Helping Students Engage

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University of New Hampshire
Agenda

- Overview of UNH & Paul College
- Overview of FIRE
  - Program Goals
  - Three Pillars
- What Works
- Lessons Learned
- Results & Data
- Questions
UNH & Paul College

University of New Hampshire
- 11 Schools & Colleges
- Research institution
- Total Enrollment - 15,000
- 50/50 In-State Students vs. Out-of-State
- Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics
  - 4 Majors
  - ~2600 undergraduates and growing!
  - 630 First year students
  - Goal: Top ranked Business School
What is FIRE?

First-year Innovation and Research Experience

- Built upon the existing freshman experience course “peer advising”
- FIRE is an integrated, team-based, game-like experience guided by peer advisors
- Designed to build a community of engaged student learners – tapping into the value of the residential experience
  - Reinforce strong social connections
  - Introduce campus resources
  - Time management and academic support
  - Academic collaboration
  - Create academic and career foundations
  - Connections to alumni network
Program Goals

- Develop skills needed to succeed as a UNH and PAUL student, as well as in the business and professional spaces
- Introduce the importance of mentorship and the value of the broader UNH community network in a “low-risk” environment
- Inform students of the resources and opportunities available to UNH students for career and academic assistance
- Guide students to potential major focuses, internship opportunities and the corresponding career paths
- Encourage students to get involved throughout campus
- Give each student an opportunity to stand out
- Teach students how to:
  - Approach and solve complex problems using a variety of different techniques
  - Effectively present a business concept and the corresponding research
  - Develop a team culture and be a part of a team
FIRE Foundational Pillars

- Mentorship
- Grand Academic Challenge
- Game

Freshman Academic Experience Course
PAUL 405 & 406: Freshman Academic Experience I & II

- Academic foundation for FIRE
- Introduction to academic knowledge, academic standards and academic management skills
- Meet once a week in classes of 20-25 with Peer Advisor (30 sections)
  - Each course section is a “team”. They created team names and logos in the first weeks.
  - As a project team, engage in Grand Challenge research for the year. This provides academic content for course requirements (group work, presentations, research...)
- Each team is assigned an alumni advisor to work with them throughout the year
- Each team and individual can take part in the game to win prizes and experiences
Mentorship

Peer Advisors
- Role Models
  - Following Same Path
  - Campus & College Resource
- Lead Discussions (Peer to Peer)
  - Bounce ideas off each other
  - Problem solve
  - Group work

Alumni Advisors
- Skills outside of the classroom
  - Business attire
  - Professional communication
  - Resume writing
  - Networking
- Taking soft skills to the next level
- Enabling the power of networking
- Opportunity to give back to their alma mater
  - Non-financial commitment
  - Help continue greatness of UNH
Grand Challenge

- Real-world, current topics
  - Created assignments with meaning
  - Allowed for broader thinking
- Fall Semester Grand Challenge selection and Lens research
  - Addictive Society
  - Food?
  - Medical Breakthroughs
  - Threats from Cyberspace
  - Water is Life
- Spring semester focus on developing a business plan for a product/service to implement into the market
How do you get students to want to participate? Make it a game!

- Each time a student participates they are awarded points (individual and team)
  - Attending Campus Events
  - Participating in Activities (intramurals, hall council, etc.)
  - Joining a Student Organization
  - Community Service
  - Playing “mini-games”

- “Winning”
  - Ultimately the first place team will win academic achievement prize ($500 per student and $1,000 for the peer advisor)

- Prizes and Awards
  - Different awards built into the program
    - Hockey game in Dean’s Box
    - Dinner at President Huddleston’s House
    - Catered Study Sessions
    - PAUL Apparel and Gear
What Works

- Academic Assignments with Purpose
- Integration & collaboration with Library
- Small Groups (20-25)
- Creation of Teams
  - Identity: Team Name & Logo
  - Teambuilding
- Peer Advisor
- Student Advisory Board (Igniters)
- Consolidated Campus Weekly Event Lists
- FIRE-specific Programming
  - Variety
  - Competition by Team
  - Mini-games
Coursework

PAUL 405: Freshman Academic Experience I
- Focus on study skills, time management, academic resources and transition from high school to college
- Assignments:
  - Academic Autobiography
  - Lens Presentation
  - Lens Paper

PAUL 406: Freshman Academic Experience II
- Focus on academic opportunities and professional development
- Assignments:
  - Resume
  - Product/Service Proposal Presentation
  - URC Final Project
    - Written Business Plan
    - Poster
    - URC Presentation
    - Research/Literature Review
  - Group Progress Report
Library Integration

Resource guides developed by the library for each Grand Challenge to be used by students (most viewed resource guide at UNH last year)
15,000 students enrolled in UNH

620 freshman involved in the FIRE program

20-25 students in each FIRE team

FIRE allows for smaller group thinking and for each student to be heard.
Teams

- Create team identity
- Weekly meeting with peer advisor
- Similar schedules
- Making friends within major
- Self assurance
- Create ownership & accountability
Peer Advisors

- Experience
- Comfort
  - Very easy to talk to
  - Well respected
- Discussions
  - Bounce ideas off each other
  - Problem solve
  - Group work
- Resources
- Nontraditional Teacher
Igniters

- Student advisory board to FIRE
- Nominated by peer advisor
- Represent each team in FIRE
- Separated into five committees
- Contributions:
  - UNH Tales Blog
  - Community Service:
    - UNH Seacoast Alumni Network
    - Wildcat Santa
  - Events
  - Game Changes & Prize Ideas
Opportunities & Involvement

- Weekly Event List
- Variety of Categories:
  - Athletics
  - Social
  - Community
  - Professional Development
  - Leadership
  - Wellness
- FIRE Specific:
  - Homecoming Carnival
  - FIRE or ICE
  - Mocktail Networking Reception
  - Career & Internship Fair Bootcamp
  - Undergraduate Research Conference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>How to Get Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30-Nov</td>
<td>MUB 338/340</td>
<td>12:15pm-12:45pm</td>
<td>Guided Meditation</td>
<td>Complete the extracurricular form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Dec</td>
<td>Stradford Room</td>
<td>11:00am-2:00pm</td>
<td>It is Easy to be Green!</td>
<td>Tweet a picture &amp; tag @UNH_PaulFIRE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Dec</td>
<td>MUB Union Court</td>
<td>10:30am-2:30pm</td>
<td>What’s on Wednesday?! Personalized Ceramic Mugs</td>
<td>Tweet a picture &amp; tag @UNH_PaulFIRE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Dec</td>
<td>Wildcats Den</td>
<td>12:00pm-1:00pm</td>
<td>Free Yoga for Students</td>
<td>Complete the extracurricular form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Dec</td>
<td>MUB 334/336</td>
<td>1:00pm-4:00pm</td>
<td>Voter Registration Drive</td>
<td>Complete the extracurricular form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Dec</td>
<td>MUB 203</td>
<td>1:00pm-2:00pm</td>
<td>Leadership Toolbox: Recruiting Potential Membership</td>
<td>Complete the extracurricular form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Dec</td>
<td>MUB Theater 1</td>
<td>6:00pm-7:00pm</td>
<td>Leadership Pursuit: Sports Leadership Lessons from Great Coaches</td>
<td>Complete the extracurricular form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Dec</td>
<td>MUB Entertainment Center</td>
<td>7:00pm-10:00pm</td>
<td>MUSO Presents: Open Mic feat. William James</td>
<td>Complete the extracurricular form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Dec</td>
<td>Lundholm Gymnasium</td>
<td>7:00pm</td>
<td>Women’s Basketball vs. Northeastern</td>
<td>Tweet a picture &amp; tag @UNH_PaulFIRE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Dec</td>
<td>Stradford Room</td>
<td>8:00pm</td>
<td>FIRE or ICE - over $5,000 worth of prizes will be awarded!</td>
<td>Swipe in with your UNH ID!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Dec</td>
<td>Wildcats Den</td>
<td>12:00pm-1:00pm</td>
<td>Free Yoga for Students</td>
<td>Complete the extracurricular form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Dec</td>
<td>MUB 334</td>
<td>2:00pm-3:00pm</td>
<td>Study Abroad Information Session</td>
<td>Complete the extracurricular form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Dec</td>
<td>MUB Entertainment Center</td>
<td>3:30pm-5:30pm</td>
<td>Cultural Connections: The Human Guy &amp; Suffering in Post-Earthquake Nepal</td>
<td>Complete the extracurricular form.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-Dec</td>
<td>Field House</td>
<td>5:00pm</td>
<td>Men’s &amp; Women’s Track vs. Maine</td>
<td>Tweet a picture &amp; tag @UNH_PaulFIRE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-Dec</td>
<td>Wildcats Den</td>
<td>6:00pm-11:45pm</td>
<td>Board Game Night at the MUB</td>
<td>Complete the extracurricular form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Dec</td>
<td>MUB Entertainment Center</td>
<td>8:00pm-11:00pm</td>
<td>CAB Presents: The Grind</td>
<td>Complete the extracurricular form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Dec</td>
<td>Field House</td>
<td>12:00pm</td>
<td>Men’s &amp; Women’s Track vs. Maine</td>
<td>Tweet a picture &amp; tag @UNH_PaulFIRE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Dec</td>
<td>Lundholm Gymnasium</td>
<td>4:00pm</td>
<td>Women’s Basketball vs. BU</td>
<td>Tweet a picture &amp; tag @UNH_PaulFIRE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Dec</td>
<td>Whittemore Center Arena</td>
<td>7:00pm</td>
<td>Men’s Hockey vs. Maine</td>
<td>Tweet a picture &amp; tag @UNH_PaulFIRE.</td>
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Lessons Learned

- Recruitment of & Training for Peer Advisors
  - Clarify expectations
  - More diversity in involvement
  - Full day of training
  - Training manual
  - Weekly checklists
- Alumni Advisors
  - Clarify the role
  - Introduce purpose in the fall semester
- Technology Platform
- Formalize Game Structure
  - Provide “checkpoints” to encourage continuous involvement
- Communication
  - Grand Challenge
  - Game
  - Semester/Year-Long Goals
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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</table>
| August & Sept | • Create team name & logo  
• Grand Challenge selection at the Homecoming Carnival |
| October       | • Form lens groups  
• Begin preliminary research on Grand Challenge |
| November      | • Finalize lens research  
• Prepare presentations with groups |
| December      | • Final group lens presentations  
• FIRE or ICE event  
• Last week of classes |
| January & Feb | • Professional Development 101  
• Form product/service proposal groups & create presentations |
| March         | • Select product/service for URC business plan  
• Create groups and begin creating project  
• Earn points for FIRE Madness Bracket Challenge |
| April         | • Continue working on and finalizing business plan project  
• Present project at Undergraduate Research Conference |
| May           | • End of Year Awards Ceremony  
• Last week of classes |
Earn Points
- Attend events on campus
- Swipe in at FIRE events
- Complete FIRE mini-games

Submit Points
- Fill out Student Form
- Tweet us! @UNH_PaulFIRE #PaulFire

To Receive...
- Advantages for your team
- Individual Prizes
- Academic Achievement Prize
How to Earn 100 points

10 point events and activities

- Sporting events: men’s hockey, football
- Dorm socials
- Attend office hours or meeting with your professor/TA
- Attend a workout class
- Compete in intramurals
- Online activities/quizzes

20 point events and activities

- Sporting events: women’s hockey, basketball, soccer
- FIRE mini games
- Campus-wide events (i.e. U-Day, Fall Fest, May Day Carnival)

30 point events and activities

- Sporting events: women’s lacrosse, swimming & diving
- Leadership workshops
- MUB Lecture series
- FIRE events
- Professional Development workshops

Attend 3 (10) point events + 2 (20) point events + 1 (30) point event = 100 points

Attend 2 (10) point events + 1 (20) point event + 2 (30) point events = 100 points

Attend 1 (10) point event + 3 (20) point events + 1 (30) point event = 100 points
2015-16: The Pilot Year

Grades/Classroom:
- Overall GPA increased from 3.02 to 3.09
- Grades significantly increased in Introduction to Business, First-Year Writing, Ethics & Society and Microeconomics
- Lower percentage of academic warnings (GPA below 2.0)
- Significant improvement in presentation skills

Involvement:
- 100% of first-year students participated in at least one FIRE event last year, while over 50% of the class participated in at least one event per month
- Over 50% of the class is involved in a club on campus
- 25 events/activities had over 100 students in attendance/participate
- Record recruitment numbers for student organizations like Alpha Kappa Psi, Women in Business & Rines Investment Club

Professional Development:
- Doubled number of first-year Paul students attending the Spring Career & Internship Fair
- Over 50 alumni engaged with the FIRE Program and its students
- 12 first-year students participated in a 4-day networking trip in Washington, D.C.
2016-17 (so far..)

Students:
- 620 active Paul first-year students – over 98% of students have participated in at least one activity
- 202 individuals with over 100 points (only 22 last year)
- Excited to be a part of FIRE (word of mouth from last year’s FIRE group)

Teams:
- All 30 teams over 1,000 points (only 7 last year)
- Building friendships with teammates
- A lot of active discussion

Events/Activities:
- 8 FIRE specific events/activities this semester – all have had over 100 participants, 5 have had over 230 participants
- Cover everything from study skills to business casual attire to dodgeball
- Trivia Night coming up in a few weeks
- Professional Development events in the spring
Questions?

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