The Trusted Expert and Internationally Recognized Leader for all Postsecondary Student Transitions
Leveraging first- and second-year transition programs to improve transfer

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National Resource Center for
The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students
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Why Attend to Transitions?

• Great attention given to the challenges of entering Higher Education (e.g. Yorke 1999, Tinto, 2000; Nutt et al 2005).

• Poor transition can lead to negative student experience, failing and withdrawing (Upcraft & Gardner et. al.,1989)

• A new first-year student probably encounters the greatest transition (Tinto, 1993; York, 1998), particularly non-traditional students (Tett, 2004)

• Efforts to plug leaks in the academic pipeline began with an attention to the first-year of college
First-Year Transitions

• Students’ first experience with higher education

• Traditionally represents a shift
  – Socially as students leave home, previous academic institutions, enter new peer group
  – Academically as students are faced with increased expectations, less structure, entering a new organizational environment
First-Year Transitions

• Period marked by:
  – Possibility, new beginnings, new discoveries, freedoms in thought and behaviors, growth in self-confidence, and excitement
  – Challenge with newfound freedom, adjustment to new environments, experiences with failure, lost confidence, and disillusionment
First-Year Transitions

- Students are (still) more likely to drop out of college during and after the first year than any other point
- Programs developed to support first-year transition:
  - Orientation
  - First-Year Seminars
  - Bridge Programs
  - First-Year Reading Experience
Sophomore Transitions

• Outgrowth first-year experience movement
  – True model of student transition and success
• Emerging research and assessment on the second college year
• Recognition that second-year students have needs and face challenges
• Evidence that sophomores are at times the least satisfied of all students
Second-Year Transitions

• Sophomore year has been characterized as:
  – Forgotten
  – Invisible
  – Disillusioned
  – Dispiriting
  – Academy’s Middle Children
  – Slump
  – Full of inertia and confusion

(Boyer Commission, 1998; Freedman, 1956; Gahagan & Hunter, 2006; Pattengale & Schreiner, 2000; Tobolowsky, 2008)
Sophomore Year Matters

- Engagement
- Focus
- Sense of Direction
- Sense of Belonging
- Interactions with faculty

- Lead to increases in motivation, academic success, self-authorship and thriving
Transfer Transitions

• Traditionally from two-year to four-year
  – “Reverse Transfer”
  – “Swirl”

• Issues facing students who transfer
  – Articulation of credits/academic progress
  – Social and academic connection
  – Campus culture
  – Completion of academic goals
Inventory

• Programs (1-2 most salient)
  – First-Year
  – Second-Year
  – Transfer
• Objectives of each
  – Stated
  – Latent
• Reach
  – Desired/Designed
  – Actual
Challenge in Execution of Transition Support: “The relay”
# Challenge in Execution of Transition Support: “The Canyon”

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

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

## Junior Year
- Internships
- Study Abroad
- Peer Leadership
Vertical Alignment

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 Alignment: Transfer - Early

First-Year Experience

Sophomore-Year Initiatives

Senior-Year Experience

Junior-Year (Major, Internships)

Sophomore-Year Initiatives

First-Year Experience
Vertical Alignment: Transfer - Reverse

First-Year Experience

Sophomore-Year Initiatives

Junior-Year (Major, Internships)

Sophomore-Year Initiatives

Senior-Year Experience

First-Year Experience

Sophomore-Year Initiatives

First-Year Experience

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Vertical Alignment: Transfer - Swirl

First-Year Experience

Sophomore-Year Initiatives

Junior-Year (Major, Internships)

Senior-Year Experience

First-Year Experience
Vertical Alignment: Transfer - Swirl

- Senior-Year Experience
- Junior-Year (Major, Internships)
- Sophomore-Year Initiatives
- First-Year Experience

Sophomore-Year Initiatives

First-Year Experience
So, how do we take advantage of existing student transition support structures to support transfer student transition?
Vertical Alignment

Year Four (Spring): National Survey of Senior Capstone Experiences
Year One (Fall): National Survey of First-Year Seminars
Year Three: Occasional Survey
Year Two (Spring): National Survey of Sophomore-Year Initiatives
National Survey of First-Year Seminars

Purpose
- Administered triennially over past 25 years
- Types of first-year seminars
- Seminar features
- Student characteristics
- Instructional characteristics
- Administration
- Assessment
- Module on HIPs

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
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>

*Source: 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 – 1500</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>

*Source: 2012-2013 NSFYS*
## Transfer-Specific First-Year Seminars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution type</th>
<th>With seminar (N = 804)</th>
<th>With Transfer Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two-year</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-year</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
<td>89.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>54.4%</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private, not-for-profit</td>
<td>42.8%</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private, for-profit</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Types of Seminars Across All Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seminar Type</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>

**Source:** 2012-2013 NSFYS
Transfer-Specific First-Year Seminars

- Extended Orientation: 55.2%
- Preprofessional/Discipline-Linked: 34.0%
- Academic - Uniform Content: 19.0%
- Academic - Variable Content: 12.1%
- Hybrid: 10.3%
- Basic Study Skills: 0.0%
# 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*
## Top 5 Goals for Transfer-Specific First-Year Seminars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Important Objective</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a connection with the institution</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation to campus resources</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop academic skills</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create common first-year experience</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop critical thinking skills</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve second-year return rates</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-exploration or personal development</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Top 5 Seminar Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Important Course Topics</th>
<th>All NSFYS %</th>
<th>Offer Transfer Specific FYS %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campus resources &lt; Two Year &lt; Public</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>45.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic planning or advising &lt; Two Year &lt; Public</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking &lt; Four Year &lt; Private</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills &lt; Two Year &lt; Public</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus engagement</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also in top 6 topics for FYS with transfer-specific sections: Writing Skills (26.3%) and Time Management (22.8%)
# HIPs and First-Year Seminars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High-Impact Practice</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>Produce and revise various forms of writing</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common reading experience</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning community</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service-learning</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate research</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2012-2013 NSFYS
## HIPs and Transfer-Specific First-Year Seminars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High-Impact Practice</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration and teamwork</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity or global learning</td>
<td>67.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common reading experience</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce and revise various forms of writing</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning community</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service-learning</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate research</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Institutions that offer transfer sections of FYS offer significantly more HIPs in connection with the course.

Source: 2012-2013 NSFYS
## 5 Most Frequently Assessed Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>All NSFYS %</th>
<th>FYS with Transfer %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the seminar</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence to second year</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>81.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with faculty</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reports of course impact</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in campus activities</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First-Year Objectives and Outcomes

• What are the objectives for first-year students on your campus?
  – Are there different objectives for any first-year seminars for transfer students?
• How are those objectives met?
• How are first-year outcomes assessed?
National Survey of Sophomore-Year Initiatives

Purpose

• Third administration; previously in 2005 and 2008
• Designed to identify sophomore-specific practices and programs and characteristics of those initiatives

2013-2014 Administration

• 3,722 institutions invited to participate
• 778 responses from unique institutions (20.9% response rate)
• 349 currently offered at least one sophomore-specific initiative (46% of sample)
## 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>
## 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*
# 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>

*Source: 2013-2014 NSSYI*
Most 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%

Only 2 institutions reported sophomore programs focused on transfer-related issues (pre-transfer advising, incoming).

Source: 2013-2014 NSSYI
Primary Sophomore-Year Initiatives

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%

- 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
Required to Participate in Primary Sophomore-Year Initiative?

Highest when **academic advising** was the primary initiative and lowest for **major and career-focused** initiatives as the primary sophomore initiative.

- Underprepared
- Prominent for students who are:
  - First-generation
  - Honors
  - International
  - In a learning community
Most Important Objectives for Primary Initiative: Academic Advising

- Academic Assistance
- Retention
- Selection of a Major
- Graduation
- Student-Faculty Interaction
Most Important Objectives for Primary Initiative: Residential Initiatives

- Connection with Institution
- Student Engagement
- Retention
- Support Network
- Self-Exploration
Most Important Objectives for Primary Initiative: High-Impact Practices

- Student Engagement
- Intercultural Competence
- Civic Responsibility
- Leadership Opportunities
- Career Preparation and Exploration
- Critical-thinking Skills
Most Important Objectives for Primary Initiative: *Major and Career-Focused*

- Career Exploration
- Career Preparation
- Selection of a Major
- Retention
- Graduation
Vertical Alignment

• What are the opportunities for leveraging first- and second-year programs to facilitate transfer transitions?
• What obstacles do these programs present?
• How can we achieve (or approximate) vertical integration for transfer students?
Thanks for your participation!

Dallin George Young
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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

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