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**Presentation Overview**

- I. Introduction of UNI 201
- II. Needs and Concerns
- III. Evolution of UNI 201
- IV. Course Structure and Curriculum Development
- V. What We Learned
- VI. Advocating for a Transfer Seminar
- VII. Discussion

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**UNI 201: Transfer Seminar**

- First offered Fall 2010 – 2 sections
- Goal was to provide a level of support for transfer students
- Originally was 2-credit hour elective reserved for transfer students
- 25 students/section
- Very few differences from UNI 101: First-Year Seminar




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## Needs and Concerns




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## Needs and Concerns



**Successful Academic Transition**

- Lack of awareness of and utilization of campus services
- Unprepared regarding policies and processes
- Lack of knowledge and research about majors, minors, and graduation requirements

- Underprepared for upper level academic courses
- Lack of skills for academic success and progression
- Lack of professional etiquette and communication skills



**Successful Academic Transition**

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## Needs and Concerns

Unrealistic expectations / Transfer Shock

- Curricular
  - "The major requires calculus?"
  - "Why didn't my biology count here?"
  - "When can I graduate?"
- Financial
  - "How can I avoid tuition surcharge?"
  - "My GI Bill only goes so far."
- Emotional
  - "I'm overwhelmed. I thought I could work full time and be a full-time student."
- Academic
  - "I'm not used to these large class sizes and these tests are nothing like I have ever seen before."



**Successful Academic Transition**

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## Needs and Concerns

- Challenged to meet complex university requirements
- Pressure to graduate “on time”
- Lack of appeal for 2-credit elective
  - Feel they already have “too many electives”




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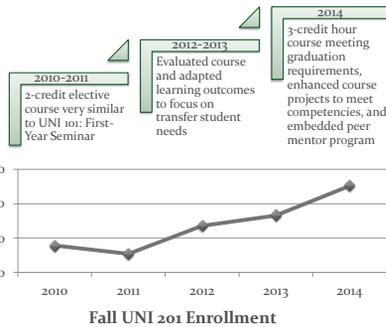
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## Evolution of UNI 201




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## Current Course Structure

- 3-credit hour course that meets Writing Intensive and Information Literacy graduation requirements
- Available to first-semester transfer students (including military transfers)
- Face-to-face sections including one once-a-week evening option
- Taught by academic advisors and staff from student support offices
- Common course components, presentations, and projects
- Common textbook and instructor choice of a supplemental text
- Peer mentor in each section
- Instructor resources and support provided

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## Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and participate in the powerful learning experience of higher education at UNCW.
2. Students will evaluate their transition into, anticipate their path through, and plan for their career after UNCW.
3. Students will understand and illustrate information literacy.
4. Students will strengthen writing skills by creating a research and reflection-based Transfer Portfolio which includes an incremental draft process
5. Students will demonstrate self-knowledge and appreciate the value of human differences.
6. Students will demonstrate and understand dimensions of health and wealth.

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## Curriculum Development

- Comprehensive portfolio assignment – Transfer Portfolio
  - Transitions
  - Major Research
    - Faculty interview
    - Required use of writing center
  - Academic Plan
  - Career Plan
    - Résumé and cover letter
- Common Assignments
  - Journals
  - Events and reflections
    - Including one student organization meeting
  - Library Research Assignment

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## Curriculum Development

### Common Presentations

- W-Curve and Adult Transition Theory
- Career Center
- Library (Information Literacy)
- Office of the Dean of Students (Code of Conduct)
- Writing Center (Writing Intensive)
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
- Academic Advising/Planning

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## Student Outcomes

- 409 students in course as of Fall 2014
- Fall 2013 end of course survey (n=70) results:
  - 92.86% indicated that the portfolio improved their ability to effectively research majors and careers
  - 91.55% reported increase confidence about communicating with and building relationships with faculty and staff
  - 84.06% reported having a smoother transition to UNCW because they took the course
  - 85.71% were glad they took the course
- 100% (n=17) of spring 2014 UNI 201 students reported:
  - improved understanding of the academic requirements needed for graduation
  - increased knowledge about campus organizations and how to join them
  - building relationships with other transfer students
  - increased confidence about communicating directly with UNCW faculty and staff

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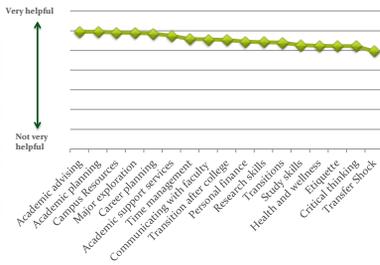
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## Student Outcomes

Student Evaluation of Course Topics (n=77)




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## Student Outcomes

"I believe UNI 201 is a vital course for transfer students of any kind. It is/was a very beneficial class and I have no regrets about taking this class. I'll actually miss this class."

"The major research project helped me see a path I can take towards graduation. It helped me get acclimated to the advising process."

"I really like how [the class] touched on a large variety of topics that are very useful to transfer students that I might not have known about or utilized had I not taken this course."

"What I really liked about the course was getting to meet transfer students like myself and get to connect with them and building bonds that I probably wouldn't have, if it wasn't for this class."

"I have been impressed with the caliber of the transfer students and their dedication to do well here at UNCW. The transfer project I know helps them to establish connections and smooth out that transition for them." Business faculty

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## What We Learned

- There is a demand
- Need to provide incentive for taking course
- Many faculty are supportive
- Increased awareness of transfer student needs
- Structure of a course leads to student follow-through and utilization of services
- Leadership development vehicle for transfers
- Value of peer involvement
- Inclusive classroom for transfers including military students
- Students build community in this course
- Who teaches this course is important

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## Advocating for a Transfer Seminar

- Spend time determining needs of staff, faculty, and students.
  - Evaluate policies at your institution to make them more transfer-friendly.
- Identify stakeholders at your institution for buy-in.
- Build a coalition/team of individuals from across campus divisions (academic affairs and student affairs)
  - Build awareness of policies that impact transfer students.
- Connect arguments to already established institutional priorities such as first-year seminar and first-year experience programs.

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## Advocating for a Transfer Seminar

- Ground arguments for increased transfer support in theory and research.
- Explain in terms of added appreciation for and support of diverse populations and equity.
- Use the power of the student voice.
- Share successes with stakeholders.
- Start small.
  - Work with campus partners to develop workshops.
  - 1, 2, 3 credit hours? Even if it is an elective it is important.

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# Questions?

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