An Evidence-Based Discussion of Integrating First- and Second-Year Transition Programs

Dallin George Young (@DallinYoung)
Jennifer Keup (@JRKeup)
National Resource Center for
The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

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Session Goals

• As the result of this session, participants will:
  – Gain a greater understanding of the purpose, organization, and outcomes associated with first-year seminars and sophomore-year initiatives
  – Have the opportunity to contextualize their institutional approaches to a national empirical profile
  – Increase their awareness of how integrated approaches may be constructed to assist students in their success and development during the first two years of college.
INTRODUCTION

Jennifer R. Keup
Definition of Transition

• A transition is “a point or period in which a student encounters an event or non-event that may impact his or her progression toward educational and personal goals.” (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006)

• A student in transition (or students in transition) refers to any student involved in a transition that impacts his or her progression toward educational or personal goals.
Challenge in Perception of SIT Support: “Moving the cliff!”

Is this how our efforts to support students in transition are perceived?
Challenge in Execution of SIT Support: “The relay”
Criteria for “Excellence”

• “Evidence of an **intentional, comprehensive approach** to improving … that is appropriate to an institution’s type and mission.”

• “Evidence of assessment of the various initiatives that constitute this approach.”

• “**Broad impact on significant numbers of … students**, including, but not limited to special student subpopulations.”

• “**Strong administrative support for … initiatives, evidence of institutionalization, and durability over time.**”

• “**Involvement of a wide range of faculty, student affairs professionals, academic administrators, and other constituent groups.**”
Jennifer R. Keup

NATIONAL SURVEYS

Year One (Fall): National Survey of First-Year Seminars

Year Two (Spring): National Survey of Sophomore-Year Initiatives

Year Three: Occasional Survey

Year Four (Spring): National Survey of Senior Capstone Experiences
First-Year Transition

**Issues**
- Sense of belonging
- Academic preparation
- Time management
- Finding campus resources
- Financial issues
- Physical/emotional well being
- Understanding culture of higher education

*(Collier, forthcoming)*

**Students**
- Racially/ethnically diverse
- Multicultural
- “New-traditional” (first-gen, int’l, veterans)
- Concerned about $
- Service oriented
- Connected
- Academically “trained” under NCLB culture
High-Impact Educational Practices

First-Year Seminars and Experiences
Many schools now build into the curriculum first-year seminars or other programs that bring small groups of students together with faculty or staff on a regular basis. The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students’ intellectual and practical competencies. First-year seminars can also involve students with cutting-edge questions in scholarship and with faculty members’ own research.

Common Intellectual Experiences
The other idea of a core curriculum has evolved into a variety of modern forms, such as a set of required common courses or a vertically organized general education program that includes advanced integrative studies and/or required participation in a learning community (see below). These programs often combine broad themes—e.g., technology and society, global interdependence—with a variety of curricular and cocurricular options for students.

Learning Communities
The key goals for learning communities are to encourage integration of learning across courses and to involve students with “big questions” that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with their professors. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some deliberately link “liberal arts” and “professional courses”; others feature service learning.

Writing-Intensive Courses
These courses emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum, including first-year projects. Students are encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences in different disciplines. The effectiveness of this repeated practice “across the curriculum” has led to parallel efforts in such areas as quantitative reasoning, oral communication, information literacy, and, on some campuses, ethical inquiry.

Collaborative Assignments and Projects
Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one’s own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.

Undergraduate Research
Many colleges and universities are now providing research experiences for students in all disciplines. Undergraduate research, however, has been most prominently used in science disciplines. With strong support from the National Science Foundation and the research community, scientists are reshaping their courses to connect key concepts and questions with students’ early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research. The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.

Diversity/Global Learning
Many colleges and universities now emphasize courses and programs that help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These studies—which may address U.S. diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore “difficult differences” such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. Frequently, intercultural studies are augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad.

Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
In these programs, field-based “experiential learning” with community partners is an instructional strategy—and often a required part of the course. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

Internships
Internships are another increasingly common form of experiential learning. The idea is to provide students with direct experience in a work setting—usually related to their career interests—and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field. If the internship is taken for course credit, students complete a project or paper that is approved by a faculty member.

Capstone Courses and Projects
Whether they’re called “senior seminars” or some other name, these culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they’ve learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of “best work,” or an exhibit of artwork. Capstones are offered both in departmental programs and, increasingly, in general education as well.
National Survey of First-Year Seminars

- 2012-2013 Administration
  - 3,753 institutions were invited to participate
  - 896 campuses responded (23.9% response rate)
  - 804 (89.7% of sample) indicated that they had one or more FYS

- Online instrument collected data on:
  - Seminar features (structural and instructional)
  - Characteristics of students in FYS
  - Administration
  - Assessment
  - Module on HIPs
### 2012-2013 NSFYS: Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution type</th>
<th>All  ((N = 896))</th>
<th>With seminar ((N = 804))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two-year</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-year</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
<td>54.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private, not-for-profit</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>42.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private, for-profit</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2012-2013 NSFYS: Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of First-Year Class</th>
<th>All $(N = 896)$</th>
<th>With seminar $(N = 804)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 500</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501 – 1,000</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,001 – 1,500</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,501 – 2,000</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,001 – 2,500</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,501 – 3,000</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,001 – 3,500</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,500 – 4,000</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,001 – 5,000</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 5,000</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### FYS: Most Important Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a connection with the institution</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide orientation to campus resources &amp; services</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop academic skills</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop critical thinking skills</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create common first-year experience</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop study skills</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-exploration or personal development</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop support network or friendships</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve second-year return rates</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase student-faculty interaction</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop writing skills</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Types of Seminars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Seminar</th>
<th>All Seminars (N = 788)</th>
<th>Primary Type (N = 786)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extended Orientation &lt; Two-Year &lt; Public</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Uniform Content</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Variable Content &lt; Four-Year &lt; Private</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Study Skills &lt; Two-Year</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-professional/Discipline-linked</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid &lt; Four-Year &lt; Private</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HIPs and First-Year Seminars

Number of HIPs Offered in the FYS

Percent of institutions

0  |  1  |  2  |  3  |  4  |  5  |  6  |  7
---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----
1.4|  5.8|  10.8|  17.9|  18.3|  22.2|  16.8|  6.7

0  |  5  | 10  | 15  | 20  | 25
---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----
0  |  1  |  2  |  3  |  4  |  5  |  6  |  7

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HIPs and First-Year Seminars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High-Impact Practice</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Produce and revise various forms of writing</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration and teamwork</td>
<td>67.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity or global learning</td>
<td>58.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service-learning</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning community</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common reading experience</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate research</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Second Year: Developmental Milestone

- Critical juncture for students developmentally
  - Academic development
  - Connection to institution and place in the community
  - Career development
  - Personal identity issues
  - Examination of life purpose

- Increased capacity to make progress on important college outcomes
Campus Response to Sophomores?

First-Year
- Orientation
- Common Reading Programs
- First-Year Seminars
- Student Engagement

Junior Year
- Internships
- Study Abroad
- Peer Leadership

Senior Year
- Capstone Experiences
- Job Fairs
- Professional Licensing
- Graduate and Professional School Applications

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Sophomore Student
(Unmotivationus Middlechildibus)
National Survey of Sophomore-Year Initiatives

• Designed to identify sophomore-specific practices and programs and characteristics of those initiatives

• 2013-2014 Administration
  – Online survey
  – 3,722 institutions were invited to participate
  – 778 responded (20.9% response rate)
  – 349 (46% of sample) currently offered at least one sophomore-specific initiative
# 2013-2014 NSSYI: Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution type</th>
<th>All ((N = 778))</th>
<th>With initiative ((N = 349))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two-year</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-year</td>
<td>77.1%</td>
<td>49.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private, not-for-profit</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>50.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2013-2014 NSSYI: Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Undergraduates</th>
<th>All (N = 778)</th>
<th>With initiative (N = 349)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 500</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501 – 1,000</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,001 – 1,500</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,501 – 3,000</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,001 – 5,000</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,001 – 10,000</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,001 – 15,000</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,001 – 20,000</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 20,000</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2013-2014 NSSYI
# NSSYI: Most Important Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve retention</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career exploration</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career preparation (&lt; 2-year)</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic assistance</td>
<td>45.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of a major (&lt; 4-year)</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership opportunities</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student engagement</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with the institution (&lt; 4-year; &lt; Private)</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic skills</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation rates (&lt; 2-year; &lt; Public)</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Common Sophomore-Year Initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advising</td>
<td>57.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career exploration</td>
<td>52.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early alert systems</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership development</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major exploration and selection</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic coaching or mentoring</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer mentoring by sophomores</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class events</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internships</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2013-2014 NSSYI
Primary Sophomore-Year Initiatives

- Academic Advising: 45.7%
- Live-on Requirement: 8.2%
- Early Alert: 4.7%
- Other: 4.1%
- Credit-Bearing Course: 3.8%
- Academic Coaching: 3.2%
- Class Events: 2.9%
- Sophomore LLC: 2.9%
- Career Exploration: 2.3%
- Major Exploration: 2.1%

Source: 2013-2014 NSSYI
Duration of Sophomore Initiative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 year or less</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5 years</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+ years</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coordination of Sophomore Initiative

Percent

1-Totally decentralized: 12.5%
2: 25.6%
3: 35.5%
4: 19.2%
5-Totally centralized: 6.4%

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INTEGRATION ACROSS TRANSITIONS
Strategies used to assess learning and achievement are based on what has been taught and on the learning objectives students are expected to meet.
Horizontal Alignment

Effectively evaluate & use information

Research Assignment in U101

Pre/Posttest Assessment with ProjectSAILS

Source: Friedman (2012, pp. 50-51)
What students learn in one lesson or course prepares them for the next lesson or course. Educational experiences are purposefully structured and logically sequenced so that students gain the knowledge and skills to progressively prepare them for more challenging, higher-level work.
Vertical Horizon
Horizontal Alignment in First-Year Seminars

- Learning Objectives
- Educational Experiences
- Assessment

- Goals in Literature
- NSFYS Objectives
- Topics
- Objectives Assessed
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals in Literature</th>
<th>NSFYS Objectives</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Objectives Assessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal relationships</td>
<td>Connection with institution</td>
<td>Campus Resources</td>
<td>Satisfaction with the seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career development</td>
<td>Campus resources</td>
<td>Academic Planning</td>
<td>Persistence to second year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual/academic competence</td>
<td>Academic skills</td>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Satisfaction with faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness</td>
<td>Critical thinking skills</td>
<td>Study Skills</td>
<td>Student self-reports of course impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity development</td>
<td>Common FYE</td>
<td>Campus Engagement</td>
<td>Participation in campus activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>Study Skills</td>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic responsibility</td>
<td>Self-exploration</td>
<td>Writing Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing skills</td>
<td>Career Issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student-faculty interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfaction with the Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd year retention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goals in Literature

NSFYS Objectives

Topics

Objectives Assessed

Interpersonal relationships
Career development
Intellectual/academic competence
Wellness
Identity development
Spirituality
Civic responsibility
Connection with the institution
Orientation to campus resources
Academic skills
Critical thinking skills
Common FYE
Study Skills
Self-exploration
Writing skills
Student-faculty interaction
2nd-year retention
Campus Resources
Academic Planning
Critical Thinking
Study Skills
Career Engagement
Time Management
Writing Skills
Career Issues
Satisfaction with the seminar
Persistence to second year
Satisfaction with faculty
Student self-reports of course impact
Participation in campus activities
Satisfaction with the Institution

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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## Top 5 Seminar Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Important Course Goals</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a connection with the institution</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation to campus resources $&lt;$ Two-Year</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop academic skills</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop critical thinking skills $&lt;$ Four-Year</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create common first-year experience $&lt;$ Four-Year</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: 2012-2013 NSFYS*
Goals in Literature

- Interpersonal relationships
- Career development
- Intellectual/academic competence
- Wellness
- Identity development
- Spirituality
- Civic responsibility

NSFYS Objectives

- Connection with institution
- Campus resources
- Academic skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Common FYE
- Study Skills
- Self-exploration
- Writing skills
- Student-faculty interaction
- 2nd-year retention

Topics

Objectives Assessed
Goals in Literature

NSFYS Objectives

Topics

Objectives Assessed

Interpersonal relationships
Career development
Intellectual/academic competence
Wellness
Identity development
Spirituality
Civic responsibility
Connection with the institution
Orientation to campus resources
Academic skills
Critical thinking skills
Common FYE
Study Skills
Self-exploration
Writing skills
Student-faculty interaction
2nd-year retention

Stated objectives centered on developing academic and intellectual competence

Not much specific stated focus on objectives related to civic responsibility, wellness, or spirituality
## Top 5 Seminar Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Important Course Topics</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campus resources</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic planning or advising</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus engagement</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: 2012-2013 NSFYS*
NSFYS Objectives

- Connection with institution
- Campus resources
- Academic skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Common FYE
- Study Skills
- Self-exploration
- Writing skills
- Student-faculty interaction
- 2nd-year retention

Topics

- Campus Resources
- Academic Planning
- Critical Thinking
- Study Skills
- Campus Engagement
- Time Management
- Writing Skills
- Career Issues

Objectives Assessed

Connection with institution, Campus resources, Academic skills, Critical thinking skills, Common FYE, Study Skills, Self-exploration, Writing skills, Student-faculty interaction, 2nd-year retention.
For colleges and universities who named

Connection with institution as an objective

These were the top 5 topics

Campus Resources – 47.8%
Academic Planning – 41.6%
Campus Engagement – 38.1%
Study Skills – 27.0%
Time Management – 25.2%

Some evidence of horizontal alignment
For colleges and universities who named

Orientation to Campus Resources and Services

as an objective

NSFYS Objectives

Topics

Objectives Assessed

Campus Resources – 62.6%

Academic Planning – 42.3%

Study Skills – 37.1%

Time Management – 33.6%

Campus Engagement – 31.8%

These were the top 5 topics

Evidence of horizontal alignment
For colleges and universities who named Academic Skills as an objective, these were the top 5 topics:

- Study Skills: 46.2%
- Academic Planning: 37.7%
- Campus Resources: 35.2%
- Critical Thinking: 31.5%
- Time Management: 24.9%

Strong evidence of horizontal alignment.
For colleges and universities who named Critical Thinking Skills as an objective, these were the top 5 topics assessed:

- Critical Thinking – 73.3%
- Writing Skills – 38.6%
- Specific Disciplinary Topic – 21.6%
- Campus Engagement – 19.9%
- Study Skills – 18.2%
- Academic Planning – 18.2%

Strong evidence of horizontal alignment.
For colleges and universities who named as an objective

**Common FYE**

- Critical Thinking – 37.4%
- Academic Planning – 35.6%
- Campus Engagement – 35.0%
- Campus Resources – 35.0%
- Writing Skills – 22.1%

These were the top 5 topics

Some evidence of horizontal alignment
## 5 Most Frequently Assessed Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the seminar</td>
<td>75.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of course outcomes</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence to second year</td>
<td>58.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with faculty</td>
<td>52.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reports of course impact</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For colleges and universities who named

Connection with institution as an objective

These were the top 5 outcomes assessed:

- Satisfaction with the seminar – 76.8%
- Achievement of Course Outcomes – 69.5%
- Persistence to Second Year – 63.2%
- Satisfaction with faculty – 47.9%
- Student self-reports of course impact – 45.3%

Some evidence of horizontal alignment:

Connections with Peers – 44.7%, #6
Student-faculty interaction – 28.4%, #12
Satisfaction with Institution – 38.9%, #8
For colleges and universities who named Orientation to Campus Resources and Services as an objective, these were the top 5 outcomes assessed:

- Satisfaction with the seminar – 76.6%
- Achievement of Course Outcomes – 64.3%
- Persistence to Second Year – 60.2%
- Satisfaction with faculty – 44.0%
- Student self-reports of course impact – 48.5%

Little evidence of horizontal alignment.

Use of Campus Services – 36.8%, #8 most frequent assessed outcome.
For colleges and universities who named Academic Skills as an objective, these were the top 5 outcomes assessed:

- **Achievement of Course Outcomes**: 76.8%
- **Satisfaction with the seminar**: 74.8%
- **Persistence to Second Year**: 64.9%
- **Satisfaction with faculty**: 50.3%
- **Student self-reports of course impact**: 50.3%

Strong evidence of horizontal alignment:

- **Grade Point Average**: 47.7%, #6
- **Student self-reports of improvement**: 33.1%, #11
- **Writing Ability**: 20.5%, #16
Achievement of Course Outcomes – 75.0%
Satisfaction with the seminar – 71.4%
Critical Thinking – 64.3%
Satisfaction with faculty – 56.3%
Persistence to Second Year – 51.8%

For colleges and universities who named Critical Thinking Skills as an objective, these were the top 5 outcomes assessed.

Some evidence of horizontal alignment:
Student self-reports of course impact – 45.3%, #6
Writing Skills – 44.6%, #7
For colleges and universities who named **Common FYE** as an objective:

**NSFYS Objectives**
- Satisfaction with the seminar – 72.6%
- Achievement of Course Outcomes – 68.4%
- Persistence to Second Year – 57.9%
- Satisfaction with faculty – 62.1%
- Student self-reports of course impact – 42.1%
- Satisfaction with the institution – 42.1%

**Topics**

These were the top 5 outcomes assessed:
- Connections with Peers – 40.0%, #7
- Participation in Campus Activities – 37.9%, #8
- Satisfaction with Advising – 36.8%, #9
- Critical Thinking – 34.7%, #10

**Objectives Assessed**

- Little evidence of horizontal alignment
Evidence that assessment is not always driven by objectives
Assessment is not being directed by most stated objectives or ‘theoretical’ goals for first year.
Horizontal Alignment in Sophomore-Year Initiatives

Learning Objectives

Educational Experiences

Assessment

Goals from Literature

Sophomore-Year Objectives

Sophomore-Year Initiatives

Assessment of SYI

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE & STUDENTS IN TRANSITION
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

www.sc.edu/fye
Objectives for the Sophomore Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retention</td>
<td>62.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career exploration</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career preparation &lt; Two-Year</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic assistance</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of a major &lt; Four-Year</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership opportunities</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student engagement</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with institution &lt; Four-Year &lt; Private</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic skills</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation rates &lt; Two-Year &lt; Public</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goals from literature line up pretty well with reported institutional goals for sophomore year.

Heavy focus on retention and purpose is not explicitly stated as objective for second-year students.
Common Sophomore-Year Initiatives

- Academic Advising: 57.6%
- Career exploration: 52.7%
- Career planning: 48.7%
- Early alert systems: 42.7%
- Leadership development: 40.3%
- Major exploration and selection: 33.1%
- Academic coaching or mentoring: 30.3%
- Peer mentoring by sophomores: 29.1%
- Class events: 28.2%
- Internships: 27.1%

Source: 2013-2014 NSSYI
Primary Sophomore-Year Initiatives

- Academic Advising: 45.7%
- Live-on Requirement: 8.2%
- Early Alert: 4.7%
- Other: 4.1%
- Credit-Bearing Course: 3.8%
- Academic Coaching: 3.2%
- Class Events: 2.9%
- Sophomore LLC: 2.9%
- Career Exploration: 2.3%
- Major Exploration: 2.1%

Source: 2013-2014 NSSYI
Primary Sophomore-Year Initiative: Categories

- Academic Advising (45.7%)
- Residential Initiatives (12.3%)
- High-Impact Practices (7.9%)
- Major and Career-Focused Initiatives (6.4%)
- Academic Support
- Curriculum or Course-Based

- Communication to Sophomores
- Campus-Based Events
- Away-from-Campus Events
- Transition-Focused Initiatives
- Financial Aid & Scholarships
- Leadership Development
- Comprehensive Sophomore-Year
- Early Alert
Sophomore Objectives

- Retention
- Career exploration
- Career preparation
- Academic assistance
- Selection of a major
- Leadership opportunities
- Student engagement
- Connection with institution
- Academic skills
- Graduation rates

SYI

- Academic Advising
- Residential Initiatives
- High-Impact Practices
- Major and Career Initiatives

Objectives Assessed

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE AND STUDENTS IN TRANSITION
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

www.sc.edu/fye
For colleges and universities who named Academic Advising as their primary SYI

These were the top 5 objectives

Strong evidence of horizontal alignment
Popular SYI Objectives for colleges and universities who named as their primary SYI:

- Connection with Institution
- Student Engagement
- Retention
- Support Network
- Self-Exploration

These were the top 5 objectives.
For colleges and universities who named as their primary SYI:

These were the top 5 (6) objectives:

- Student Engagement
- Intercultural Competence
- Civic Responsibility
- Leadership Opportunities
- Career Preparation and Exploration
- Critical-thinking Skills

Strong evidence of horizontal alignment.
Career Exploration
Career Preparation
Selection of a Major
Retention
Graduation

For colleges and universities who named

Major and Career Focused

as their primary SYI

These were the top 5 objectives

Strong evidence of horizontal alignment
Sophomore Objectives

- Retention
- Career exploration
- Career preparation
- Academic assistance
- Selection of a major
- Leadership opportunities
- Student engagement
- Connection with institution
- Academic skills
- Graduation rates

SYI

- Academic Advising
- Residential Initiatives
- High-Impact Practices
- Major and Career Initiatives

Objectives Assessed

- Did not capture in 2014 NSSYI
- 49.5% of Institutions reported Assessing SYI
- Avenue for Future Research

Did not capture in 2014 NSSYI

49.5% of Institutions reported Assessing SYI

Avenue for Future Research

SYI Objectives

Assessed
Vertical Alignment

Senior-Year Experience

Major

Sophomore-Year Initiatives

First-Year Experience

Sophomore Objectives

SYI

Objectives Assessed

FYS Objectives

Topics

Objectives Assessed
Opportunities for Vertical Alignment?

First-Year Objectives
- Identity development
- Wellness
- Spirituality
- Civic responsibility

Sophomore-Year Objectives
- Purpose
- Meaningful interactions w/faculty
- Engaged learning
- Campus involvement

Academic self-efficacy
- Major/career exploration
- Interpersonal relationships

First-Year Objectives overlap with Sophomore-Year Objectives.
# Vertical Alignment

## Objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-Year Seminar</th>
<th>Second-Year</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Direction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic self-efficacy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with the institution</td>
<td>Academic skills</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking skills</td>
<td>Critical-thinking skills</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing skills</td>
<td>Critical-thinking skills</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing skills</td>
<td>Retention</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preprofessional preparation</td>
<td>Retention</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major/career exploration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking skills</td>
<td>Career exploration&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking skills</td>
<td>Selection of a major</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing skills</td>
<td>Career exploration&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>**</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing skills</td>
<td>Selection of a major&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal relationships</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with the institution</td>
<td>Student engagement</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common first-year experience</td>
<td>Student-faculty interaction</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> = Second-year institutional objective, <sup>b</sup> = both institutional and SYI objective. All other second-year objectives are from initiatives.
Opportunities for Vertical Alignment?

• What initiatives do you have in first year that focus on these outcomes?
  – Academic self-efficacy
  – Major/career exploration
  – Interpersonal relationships

• How are they (or how might they) lay the groundwork for initiatives in the sophomore year?

• In what ways are your sophomore initiatives intentionally building on the work of the first year?

• How can you build in assessment of outcomes from the first year to support second-year success?
  – Likewise from second year on?
More information available

2012-2013 National Survey of First-Year Seminars: Exploring High-Impact Practices in the First College Year
Dallin George Young and Jessica M. Hopp

Available Now
www.nrcpubs.com