Engaging Faculty in Shaping Academic Expectations for First-Year Students

30th Annual Conference on the First-Year Experience
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SACS Quality Enhancement Plan Goal

Freshmen will apply behaviors that demonstrate their responsibilities as engaged learners.

Conversations with Professors (CwP) Goals/Programmatic Outcomes

- Provide an academic welcome to Georgia Southern.
- Prepare students to be successful during the first week of class.
- Discuss and model positive faculty/student relationships.
- Convey that Georgia Southern faculty are committed to students' success.
- Answer student questions.

CwP Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will experience (through observation, participation and explicit discussion) appropriate classroom behaviors and ways of interacting with college faculty.
- Students will understand the importance of the college syllabus to their academic success and how to use the information contained in the syllabus.
- Students will create a final schedule before the last day of drop/add, and preferably before classes begin.

Web Resources

- CwP Overview: http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/fye/conversations.htm
- CwP Faculty Resources: http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/fye/conversations_resources.htm
- FYE Faculty Task Force: http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/fye/facultytaskforce.htm
- Expectations Brochure: http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/fye/expectations_brochure.pdf

Conversations with Professors Student Survey, Fall 2010

Question	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Rating Average	Response Count	Strongly Agree & Agree %
After Conversations with Professors (CwP), I understood the importance of making schedule changes no later than the fourth day of classes.	349	201	50	19	12	4.36	631	87.16%
After attending CwP, I understood the importance of the syllabus in being successful in my classes at Georgia Southern.	380	195	38	9	9	4.47	631	91.13%
CwP helped me know what to look for in a syllabus.	274	228	84	28	16	4.14	630	79.56%
CwP helped me understand who professors are and what they do.	292	240	69	15	12	4.25	628	84.31%
CwP helped me understand how I should interact with faculty.	318	232	59	11	10	4.33	630	87.16%
I learned from the questions that I or others asked during CwP.	298	223	81	16	11	4.24	629	82.57%
I believe that faculty care about my success at Georgia Southern.	328	245	41	4	9	4.40	627	90.81%
CwP helped me be better prepared for the first week of classes.	308	201	80	24	15	4.21	628	80.67%

Most important thing learned at CwP?

Professor Expectations/Relationship	33%
Syllabus	15%
Time Management	11%
Attendance Matters	7%
High School vs. College	5%

What would have made the first week more successful if learned at CwP?

Nothing to change	41%
Campus Geography/Map Explanation	14%
GeorgiaView (Blackboard product)	9%
Time Management	7%
Professor Expectations/Relationship	4%

Survey administered second week of classes through SurveyMonkey email link. Response rate: 21.1%

Dr. Chris Caplinger
First-Year Experience

Developing Good Relationships with Faculty
(a.k.a. "Twelve Ways Not to Annoy Your Professors")

1. Know your professors' names—and use them! Figure out the appropriate title for your professor. If you don't know what he or she would like to be called, ask.

2. Give your professor the best chance possible to know <u>your</u> name. Introduce yourself after class or during office hours.

3. Practice commonsense classroom etiquette:
    - Turn your cell phone off.
    - Don't put your head down on the desk.
    - Don't read a newspaper.
    - Don't do work for another class.
    - Don't talk to your neighbor during lecture, etc.

4. Read and understand your entire syllabus. This is your first assignment in every class.

5. Go to every class, and be on time.

6. When you are late or need to leave early, be as inconspicuous as possible. Please don't let that door slam behind you when you enter or leave!

7. Read and come prepared to participate in class.

8. Appreciate the fact that not all faculty members are the same.

9. Be aware of your body language during class.

10. As a general principle, professors enjoy questions. They demonstrate that you are engaging with the material. That said, avoid the following:
    - Don't raise your hand and ask if you can go to the bathroom. Just go (and leave and return as quietly as possible; see above).
    - Don't ask "will this be on the exam?"
    - And NEVER ask: "Did we do anything important last class?"

11. Get over the fact that answering questions wasn't the thing to do in high school. If your professor asks a question to the class, volunteer to answer (at least some of the time).

12. Get to know at least some of your professors. Show an interest in the course material. Go to your professor's office hours, and if you make an appointment, be sure to show up, on time!

Thanks to Dr. Neal Saye, Writing and Linguistics, for the idea for this program, and for providing some of the specific examples.

Semester-at-a-Glance, Fall 2010

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8/08-8/14				University Convocation		Residence hall check-in at RAC	
8/15-8/21	3:30 – 4:45 Conversations w/ Professors	classes begin			last day of drop/add		
8/22-8/28							
8/29-9/4			HIST essay ENGL paper #1 final draft			MATH test	
9/5-9/11		Labor Day no classes	Faculty can post Early Alert grades				
9/12-9/18							
9/19-9/25		CHEM test	HIST test	FYE 1220 Preparing for Advisement		MATH test	
9/26-10/2						Early Alert grades due	
10/3-10/09			ENGL paper #2 final draft		HIST essay		Family Weekend
10/10-10/16		Last day to withdraw w/o penalty					
10/17-10/23		FYE 1220 bibliography				MATH test	
10/24-10/30		Spring reg. begins	HIST test	FYE 1220 Time management			
10/31-11/6		FYE 1220 paper draft CHEM test	ENGL paper #3 final draft				Homecoming
11/7-11/13							
11/14-11/20		MATH test	HIST essay ENGL paper #4 final draft				
11/21-11/27	Thanksgiving Holiday – No Classes						
11/28-12/4		FYE 1220 final paper due	ENGL portfolio			last day of classes	
12/5-12/11		CHEM exam FYE exam	HIST exam ENGL exam	MATH exam	exams end	graduation	

Template courtesy of Dr. Nancy Malcom, Sociology and Anthropology. Blank template (without test and paper dates) available this and every semester at: http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/fye/time_mgmt.htm