets of interest in some of our nation's most STEM critical regions, including Ohio, Michigan, Texas, Oklahoma, California and Virginia.