



# RETHINKING THE FACULTY-LED MODEL OF FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR

Cathy Carlson, Ed.D

Associate Dean for Academic Services

Wiley Davi, Ph.D.

Associate Dean of Arts & Sciences

PJ Dickson, Ph.D. (A.B.D.)

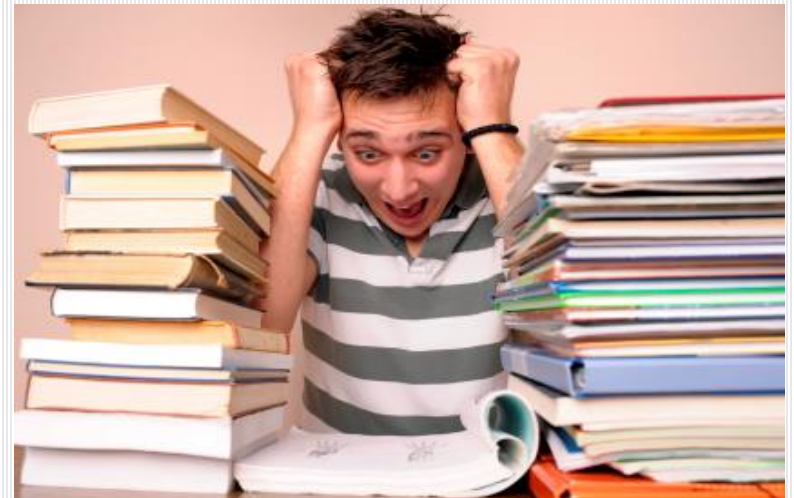
Assistant Dean for Academic Services

# IN THIS PRESENTATION



**BENTLEY**  
UNIVERSITY

- Overview of Bentley's FYS
- Inside Bentley's change process
- Breakout conversations – looking at your home campus
- Debrief – Where do we go from here?
- Q&A



# BENTLEY & THE FYS



**BENTLEY**  
UNIVERSITY

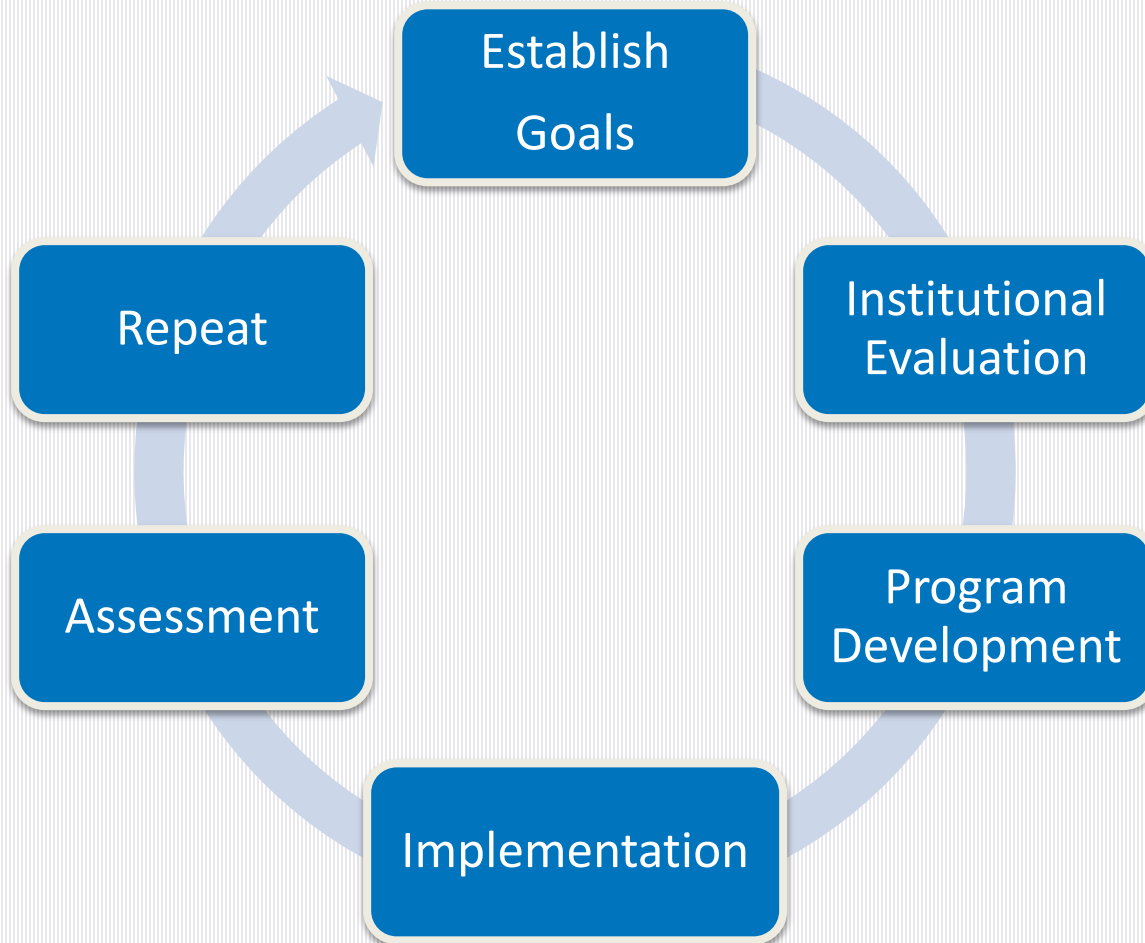
- Bentley University
  - Predominantly business university
  - roughly 4000 undergraduates
- FYS: required 1 credit course in Gen. Ed. core
- Historically facilitated by staff and peer leader, faculty assigned for advising only
- Topics included some academic success topics, time management but also student affairs topics as well
- Faculty and Staff review Committee worked nearly 2 years



# REVISION PROCESS



**BENTLEY**  
UNIVERSITY



# REVISED FYS GOALS



**BENTLEY**  
UNIVERSITY

- Students in FYS should:
  - Develop a connection with a Bentley faculty member & Peer Leader
  - Understand academic expectations and opportunities at Bentley
  - Learn more about campus resources that support academic opportunity and success
  - Explore communication and team skills necessary to be an engaged member of a diverse community of scholars

Establish  
Goals

# ENVIRONMENT/STAKEHOLDERS



**BENTLEY**  
UNIVERSITY

- + Strong support for program among many faculty
- + Status as degree requirement
- + Energized and creative advisory committee
- + Funding for improving Peer Leader program
- No faculty compensation – negative impact on morale
- Faculty were told that all would serve; no selection for skill/interest
- Faculty orientation/training is limited & not compulsory.
- Linking FYS with faculty’s academic course is logistically difficult.
- +/- “Student Affairs” topics excluded

Institutional  
Evaluation

# FYS CHANGES



**BENTLEY**  
UNIVERSITY

- Peer Leader role strengthened to take some of the burden from instructors and to provide consistency in approach across sections.
- Created Peer Leader Coordinator position.
- Launched pilot program with 2 residential-based sections
- New curriculum on presentations & team work – essential for Bentley students
- Limit reliance on large group meetings

Program  
Development

# NEW FYS CURRICULUM



**BENTLEY**  
UNIVERSITY

## New FYS Schedule

- Week 1: Introduction & Community Building
- Week 2: Academic Expectations
- Week 3: Team Skills
- Week 4: Presentation Skills
- Week 5: Academic Integrity
- Week 6: Team Work Revisited
- Week 7: Campus Resources & Time Management
- Week 8: The Bentley Beliefs & Being Bentley Brave
- Week 9: Academic Advising
- Week 10: Final Presentations

Program  
Development



# PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION



**BENTLEY**  
UNIVERSITY

- Training for Peer Leaders extended from 1.5 days to 4 days.
- Weekly meetings with Peer Leaders encourage collaboration across sections and ensure that critical goals are met.
- Teaching teams sharing successes; new exercises and activities saved for future



Implementation

# WHAT'S NEXT FOR FYS @ BENTLEY



**BENTLEY**  
UNIVERSITY

- Course is still in progress.
- Positive reviews of extended Peer training program.
- Faculty report positive experiences with their Peer Leaders.
- Strong enthusiasm for the residential based sections from teaching teams.
- Some sections reporting difficulty engaging students, developing sense of community. Greater emphasis next year
- Preparing formal assessment of FY students, Peer Leaders and faculty
- New provost, new president coming – potential for greater change

Implementation

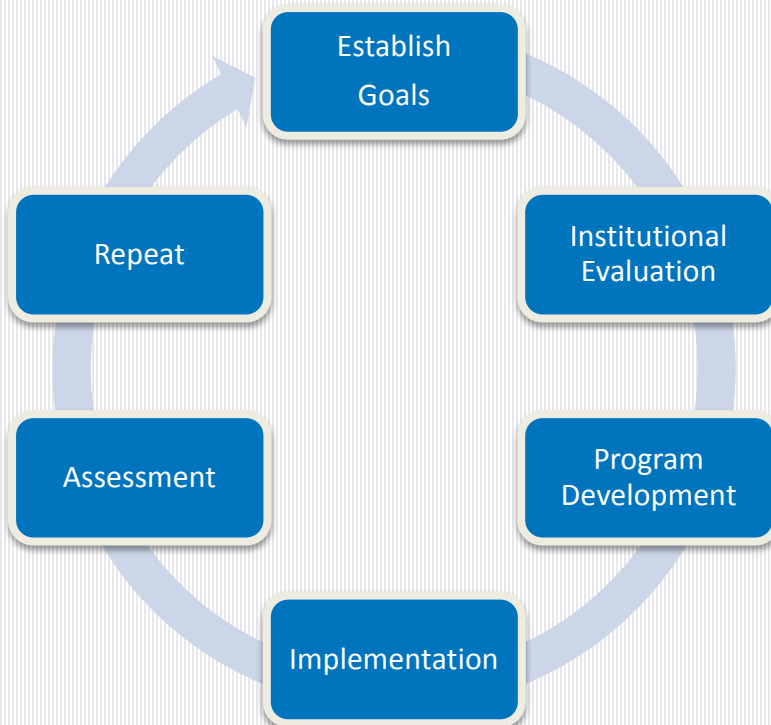
Assessment

# BREAKOUT CONVERSATIONS



**BENTLEY**  
UNIVERSITY

## CHANGE PROCESS



## YOUR HOME CAMPUS

- What do you think is the most pressing issue in your First Year Program initiatives?
- What is the culture around FYS on your campus?
- Who are your FYS stakeholders and what are their perspectives?
- If you wanted to bring change to the FYS on your campus, where would you begin?



## ■ Questions?

Cathy Carlson, Ed.D, Associate Dean for Academic Services

[ccarlson@bentley.edu](mailto:ccarlson@bentley.edu)

Wiley Davi, Ph.D., Associate Dean of Arts & Sciences

[wdavi@bentley.edu](mailto:wdavi@bentley.edu)

PJ Dickson, Assistant Dean for Academic Services

[pdickson@bentley.edu](mailto:pdickson@bentley.edu)