Strategies in First-Year Programming to Improve Student Success

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Presentation Outline

• Institutional Description
• History of First-Year Programming
• Strategies for Student Success
  – Structural
  – Curricular & Co-curricular
  – Collaborative
• Future Directions
Kennesaw State University

- Chartered in 1963 as a 2-Yr Jr College
- First Class enrolled in 1966 - 1014 Students – Growth every year except one – many years @10%+
- 4-Yr status in 1978; First B.A./B.S. in 1980
- First Grad Programs in 1985 (M.Ed.; M.B.A.)
- University Status in 1996
- On-Campus Housing Added in 2002
- D.N.S. in 2009; Ph.D. (International Policy) in development
- Currently 21,000+ students; 3,000+ residential
First-Year Programming

• Have been teaching an FY seminar (elective) for 25+ years
• Originally taught primarily by faculty from various academic departments
• Mid 1990’s – Responsibility for course (KSU 1101) given to Department of University Studies
• Department had no affiliation with an academic college – supervised by a Dean of Undergraduate Studies
Programs/Services in the Department of University Studies

- FY Seminar Course (KSU 1101)
- Learning Communities
- Senior Year Experience Seminar Course (KSU 4401)
- Honors Program & Joint Enrollment Honors Program
- Interdisciplinary Studies Major
- Learning Support (Math, English, Reading)
- Math Lab
- English as a Second Language (ESL) Study & Tutorial Center
Structural Strategies

Formation of University College

- Resulted from participation as a founding institution in the Foundations of Excellence Project
  “Given the history, energy, investments, experience, and programmatic scope of the signature KSU efforts for first-year students,” attention should be given to efforts that would “allow KSU to move ‘from de facto to official’ in the programmatic areas that are the core academic experiences for first-year students.”
  Comments from Site Evaluator, Dr. John Gardner

- Dean’s position re-titled to Dean of University College
- University College Advisory Council formed
UCAC Accomplishments

• 1st mission statement for college drafted and approved
  – Revised after disbanding of UCAC
• Joint-appointment agreement guidelines drafted and approved
  – Still in use by Academic Affairs
• First-year curriculum requirement drafted and approved; part of the Undergraduate Catalog as of Fall 2005
Structural Strategies
(continued)

• New Dean hired in 2006-2007
• College Restructured in July 2007 – Two departments
  – FY Seminars & LCs in Department of First-Year Programs
  – Remainder in Department of University Studies
  – Added Associate Dean
  – Added Director of First-Year Retention Initiatives
  – Added Assessment Coordinator – 2009-2010
Curricular/Co-curricular Strategies

• First-Year Curriculum Requirement
• Learning Outcomes
• Custom Textbook
• Common Reader
• First-Year Convocation
• Civic/Political Engagement
First-Year Curriculum Requirement

• “All first-year, full-time students entering Kennesaw State University with fewer than 15 semester hours are required to take a first-year seminar or enroll in a Learning Community.”
KSU 1101 LEARNING OUTCOMES

Life Skills
- Personal & career goals
- Time management
- Decision-making & goal-setting
- Financial responsibility
- Group dynamics
- Wellness

Strategies for Academic Success
- Critical thinking skills
- Study skills & test preparation
- Research and library skills
- Oral presentation
- Writing skills
- Learning styles
- Technology/computer usage

Foundations for Global Learning

Campus and Community Connections
- Knowledge of academic services, campus resources, & policies
- Faculty & peer interaction
- On- and off-campus activities
- Civic engagement

Foundations for Global Learning
- Ethics
- Leadership
- Citizenship
- Diversity & inclusiveness
- Global perspectives
Custom Textbook/Online Resources

- *Foundations of Academic Inquiry, 2*\textsuperscript{nd} \textit{ed.}*
  - Published by Pearson Custom Publishing
  - Entire content written by KSU professors
  - All royalties go to department to fund student-centered initiatives

- Pearson designed online resource center to compliment textbook content
  - Individual student login
  - Assessments bank
  - Multimedia clips
  - Customizable to our campus
Common Reader Program - Objectives

Students participating in the Common Reader Program will:

• Gain reinforcement of the KSU 1101 learning outcomes by participating in this program;
• Engage in the reading and discussion of a book that challenges them to see the world from new perspectives;
• Join their peers in a common academic experience;
• Demonstrate knowledge of academic, political, social, and world issues;
• Explore the development of their individual identities;
• Develop multicultural awareness.
Common Reader Selections

2004-2005
• *The Diary of a Young Girl: The Definitive Edition*, Anne Frank, Otto M. Frank, edited by Mirjam Pressler and Susan Massoty

2005-2006
• *It’s Not About the Bike: My Journey Back to Life*, Lance Armstrong & Sally Jenkins
• *My Reconstructed Life*, by Eugen Schoenfeld

2006-2007
• *Sounds of the River: A Young Man’s University Days in Beijing*, Da Chen
Common Reader Selections

2007-2008

• Not For Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade—and How We Can Fight It, David Batstone

2008-2009

• Three Cups of Tea: One Man’s Mission to Promote Peace… One School at a Time, Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin

2009-2010

• Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in a Cynical Time, Paul Rogat Loeb
Demographics

- Pre-test  N = 739  M = 45%  F = 54%
- Post-test  N = 639  M = 41%  F = 54
- Live with parents  45%
- On campus  41%
- Other  11%
- Employed  51%
- Hope Scholarship  65%
- White  76%
- Black  7%
Time Management Skills
Academic Skills

Bar charts illustrating academic skills.
Knowledge of Support Services
Knowledge of Global Issues
Academic Success Confidence, they had a reality check
Traditional Seminar

• Content is a challenge
• Some students need more than others
• Five faculty wanted “more” content
• Two of the faculty saw Dr. Erik Peterson present on the “Seven Revolutions” concept at the American Democracy Project Conference in 2007
The Coming Seven Revolutions

1. Population
2. Resource Management
3. Technology
4. Knowledge/Information
5. Economic Integration
6. Conflict
7. Governance
Difficulty in Teaching Global Topics

Greenberg of Pace University in *History Teacher* (2008-05) noted the difficulty in getting American students interested in global connections.
Fall 2007

• I did a pilot using The Coming Seven Revolutions as a teaching tool/vehicle

• I had to make it personal for the students, how will the 7 affect your career in 5 years, 15 years, 25 years
Population

- Total enrollment Fall 2008 2386
- Pools of data, not matched
- Pre-test, skills self-report  N = 768
  - KSU 1101  N =  634
  - KSU 2290 (global focus)  N =  134
- Post-test, skills, self-report  N = 658
  - KSU 1101  N =  531
  - KSU 2290  N =  124
URLs

• www.CSIS.org (Center for Strategic International Studies
• www.7revs.org
• www.Epsilen.com
Self-report Survey Data

- Time management skills
- Budgeting skills
- Academic skills
- Knowledge of campus resources
- Knowledge of gen ed requirements
- Opinions on global issues
- No statistical significance, which is significant
Conclusion From No Significance

• We can spend less time on meeting course learning outcomes and spend more time on:
  • Global learning
  • Service learning projects
  • Career development projects
Common Reader

• After reading *Three Cups of Tea* and taking the course those in special topics had more compassion for those living in the Middle-East

• Significance: .004
KSU 2290

Text: Annual Edition of Global Issues, a very “foreboding” text on population, on resource management, on conflict, etc.
After All the Exposure

• “Should the U.S be more actively involved in world affairs?” Females said yes,
• Significance at .026
• Sprecher et al. Sex Roles, 2007-04, females are more compassionate
Any Guesses Why…

• After a semester of all this material very little impact on view of the future???

• Why????
Fall Semester 2009

• Collaborate with statistics professor
• Matched pre and post test respondents
• Smaller data set, 400-500
• More than self-report
Beyond the Classroom

- Collaboration among students across continents
- They are going to make the critical decisions
- Gibson (2008, *Roeper Review-03*) says this needs to begin with teacher training in K-12
Common Reader Assessment

• Critical Thinking: 76% agreed it contributed to seeing multiple sides:
  – 79% agreed it challenged them to see the world from new perspectives.
• Global Awareness:
  – 85% have a greater understanding of global issues; and
  – 85% more aware of other cultures.

• Connections: 2/3 agreed it contributed to peer-to-peer connection:
  – More than ½ attended related campus events;
  – Almost ½ reported motivation to volunteer or join a campus organization; and
  – 73% discussed book outside the classroom.
Collaborative Strategies

- Learning Communities
- First-Year & Undeclared Advising Services
- Supplemental Instruction
- Early Alert
- Advising Teams
- Early Start Bridge Academy
Collaborative Partners & Programs

• Collaborative Relationship with other Academic Units
  – LCs, ESBA, SI

• Strong Collaborative Relationship with Division of Student Success & Enrollment Services (SSES), especially CAPS (now SSS)
  – FYUAS, Early Alert, Advising Teams

• Joint (with SSES) oversight the Center for Student Leadership (CSL)
  – Peer Leaders, Peer Advisors, Advising Teams
Program Results

• Learning Communities
  – Higher retention than standalone KSU 1101 sections

• Supplemental Instruction
  – Dramatic reduction of D,F,W rate (>30% ➞ <15%)  

• Early Alert
  – Piloted (manually) in KSU 1101  
  – Successful interventions – reduced # of students on probation

• Early Start Bridge Academy
  – Reduction in LS Math D,F,W rate (>33% ➞ 7%)  
  – Reflective testimonials on the value of the program
Objectives and Learning Outcomes of Early Start Bridge Academy

Student participants would gain

• Early (Summer) start on Math skills
• Academic and study skills
• Time management skills
• Interpersonal communication skills
• Mentoring relationships with instructors
• Knowledge of the campus and its resources
• Social interaction with peers
Student Reflections

I know that by taking this program I was able to take a step in the right direction towards college. I sharpened my math skills, I started a class in advance, and I’ve gotten a head start at college…
Student Reflections

I finally understand math now, and I understand why I am broke all of the time... I have also learned that the way I used to study wasn’t best for me, so I have changed my study habits...ESBA has been a life saver for me. I am fully ready to attend KSU as a promising freshman.
Student Reflections

Since I’ve started the Early Start Bridge Academy I’ve come out of my shell, leaped out of my box, and have made great friends. I’ve also found a whole new respect for mathematics, and the strange people that actually enjoy it.
Student Reflections

I feel very fortunate to have been able to be a part of this program in its first year. Even though we are just the guinea pigs and are being experimented on, I have never felt so grateful to be a guinea pig.
Advising Teams

• A Faculty Advisor (KSU 1101 Instructor)

• A Professional Advisor (from SSS/FYUAS): the counseling & advising unit in the division of Student Success & Enrollment Services

• A Student Peer Advisor or Peer Leader (from the Center for Student Leadership; CSL)
## Advising Team Data - Fall 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control -1</th>
<th>Control -2&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Study-1</th>
<th>Study-2&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>N=544</td>
<td>N=143</td>
<td>N=796</td>
<td>N=389</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>F-S</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>F-F</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Retention (%)</strong></td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>74.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GPA (Spring/Summer)</strong></td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.99&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Declared Majors (%)</strong></td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<sup>a</sup> Students in Control Group (no advising team assigned) who independently sought advice at CAPS = 20.8%

<sup>b</sup> Students in Study Group (advising teams assigned) who sought advice at CAPS = 32.8%

<sup>c</sup> Retention for Study-2 is significantly different – $X^2=11.399$; df=3; p=0.01

<sup>d</sup> GPA for Study-2 is significantly different p<0.001
Future Directions
KSU 1101

• Piloted hybrid sections of KSU 1101 in Fall ‘08
  – Assessment data being analyzed this semester

• Plans to pilot online sections in Fall ‘09
  – Attempt to serve BBA students enrolling in new online degree program

• Themed sections of 1101
  – NASCAR
  – Creativity for non-art majors
  – Campaign ‘08
  – and more
## Future Directions
### New Seminars

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KSU 2290</td>
<td>- Globally focused version of traditional seminar course</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Same learning outcomes and use of common reader selection</td>
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<td>- Content based on the Center for Strategic &amp; International Studies’ “7 Revolutions” project</td>
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<tr>
<td>KSU 0090</td>
<td>- Discussion about developing a 1-credit version of study skills and time management components for probation students in second semester</td>
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<td>- Collaboration with SSS/FYUAS</td>
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</tbody>
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Future Directions
Enhanced Advising Initiative

- USG Initiative to enhance advising at all 35 institutions in the system
- KSU Plan – Mandatory Checkpoints
  - Advising for 1st semester ➔ Orientation
  - Advising for 2nd semester ➔ Advising Teams/Major Dept
  - Advising for 3rd semester ➔ First-Year Advising Center (FYUAS)/Major Dept
  - Students on Probation ➔ SSS/FYUAS
  - Students Petitioning to Graduate ➔ 2 semesters out
Future Directions
ESBA/Advising Teams

• ESBA
  – Repeat in Summer 2009
  – 2 Cohorts – 50-60 students
  – Develop cohorts for students needing LSP Reading or English
  – Develop cohorts for non-traditional students
  – Develop cohorts for international students

• Advising Teams
  – Expand to all sections of KSU 1101/KSU 2290
  – Formalize training program for Peer Leaders/Peer Advisors
  – Provide workshops for faculty to encourage use of Peer Leaders and share best practices
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