

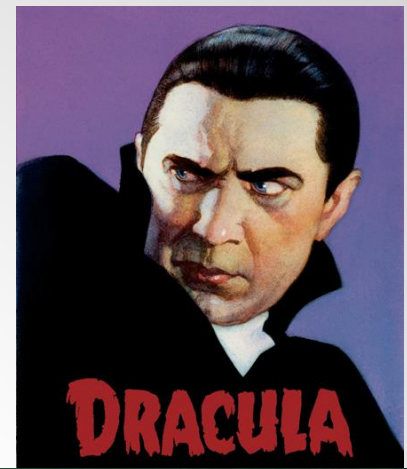


# **Transylvania University's August Term:**

## **An Innovative First Year Plan**

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# Transylvania University

- Located in Lexington, KY
- Founded in 1780; 16th oldest college in U.S.
- Total enrollment 1,074 First Year Class of 311
- Average ACT 27; Average HS GPA 3.69
- 72% of students come from Kentucky
- Average class size 14
- 39 Majors, 36 Minors

# First Engagements August Term

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- Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)
- Campus Planning 2009-10 & 2010-2011
- Built upon existing programs (Summer Read, Quick Start, University 1111)
- ***First Engagements*** Course

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# First Engagements & August Term

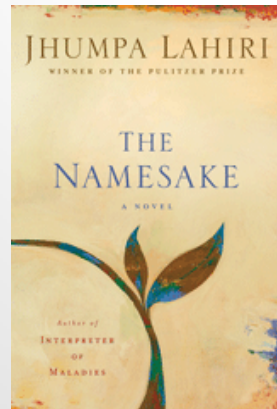
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- Creation of a new 3 week term in August
- Discussion based seminar; 3 hours every day
- Focus on Critical Reading
- Assist ***all*** students with the transition to the academic rigor of college life
- Enculturation into Community of Scholars
- Drew inspiration from:
  - Autumn Term at Eckerd College
  - Language & Learning Program at Bard College

# First Engagements & August Term

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- 22 course sections (12-14 students)
- All faculty members teach in the program (course release for teaching in August)
- Exploration of complex issues through critical reading of shared/common texts
- Curricular & co-curricular events connected to readings



# First Engagements & August Term

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## August Term Scholars (ATS)

- Upper-class *First Engagements* Instructors
- Receive stipend and academic credit for course preparation and teaching
- Assist with co-curricular events & activities
- Pivotal to the success of the program



# Co-Curricular & Academic Programming





# First Engagements & August Term

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- Early identification of “at-risk” and other student issues
- Able to quickly refer students to academic support services and other resources
- First-year class develops a strong sense of identity and community
- Decreased conduct incidents in the first-year residence halls

# Academic Advising

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- The August Term instructor serves as the student's initial academic advisor.
- Some August Term instructors keep all their first-year advisees and others work with a faculty co-advisor during the academic year.
- The August Term Scholar serves as a peer mentor/advisor throughout the first year.
- Students also participate in an ongoing convocation series throughout the semester

# Assessment & Future Planning

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- Following August Term, students exhibited measurable improvement in critical reading & evaluation skills.
- Students report having increased levels of confidence and understanding of academic & social expectations.
- Students were more likely to actively engage in classroom discussions.
- We anticipate a significant impact on student retention & graduation rates.

# *Questions & Discussion*

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