National Research and Trends on High-Impact Educational Practices and the Transition to College

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So, before we go too far down the path...

- What do we mean when we say “first-year experience”?

“The first-year experience is not a single program or initiative, but rather an intentional combination of academic and co-curricular efforts within and across postsecondary institutions.”

Koch & Gardner, 2006
To what end?

- **21st Century Learning Outcomes**
  - Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world
  - Intellectual and practical skills
  - Personal and social responsibility
  - Integrative learning

- **Metacompetencies for Employability**
  (Gardner, 2009, 2010)
High-Impact Practices

- First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments & Projects
- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships
- Capstone Courses & Projects
Characteristics of HIPs

- Creates an investment of time & energy
- Includes interaction with faculty & peers about substantive matters
- High expectations
- Includes frequent feedback
- Exposure to diverse perspectives
- Demands reflection & integrated learning
- Accountability
Not so fast

➢ “High-impact practices…combine and concentrate other empirically validated pedagogic approaches into a single multideminenational activity…

➢ Only when they are implemented well and continually evaluated…will we realize their considerable potential.”

Kuh, 2010
So, are HIPs being “implemented well?”
### 2009 First-Year Seminar Survey

87.3% of campuses offered a First-Year Seminar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online component</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service-learning</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning-community</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common reading component</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

N = 890 institutions
First-Year Seminars

➢ Only 31% of students in sections taught by advisors
➢ Less than 10% of courses taught by graduate or peer leaders
➢ Very traditional models of instructor compensation & class pedagogy

➢ Hybrid seminars are growing in proportion
➢ Faculty training is including longer-term models
  • Learning communities
  • Mentoring
➢ More FYS in CC and MSIs
Online Components

- Reliance upon outdated technologies
- Common uses of online components
  - Repository for course documents
  - Discussion boards
  - Assignment submission
  - Introduction to online research or information literacy
  - Quizzes/tests
  - Assessments
Online Components

“Seminars have not welcomed the use of social media [and other current technologies] into the classroom. The use of digital resources…should not be encouraged only as an innovative mechanism for course assignments but also for content delivery.”

Padgett & Keup, 2011
Service-Learning

- Service experience varies widely
- Often tied to specific course theme
- Service is often of short duration
  - Usually less than 10 hours
  - One-shot experience or service plunge.
- Some evidence of reflection
  - Written papers or journals
  - Class discussions & presentations
Learning Communities

- Frequently link developmental course work with first-year seminar
- Also commonly link first-year seminar to freshman English/composition
- LC structures range from block scheduling to highly integrated thematic course links
  - Living-learning communities
Common Reading

- Often an orientation or welcome week activity with little integration into FYE

- Occasional connection to:
  - Freshman composition
  - Developmental English

- Other adaptations:
  - Film festival
  - Scholarly article
A Call for Innovative & Integrative Pedagogy

Pedagogical “practices [tend to] be used in more functional rather than novel approaches. It seems that these course practices have great, albeit currently unrealized, potential for transformation into truly high-impact learning experiences for students [and] pillars in an integrated, intentional first-year experience.”

Padgett & Keup (2011)
Other Emerging Evidence

➢ High-impact practices have minor direct effects on student learning

Salisbury & Goodman (2009)

➢ A more significant connection exists between “good practices” and student-learning outcomes

Goodman, Baxter Magolda, Seifert, & King (2011)
What are some vetted “good practices”?

- Effective teaching
- Teaching clarity and organization
- Active learning
- Cooperative learning
- High expectations
- Integrative learning

- Quality non-classroom interactions w/faculty
- Influential interactions with other students
- Academic rigor and challenge
- Diversity experiences
Engaging Pedagogies

- A variety of teaching methods
- Meaningful discussion and homework
- Challenging assignments
- Productive use of class time
- Encouragement for students to speak up in class and work together

*Swing (2002)*
Bottom Line

- Potential overemphasis on participating in HIPs and connection with learning outcomes & retention
- It is what we are doing within the HIPs that is contributing to these outcomes
  - Innovative & integrative pedagogies
  - Vetted good practices
Are HIPs being “continually evaluated?”
HIPs Assessment and Evaluation

- Has your first-year seminar been formally assessed or evaluated in the past 3 years?
  - 56.5% “Yes”
  - 33.8% “No”
  - 9.8% “I don’t know”

- Only 57.8% of institutions report assessing sophomore-year initiatives at all.
## Quantitative Assessment Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FYS Assessment</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student course evaluation</td>
<td>94.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional data</td>
<td>75.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey instrument</td>
<td>75.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally developed</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National survey</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Qualitative Assessment Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FYS Assessment</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
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</table>
HIPs Assessment Considerations

- The methods and tools we use to assess the “impactfulness” of HIPs need to consider students’ self-selection
  - Who is taking advantage of HIPs?
  - Is it equally impactful for all students
- Need to maintain an institutional lens while considering national data
- Integrate longitudinal models
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FYS Objective</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop academic skills</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop connection w/the institution</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide orientation to campus resources &amp; services</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FYS Assessment Outcome</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persistence to sophomore year</td>
<td>73.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with faculty</td>
<td>70.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with institution</td>
<td>65.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Too often program objectives represent articulation of broad learning objectives but the assessment strategy relies upon transactional measures that do not adequately capture progress and achievement of student learning and program goals.”

Keup & Kilgo, forthcoming
Shifting Gears a Little…

Do we structure HIPs to help develop high-performing students or just high-performing first-year students?
High-Impact Practices

- First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
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FYE→SIT

- **Academic/transition seminars**
  - 13-15% for sophomores and juniors
  - 93% for seniors

- **Learning communities**
  - 18% for sophomores
  - 7-8% for juniors and seniors

- Many institutions maintain “early” alert systems for students throughout college
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership development</td>
<td>58.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic advising</td>
<td>57.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Events</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online resources</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer mentoring by sophomores</td>
<td>38.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence life</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study abroad</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service/Service-learning</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty/staff mentors</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Common Sophomore Initiatives</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student government</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print publications</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate research</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural enrichment activities</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retreats</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to co-teach a class/TA</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial aid</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer mentoring for sophomores</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curricular learning communities</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit-bearing course</td>
<td>14.7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Learning Objectives for Sophomore Initiatives

➢ Academic planning
➢ Career Planning
➢ Personal exploration & development
➢ Social connections & campus engagement
Connection to Retention

- Although correlation does not imply causation….

“Overall, institutions that develop and deliver sophomore-year success initiatives generally yield higher third-year return rates from their students, suggesting that such second-year programming is a worthy investment.”

*Keup, Gahagan, & Goodwin, 2010*
Finally, consider transferability

“It stands to reason that [HIP] key conditions can be adapted and incorporated into any teaching and learning situation inside or outside the classroom to promote higher levels of student performance. There are doubtless other high-impact activities…in which large number of students participate.”

Kuh, 2010
Possibilities

- Employment
- Campus activities
- Student media
- Advising
- Athletics
- Physical fitness and wellness

- Performance groups
- Transactional experiences
  - Course registration
  - Parking
- Peer leadership
Where to go from here?

- Evaluate your HIPs for innovative approaches
- Emphasize the role of good practices and engaging pedagogies in HIPs
- **ASSESS!**
  - Balance local with national data
  - Align objectives with outcomes
  - Integrate longitudinal approaches
Where to go from here?

➤ Introduce HIPs in first-year of college but don’t only front load
  • Sophomore-year initiatives
  • Senior-year initiatives
  • Create connections between them!!!

➤ Strive to make the majority of the students’ interactions HIPs
  • Peer leadership as an emerging HIP
Questions? Comments?

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