



## Preliminary Findings from the 2005 National Survey on Sophomore-Year Initiatives

### Methodology

After pilot testing in July 2005, the web-based survey was officially administered in October 2005. Invitations to participate in the survey were successfully e-mailed to 1,139 chief student affairs officer at regionally accredited public and private four-year baccalaureate-granting institutions in the 50 US states. After two reminders and data clean up, a total of 382 institutions (33.5%) successfully completed the survey. It should be noted that because the survey was sent to student affairs professionals, survey findings may under-represent academic affairs initiatives. Finally, while the sample is not fully representative of the nation's colleges and universities (large and public schools are over-represented) the collection of this data from 382 schools represents the most substantial portrait of sophomore-year initiatives currently available.

### Current Sophomore Initiatives

Table 1: Institutions with Initiatives Specifically or Intentionally Geared Toward Sophomore Students

	# Yes	% Yes
At least one sophomore initiative (n=382)	128	33.5%
Career Planning (n=120)	89	74.2%
Programs to Assist with Selection of Major (n=121)	79	65.3%
Academic Advising (n=123)	75	61.0%
Class Events (e.g., trips, dinners, dances) (n=121)	56	46.3%
Peer Mentoring by Sophomores (i.e., sophomore students mentoring other students) (n=117)	54	46.2%
Student Government (e.g., sophomore council) (n=119)	46	38.7%
Residence Life (e.g., sophomore-specific living arrangements) (n=119)	40	33.6%
Community Service / Service Learning (n=116)	38	32.8%
Faculty and Staff Mentors for Sophomore Students (n=118)	37	31.4%
Other Initiatives (n=77)	22	28.6%
Credit-Bearing Course (e.g., Sophomore Seminar) (n=114)	24	21.1%
Opportunities to Co-Teach or Assist in Teaching a Class (n=116)	24	20.7%
Financial Aid (e.g., sophomore scholarships, loans) (n=119)	23	19.3%
Cultural Enrichment (e.g., plays, musical events, multicultural fairs) (n=117)	22	18.8%
Curricular Learning Communities (i.e., linked courses) (n=113)	20	17.7%
Publications for Sophomores (e.g., sophomore newsletter or website) (n=119)	20	16.8%
Peer Mentoring for Sophomores (i.e., students mentoring sophomores) (n=117)	18	15.4%

## Current Initiatives (cont.)

Private schools are more likely than public schools to have any sophomore initiative (38.5% vs. 26.8%,  $p < .05$ ).

Of those schools with sophomore initiatives:

- Private schools are more likely than public schools to have sophomore-class events (56.8% vs. 25.6%,  $p = .006$ ).
- Private schools are more likely than public schools to have student government initiatives for sophomores (48.1% vs. 20.5%,  $p = .014$ ).
- Small (FTE < 5,000) schools are more likely than larger schools to have student government initiatives for sophomores (47.3% vs. 25.0%,  $p = .025$ ).
- Positive correlation between academic advising, career planning, and programs to assist in the selection of a major (PHI values of .434, .241, & .477).

## Future Initiatives

- 37.3% of responding institutions are planning some type of future sophomore initiative.
- Schools with current sophomore initiatives are more likely to be planning future sophomore initiatives than those schools without current initiatives (51.4% vs. 31.0%).

## Assessment of Sophomore Initiatives

- 29.5% of institutions with sophomore initiatives have assessed their initiatives.
- Locally developed surveys, focus groups, and institutional data analysis are the most popular assessment methods (58.8%, 54.7%, & 57.1%)

2007 ACPA/NASPA Joint Meeting Orlando, FL

## SOPHOMORE-YEAR INITIATIVES: A National Overview and Institutional Examples

Bradley E. Cox  
Penn State Univ

Stephanie Serven  
Marymount Univ

Barbara F. Tobolowsky  
NRC

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WHY ARE YOU HERE?

Seriously

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### SESSION PLAN

- × Introduction
  - + Why Sophomores
  - + Sophomore Slump
- × National Research
  - + 2005 National Survey of Sophomore-Year Initiatives
- × Institutional Examples
- × Participant Examples

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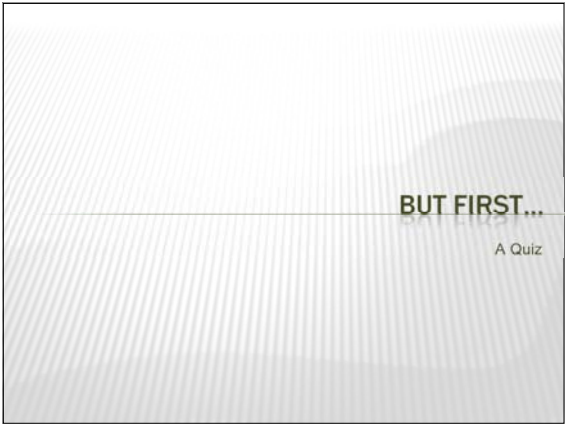
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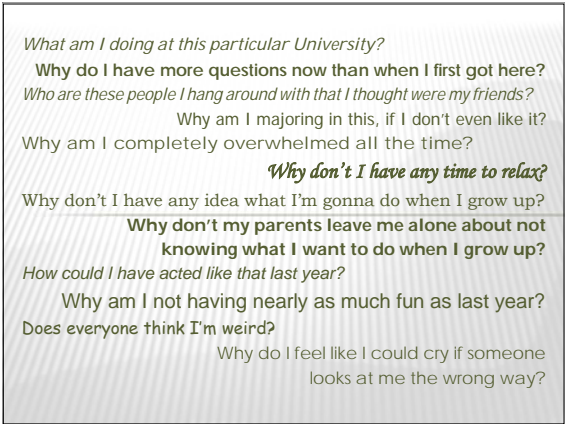
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If you said **YES, I HAVE HEARD THIS FROM MY STUDENTS** to 3 or more of those questions...

...then they could be struggling through their Sophomore experience.

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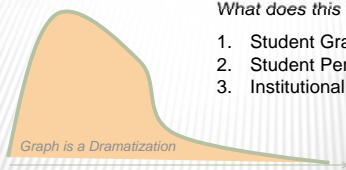
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### WHY SOPHOMORES?



What does this graph represent?

1. Student Grades?
2. Student Persistence?
3. Institutional Support?

1. Gardner, Pattengale, & Schriener, 2000; Pattengale, 2000; Pattengale & Schreiner, 2000
2. Freedman, 1956; Richmond & Lemons, 1985
3. Boivin, Fountain, & Baylis, 2000; Gaff, 2000; Juillerat, 2000; Margolis, 1976; Pattengale, 2000; Schaller, 2005

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### WHAT IS THE SOPHOMORE SLUMP?

- × Idea at least 50 years old (Freedman, 1956)
- × Recent examinations (Graunke & Woosley, 2005; Schreiner & Pattengale, 2000; Schaller, 2005)
- × **Development:** identity, purpose, goals
- × **Academic:** grades, persistence

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2005 National Survey of Sophomore-Year Initiatives

## NATIONAL RESEARCH

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## QUESTIONS

- ☞ To what extent were institutions developing sophomore-specific initiatives?
- ☞ What type of initiatives were used?
- ☞ How were the initiatives related (to each other, to school size/control)?

### Key Definition:

Sophomores are “students in their second year of post-secondary education”

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## METHODS

2005 National Survey on Sophomore-Year Initiatives

- ✦ Web-based survey, yes/no/don't know responses with text boxes for description
- ✦ 382 responses (33.5% response rate) from 1,139 CSAO at regionally accredited 4-year institutions in U.S.

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## CURRENT SOPHOMORE INITIATIVES

**33.5%**

of respondents had sophomore initiative

### Most Common Initiatives

- Career Planning (74.2%)
- Major Selection (65.3%)
- Academic Advising (61.0%)

### Least Common Initiatives

- Learning Comm. (17.7%)
- Soph Publications (16.8%)
- Peer Mentoring for Sophomores (15.4%)

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## INSTITUTION SIZE & CONTROL

- \* Private institutions more likely to offer a sophomore initiative ( $p=.019$ )
- \* Private schools more likely to have class events ( $p=.002$ ) & student gov'n't ( $p=.004$ )
- \* Small schools (<5,000 FTE) more likely to have student government initiatives ( $p=.025$ )

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## ASSOCIATIONS B/W INITIATIVE TYPES

Selection of a major, career planning, & academic advising ( $\phi = .434, .241, \& .477$ )

Sophomore class events &

- + Student government ( $\phi = .412, p<.001$ )
- + Community service ( $\phi = .323, p<.001$ )
- + Cultural enrichment ( $\phi = .306, p<.01$ )
- + Publications for sophs ( $\phi = .340, p<.001$ )

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## ASSESSMENT & FUTURE PLANS

- × 29.5% of responding institutions with initiatives have assessed their efforts
  - + Locally Developed Surveys (58.8%)
  - + Focus Groups (57.1%)
  - + Institutional Data Analysis (54.3%)
  
- × 37.3% of respondents are planning future sophomore initiatives
  - + Those with current initiatives more likely to be planning future initiatives ( $p < .001$ )

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## LIMITATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

- × Limitations
  - + A priori identification of initiative types
  - + Overlap between initiative types
  - + CSAO's (or designee) as respondents
- × Implications
  - + Assessment is key to sustained success
  - + Sophomore initiatives can be simple and/or grow out of FY initiatives

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Sophomore-Specific Initiatives

## INSTITUTIONAL EXAMPLES

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## COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVES

- × Beloit College (Wisconsin)
- × Stanford University

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## BELOIT COLLEGE

<http://www.beloit.edu/~syr/index.php>



**BELOIT COLLEGE  
PRESENTS A GUIDE TO  
YOUR SOPHOMORE  
YEAR**

- × Welcome-Back Dinner
- × Sophomore Retreat
- × Major Fair
- × Sophomore Website
- × Sophomore Guidebook
- × Venture Grants

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## BELOIT: VENTURE GRANTS

- × 13 grants:  
\$500-\$1,500 each
- × Apply as FY, do as sophs
- × "Entrepreneurial, self-testing, or intellectually challenging activities in which the winner(s) attempt something (academic or non-academic) that benefits others"



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## BELOIT: SOPHOMORE RETREAT

- ✧ Confront Personal Academic Issues
  - + Major Selection
  - + Study Abroad
  - + Career Planning
- ✧ Identify Campus Issues
  - + Recycling Initiatives
  - + Coffee House
  - + Library Hours



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## STANFORD UNIVERSITY

<http://fep.stanford.edu>



Stanford University  
**FRESHMAN and SOPHOMORE PROGRAMS**  
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

- ✧ Sophomore Seminars
- ✧ Residential Learning Communities
- ✧ Direct coordination with their FY programs



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## RESIDENTIAL INITIATIVES

- ✧ Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
- ✧ ECU
- ✧ U of Central Arkansas
- ✧ Southern Arkansas
- ✧ U of South Carolina

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## Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

[www.sophomoresuccess.calpoly.edu/index.php?page=1](http://www.sophomoresuccess.calpoly.edu/index.php?page=1)

- ✖ Live together in residence hall
- ✖ Specific Goals and Learning Outcomes explained
  - + Academic Planning
  - + Community
  - + Autonomy
- ✖ Explanation of "Soph Slump" (nationally and at Cal Poly)
- ✖ Potential ramifications of poor academic success
  - + Strategies for how to be successful



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## Eastern Kentucky University

[www.housing.eku.edu/mainmenu\\_links/living\\_learning.php](http://www.housing.eku.edu/mainmenu_links/living_learning.php)

- ✖ **Sophomore Overdrive**
  - + dedicated to providing a living environment to help with the transition specific to the sophomore year.
- ✖ **Next Steps Residence Hall**
  - + For Sophomore, Junior and Senior students
  - + focuses on the next steps of college career including internship, graduate school, and career exploration, as well as offering programs to support personal and academic growth.



Living Learning Communities  
Where Student and Learning Come First

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## University of Central Arkansas

<http://www.uca.edu/DIVISIONS/admin/housing/sye.html>

- ✖ The Sophomore Experience Program will provide programs specifically designed to prepare sophomores to be leaders and active members of their community in Stadium Park and campus wide.
- ✖ Programs that deal directly with the issues they are currently facing:
  - **Building Leadership skills, Deciding a Major, Creating a Community, Civic Participation and Building Life Skills.**

SOPHOMORE YEAR EXPERIENCE



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## Southern Arkansas University

[http://www.saumag.edu/student\\_affairs/mule.org/](http://www.saumag.edu/student_affairs/mule.org/)

**Meaningful Undergraduate Living/Learning Experience**  
**Organization, Retention, Graduation**  
(MULE.org)

- ✧ Focuses on students' academic and personal success.
- ✧ Opportunity to interact more directly with faculty in classes and in residence halls to enhance learning
  - + Learning community: common block of classes
  - + Focus on involvement: active role in planning and initiating activities on their floors and within the hall; encouraged to participate in campus activities



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## University of South Carolina

<http://www.housing.sc.edu/rli/>

- ✧ S.L.U.M.P. Retreat  
(Sophomores Learn, Understand, and Map a Plan)
- ✧ The Sophomore Initiative (TSI) Planner



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## MAJOR/CAREER INITIATIVES

- ✧ College of the Holy Cross
- ✧ Macalaster College
- ✧ Texas Christian University

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## College of the Holy Cross

<http://college.holycross.edu/grants/lily/2yo.html>

- × Second Year Opportunities  
2YO
  - + The Academic Planner
  - + 2YO Dessert and Academic Extravaganza
  - + Lecture by the author of the 2YO summer book
- × Part of the Lily Vocation Discernment Initiative

**Holy Cross**

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## Macalaster College

<http://www.macalester.edu/>

- × Soph Fiesta
- × Majors Fair
- × Sophomore Interview
  
- × Part of the Lily Project with the Career Development Center

 MACALESTER COLLEGE

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## Texas Christian University

<http://www.sds.tcu.edu/>

- × Sophomore programs and services: principle of ethical leadership
  - + Inward Bound



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## MENTORING INITIATIVES

- ✦ Indiana Wesleyan (coming soon)
  
- ✦ Kennesaw
  
- ✦ U of Louisville

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## Kennesaw University

[http://www.kennesaw.edu/university\\_studies/sophy](http://www.kennesaw.edu/university_studies/sophy)

- ✦ **Year 2 Kennesaw**
  - + SophYE Peer Leaders is a program that provides leadership training for rising sophomores and uses their experience as first-year students in KSU 1101, our first-year seminar.
  
  - + One of their primary functions is to help build a sense of community among the students enrolled in a section of KSU 1101, which is usually connected to two or three general education courses in a larger learning community (CLASS: Communities for Learning Success).



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## University of Louisville

<http://www.reach.louisville.edu/mentoring/>

- ✦ **REACH Ambassadors**
  - + mentor first-year and transfer students
  - + help students negotiate transition to UofL community
  - + provide support, friendship, advice and help new students connect to university faculty, staff and services.



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## ACADEMIC COURSE INITIATIVES

- ✧ University of Texas at San Antonio
- ✧ Indiana Wesleyan
- ✧ University of Indianapolis

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## University of Texas at San Antonio

- ✧ **Sophomore Seminars** <http://www.utsa.edu/uc/05-06%20design/sophsem.htm>
  - + small group discussion with faculty from a variety of academic disciplines
  - + provides an opportunity to learn more about research within their chosen discipline or explore interests outside of their current major
- ✧ Part of a learning community
- ✧ Secondary intent: create bonds within major



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## Indiana Wesleyan University

<http://cici.indwes.edu/template.cfm?topic=2a11>

- ✧ LDR 150: Life Calling, Work and Leadership
  - + 3 credit hour course
  - + Part of the Leadership Major, housed in the Center for Life Calling & Leadership



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## University of Indianapolis

<http://registrar.uindy.edu/catalog/catalog.php>

- ✧ Required of all sophomore students
- ✧ opportunity for students to attend programs of intellectual and/or cultural significance outside of the normal classroom setting.



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## ADDITIONAL UNIQUE INITIATIVES

- ✧ Furman University
- ✧ St. Michael's College
- ✧ Brandeis

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## Furman University

<http://www.furman.edu/>

- ✧ An informal initiative begun by the Vice President for Student Services
- ✧ Students receive a letter from him offering assistance with issues typically faced by sophomores



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## St. Michael's College

<http://www.smcvt.edu/studentlife/offices/sophomore.asp>

- × Office of Sophomore Programs and Development
  - + focuses on academic, social, and personal issues.
  - + a supportive and caring environment where students can take advantage of individual help session, workshops, group activities, and referral services.
- × Also offer a comprehensive transfer orientation program
  - + The office serves as a safety net for transfer students making the transition into their new environment.




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## Brandeis University

<http://my.brandeis.edu/groups/sye/>

- × Sophomore Year Experience
  - + An intra-department initiative to engage Brandeis sophomores and help them make the most all resources available
- × Sophomore portal includes information about:
  - + Events for sophomores
  - + Academic Resources
  - + Study Abroad
  - + Career Development
  - + Resources for Family and Friends
  - + Actions to consider
    - × (broken into 4 categories)




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## KNOWN SOPHOMORE INITIATIVES:

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| × Beloit College   | × University                                | × Texas Christian University            |
| × Brandeis University                                      | × Kennesaw State University                 | × Texas Southern University             |
| × Bridgewater State College                                | × University                                | × Trinity Western University            |
| × California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo | × Macalaster College                        | × University of Central Arkansas        |
| × Colgate University                                       | × McPherson College                         | × University of Denver                  |
| × College of the Holy Cross                                | × Moravian College                          | × University of Georgia                 |
| × Colorado College   | × Northeastern State University             | × University of Indianapolis            |
| × Duke University  | × Pace University                           | × University of Louisville              |
| × Eastern College  | × Saint Louis University                    | × University of South Carolina          |
| × Eastern Kentucky University                              | × St. Michael's College                     | × Washington University                 |
| × Emory University   | × Southern Arkansas University              | × Yale University                       |
| × Fairfield University                                     | × Southern Illinois University Edwardsville |   |
| × Greenville College                                       | × Spartanburg Methodist College             | × PLUS others we can't fit on the slide |
| × Hiram College  | × Stanford University                       | × Over 130 Identified                   |
| × Indiana Wesleyan   | × Stony Brook University                    |   |

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Your Sophomore Initiatives

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**PARTICIPANT EXAMPLES**

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**CURRENT INITIATIVES**

- ✧ What's Happening? (describe the initiative)
- ✧ How is it Happening (administration, personnel)
- ✧ Is it Working? (assessment, anecdotes)
- ✧ What's Next? (modifications, additions)

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**FUTURE PLANS OR DESIRES**

- ✧ What Needs/Challenges should be addressed?
- ✧ Who is Involved?
- ✧ What's the Potential Initiative(s)?
- ✧ What's Next?

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## FINAL THOUGHT

It seems, therefore, that efforts to establish and enhance initiatives for sophomores require a reallocation of institutional **FOCUS** more than any reallocation of institutional *resources*.

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## SOPHOMORE RESOURCES

- ✦ Shedding Light on Sophomores
  - + Monograph from NRC
- ✦ SOPH-List
  - + Email discussion listserv
- ✦ Sophomore Year Resources Webpage
  - + [www.sc.edu/fye/resources/soph](http://www.sc.edu/fye/resources/soph)
- ✦ Slides will be available on website soon!

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## THANK YOU

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