

Academic Foundations: Strengthening the Foundation for Higher Education

16th National Conference on Students in Transition

Saturday 3:45 pm – 4:45 pm

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Presentation Objectives

To provide a description of the academic foundations program.

To provide retention statistics for students who participated.

To provide recommendations for implementing such a program.

To discuss lessons learned by doing the program for three years.

To provide examples of materials.

Who is Trine University?

Formerly Tri-State University, Angola, Indiana

Normal School heritage (est. 1884)

Main campus enrollment: 1300

Schools: business, engineering, education, and arts
and sciences

You can lead a horse...

What can be done to help students reach their potentials?

When should “it” be done?

Who should do “it”?

Why bother?



Statue of Liberty

*“Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe
free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to
me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”*

From the Statue of Liberty Inscription



Conditionally Admitted into Academic Foundations

Slightly below minimum admission standards:

< 2.5/4.0 high school GPA

< 50% high school rank

< 19 ACT or 900 SAT (reading and math)

Academic Foundations Course

UE 012 ACADEMIC FOUNDATIONS 2-1-2

This course helps students develop the competency needed to be successful in other college courses. The focus is on preparing students to do college level reading and writing and learning by building on each student's academic skills. This is a non-credit, preparatory class.

Academic Foundations

Main Objectives

- 1: Students will have the opportunity to develop the proficiencies needed to be successful college students.
- 2: Students will be able to begin college without meeting the requirements to be admissible into their desired majors.
- 3: Students will be able to persist in their education because they will have the skills needed to do so.

Academic Foundations

Learning Outcomes

1. Establish personal goals and a plan for success.
2. Apply academic success skills to college learning.
3. Understand and practice methods for effective college reading and writing.
4. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of campus support systems, especially Academic Support Services, the Trine Learning Center, the Trine Writing Center, the Math Help Sessions, the Library, and Counseling Services.
5. Understand and practice methods for effective course, major and career decision making.

Course Materials

REQUIRED TEXT:

Downing, Skip. *On Course, 5th Edition*. Houghton
Mifflin. 2008

Passport to College Reading. McGraw Hill Higher
Education. 2005

<http://trine.blackboard.com/>

<http://passportocollegereading.com/>

ONLINE

Readings

1. What new facts did you learn about this topic?
2. Briefly state, in your own words, the main ideas discussed in this article.
3. List three important facts that the author uses to support the main ideas found in this article.
4. List any new terms/concepts that were discussed in the article, and write a short definition.
5. What is your overall impression of the material presented in this article?

Distribution of Points

Kind of Assessment	Distribution	Your Points
Quizzes	4 @ 25 points each	100
Passport to College Reading	1 diagnostic test + completion of program	30 (15 & 15)
PCCR Readings	10 @ 5 points each	50
Journal Entries	31 @ 5 points each	155
Final examination	1 (guided essay)	65
Total		400

Final Exam Essay

Success Factors	Guiding Questions
Responsibility	Who's in charge of creating my life the way I want it to be?
Motivation	What are my most valued goals and dreams? What outcomes and experiences do I want to create? What's my educational goal? What job/career do I want? What legacy do I want to leave? To what degree do I expect success?
Self-Management	How do I manage my actions effectively to achieve the life I want? What self-management tools will assist me?
Interdependence	Who do I want to associate with? Will I help others? Will I ask for and accept help?
Self-Awareness	What are my habit patterns? Which habits support my success? Which habits sabotage my success? How can I change the habits that sabotage me?
Life-Long Learning	What do I need to learn to achieve my desired outcomes and experiences? How can I use what I'm learning in every college course I take? How can I create deep and lasting learning? What life lessons do I need to master to succeed? How can I develop wisdom?
Emotional Intelligence	How do I experience life fully yet manage my emotions so that I stay on course to my goals and dreams?
Self-Esteem	Who am I? What do I value? How can I feel even more confident? What reputation do I have with myself?

Retention Statistics

Retention Information September 2009	Fall 2006 AF/total freshmen	Fall 2007 AF/total freshmen	Fall 2008 AF/total freshmen
Number in original freshman cohort group	28/317	31/413	18/423
Number who returned Spring (freshman)	19/279 67%/88%	24/373 77%/90.3%	18/401 100%/94.8%
Number and % who returned Fall (sophomore)	11/210 39%/66.2%	17/283 55%/68.5%	11/305 63%/72%
Number and % who returned Spring (sophomore)	10/199 36%/62.8%	15/265 48/64%	
Number and % who returned Fall (junior)	7/183 25%/57.7%	11/235 35/57%	
Number and % who returned Spring (junior)	7/181 25%/57%		
Number and % who returned Fall (senior)	6/172 21%/54%		

Recommendations for Implementing the Program

Establish a committee to review potential applicants

Establish specific criteria to determine admission

Make sure students understand the conditions of their admittance

Keep class sections small—under 15 students

Have students meet in a structured course that meets at least twice a week.

Make students do reading and writing and journaling

Lessons Learned

Focus on students' strengths

Find a textbook that works for your school

Schedule at least one class day each week in a
computer lab if you have a heavy online component

Follow up on any students who miss class

Questions?

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