

Appendix

A

Survey Instrument

The following survey does not reflect the layout of the web-based survey but accurately captures the content of those questions. In the web administration, follow-up questions were prompted by specific answers, but here all questions, including the follow-ups, are listed.

**2003/04 National Survey on First-Year Seminars
National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition
University of South Carolina**

This survey is dedicated to gathering information regarding first-year seminars. First-year seminars are courses designed to enhance the academic skills and/or social development of first-year college students.

The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete and, once started, cannot be saved for completion at a later time. Your responses are important to us. Therefore, please allot 15-20 minutes to respond by November 21, 2003. Thank you.

Does your institution (including any department or division) offer one or more first-year seminar type courses? Yes _____ No _____

Background Information

Name of institution _____

Your name _____ Title _____

Department address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Mark appropriate categories regarding your institution:

Two-year institution _____

Four-year institution _____

Public _____

Private _____

Proprietary _____

Quarter system _____

Semester system _____

1. What is the approximate undergraduate enrollment (head count) at your institution? _____

2. What is the approximate number of entering first-year students at your institution? _____

3. Does your institution (including any department or division) offer one or more first-year seminar-type courses? Yes _____ No _____

Types of Seminars Offered

4. Approximately how many years has a first-year seminar been offered on your campus? _____ years

5. What is the approximate percentage of first-year students who participate in a first-year seminar course? _____

6. Select each *discrete* type of first-year seminar that best describes the seminars that exist on your campus.

a. _____ Extended orientation seminar. Sometimes called freshman orientation, college survival, college transition, or student success course. Content likely will include introduction to campus resources, time management, academic and career planning, learning strategies, and an introduction to student development issues.

b. _____ Academic seminar with generally uniform academic content across sections. May be an interdisciplinary or theme-oriented course, sometimes part of a general education requirement. Primary focus is on academic theme / discipline, but will often include academic skills components such as critical thinking and expository writing.

c. _____ Academic seminars on various topics. Similar to previously mentioned academic seminar except that specific topics vary from section to section.

d. _____ Pre-professional or discipline-linked seminar. Designed to prepare students for the demands of the major / discipline and the profession. Generally taught within professional schools or specific disciplines such as engineering, health sciences, business, or education.

e. _____ Basic study skills seminar. Offered for academically underprepared students. The focus is on basic academic skills such as grammar, note-taking, and reading texts, etc.

f. _____ Other
Describe: _____

Specific Seminar Information

7. If you offer more than one first-year seminar type, select the **seminar type with the highest total student enrollment** to answer the remaining questions. That seminar type is:

- Extended orientation seminar
- Academic seminar with generally uniform content
- Academic seminar on various topics
- Pre-professional or discipline-linked seminar
- Basic study skills seminar
- Other

8. Please indicate the approximate number of sections of this seminar type offered in the 2003/2004 academic year: _____

Please answer the remaining questions for the seminar type with the highest student enrollment.

The Students

9. What is the approximate class size for each first-year seminar section?

- Under 10 students
- 10 - 15
- 16 - 20
- 21 - 25
- Other Specify: _____

10. What is the approximate percentage of first-year students *required* to take the first-year seminar?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 100% | <input type="checkbox"/> 79 - 70% | <input type="checkbox"/> less than 50% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 99 - 90% | <input type="checkbox"/> 69 - 60% | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 89 - 80% | <input type="checkbox"/> 59 - 50% | |

11. If less than 100%, which students (by category) are *required* to take the first-year seminar? (Select all that apply.)

- None are required to take it
- Honors students
- Learning community participants
- Provisionally admitted students
- Student athletes
- Students in specific majors (List the majors _____)
- Undeclared students
- Other Describe: _____

12. Are special sections of the first-year seminar offered for any of the following unique sub-populations of students? (Select all that apply.)

- No special sections are offered
- Academically underprepared students
- Honors students
- International students
- Learning community participants
- Pre-professional students (i.e., pre-law, pre-med)
- Students residing within a particular residence hall
- Students within a specific major (Please list the majors _____)
- Transfer students
- Undeclared students
- Other

The Instructors

13. Who teaches the first-year seminar? (Select all that apply.)

- Faculty
- Graduate students
- Undergraduate students
- Student affairs professionals
- Other campus professionals Describe: _____

14. How are undergraduate students used in the first-year seminar? (Select all that apply.)

- They teach independently.
- They teach as part of a team.
- They assist the instructor.

15. Are any first-year students intentionally placed in first-year seminar sections taught by their academic advisors? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, give the approximate percentage of students placed in sections with their academic advisors _____

16. Are any sections of the course team taught? Yes _____ No _____

17. Indicate the approximate percentage of sections that are team taught.

- 100%
- 99 - 75%
- 74 - 50%
- 49 - 25%
- Less than 25%

18. Please identify team configurations used in your first-year seminar courses. _____

19. For faculty, how is teaching the first-year seminar configured for workload? (Select all that apply.)
 As part of regular teaching load
 As an overload course
 Other Describe: _____
20. For administrative staff, how is teaching the first-year seminar configured for workload? (Select all that apply.)
 As one of the assigned responsibilities
 As an extra responsibility
 Other Describe: _____
21. If taught as an overload or extra responsibility, what type of compensation is offered for teaching a first-year seminar? Please mark all that apply and provide a description of each compensation in the accompanying text box.
 Stipend Specify: _____
 Release time Specify: _____
 Graduate student support Specify: _____
 Other Specify: _____
22. Is instructor training *offered* for first-year seminar instructors?
 Yes _____ No _____
23. If yes, how long is instructor training?
 Half a day or less 3 days Other
 1 day 4 days Describe: _____
 2 days 1 week
24. Is instructor training *required* for first-year seminar instructors?
 Yes _____ No _____

The Course

25. Is this first-year seminar offered for:
 One semester
 One quarter
 Other Describe: _____
26. How is the first-year seminar graded?
 Pass/fail
 Letter grade
 No grade
27. How many total classroom contact hours are there per week in the first-year seminar?
 One Three Five
 Two Four More than five
28. Does the first-year seminar carry academic credit?
 Yes _____ No _____

29. How many credits does the first-year seminar carry? (Select all that apply.)

- One Three Five
 Two Four More than five

30. How does such credit apply? (Select all that apply.)

- As an elective
 Toward general education requirements
 Toward major requirements
 Other Describe: _____

31. Does the first-year seminar include a service-learning component (non-remunerative service as part of a course)? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, describe: _____

32. Is the first-year seminar linked to one or more other courses (i.e., "learning community" – enrolling a cohort of students into two or more courses)?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, describe: _____

33. Select **THREE** of the most important course objectives for this first-year seminar.

- Create common first-year experience
 Develop academic skills
 Develop support network/ friendships
 Improve sophomore return rates
 Increase student/ faculty interaction
 Introduce a discipline
 Provide orientation to campus resources and services
 Self-exploration/ personal development
 Other Describe: _____

34. Select **FIVE** of the most important topics that comprise the content of this first-year seminar.

- Academic planning/ advising
 Career exploration/ preparation
 Campus resources
 College policies and procedures
 Critical thinking
 Diversity issues
 Relationship issues (e.g., interpersonal skills, conflict resolution)
 Specific disciplinary topic
 Study skills
 Time management
 Writing skills
 Other Describe: _____

35. Please list up to three elements or aspects of your first-year seminar that you consider **innovative or especially successful**.

36. Is part or all of this first-year seminar taught online?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, describe those elements: _____

The Administration

37. What campus unit directly administers the first-year seminar?

____ Academic affairs

____ Academic department Specify: _____

____ First-year program office

____ Student affairs

____ Other Describe: _____

38. Is there a director/coordinator of the first-year seminar?

Yes _____ No _____

39. If yes, is this position

____ Full time (approximately 40 hours per week)

____ Less than full-time

40. If less than 40 hours, how many hours per week? _____

41. If less than 40 hours, does the director/coordinator have another position on campus? Yes _____ No _____

42. The director/coordinator's other campus role is as a/an:

____ Academic affairs administrator

____ Faculty member

____ Student affairs administrator

____ Other Describe: _____

Evaluation Results

43. Has a formal program evaluation been conducted on your first-year seminar since fall 2000? Yes _____ No _____

44. If yes, what type of evaluation was conducted? (Select all that apply.)
- Focus groups with instructors
 - Focus groups with students
 - Individual interviews with instructors
 - Individual interviews with students
 - Student course evaluation
 - Survey instrument
 - Use of collected institutional data
 - Other Describe: _____
45. Did your institution create the survey instrument?
Yes _____ No _____
46. Did your institution use an established instrument?
Yes _____ No _____
47. List instruments used:
- First-Year Initiative (FYI)
 - Your First College Year (YFCY)
 - Other Specify: _____
48. Through your formal evaluation efforts, which of the following results can be attributed to participation in your first-year seminar? (Select all that apply.)
- Improved connections with peers
 - Improved grade point average
 - Increased academic abilities
 - Increased level of student participation in campus activities
 - Increased out-of-class interaction with faculty
 - Increased persistence to sophomore year
 - Increased persistence to graduation
 - Increased student satisfaction with faculty
 - Increased student satisfaction with the institution
 - Increased use of campus services
 - Other Describe: _____

Survey Responses

It is our practice to make available to all requesting institutions specific and general information gathered from this survey. Please let us know if we can share your specific survey information with others by selecting the appropriate response below:

- You may share my survey responses.
- Please do not share my survey responses.