

# **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?

- 21<sup>st</sup> 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

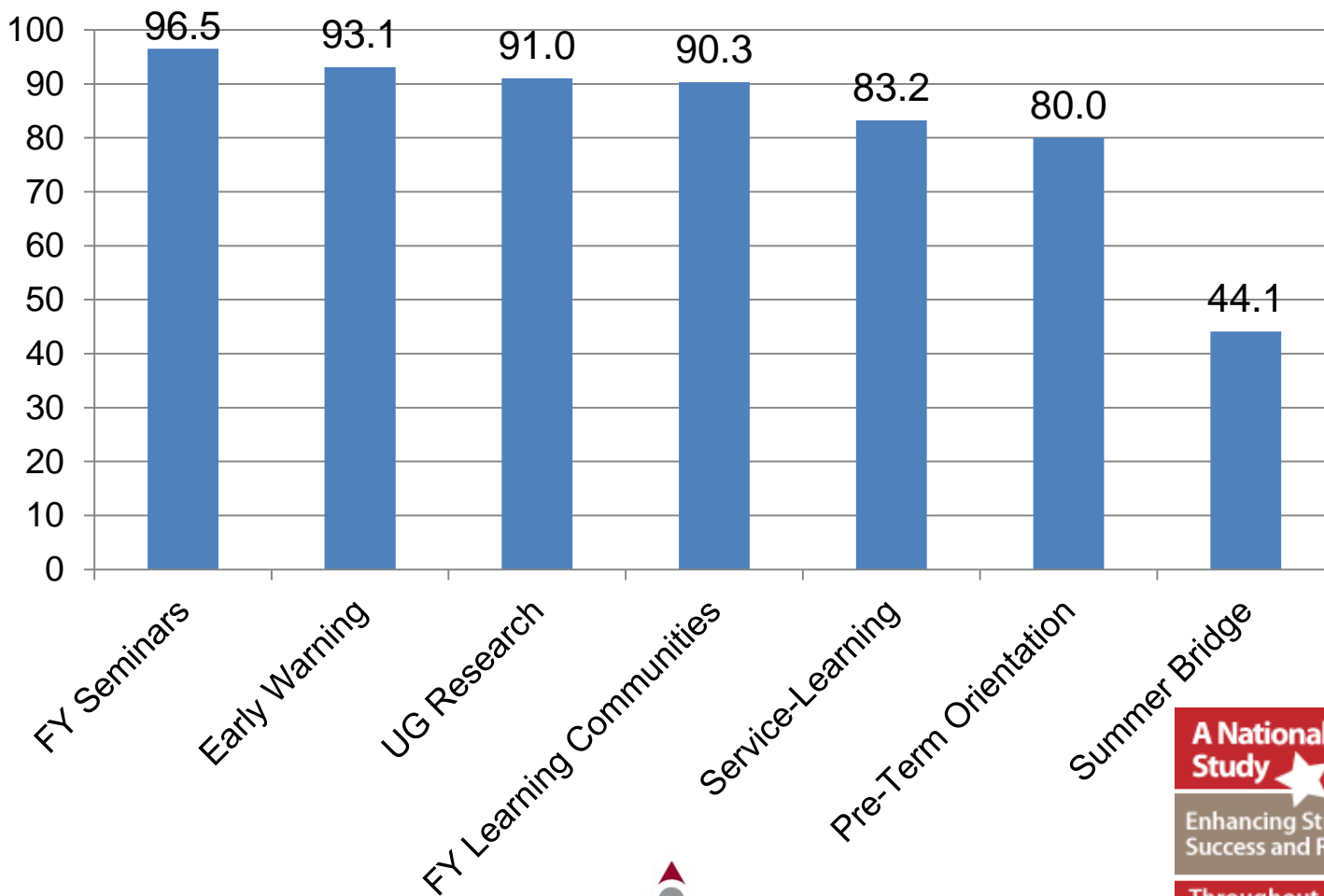


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# Characteristics of HIPs

- 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





**A National Study** ★  
Enhancing Student Success and Retention  
**Throughout Undergraduate Education** ★



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# Not so fast

- “High-impact practices...combine and concentrate **other empirically validated pedagogic approaches** into a single multidimensional activity...
- Only when they are **implemented well** and **continually evaluated**...will we realize their considerable potential.”

*Kuh, 2010*





**So, are  
HIPs being  
“implemented  
well?”**



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# 2009 First-Year Seminar Survey

**87.3% of campuses offered a First-Year Seminar**

<b>Practice</b>	<b>2009</b>
Online component	<b>52.9%</b>
Service-learning	<b>40.3%</b>
Learning-community	<b>35.7%</b>
Common reading component	<b>31.0%</b>

# 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



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# 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.”



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*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



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# 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)*



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# 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

<b>FYS Assessment</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Student course evaluation	94.9%
Institutional data	75.3%
Survey instrument	75.3%
<i>Locally developed</i>	<i>84.0%</i>
<i>National survey</i>	<i>52.4%</i>



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# Qualitative Assessment Strategies

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## FYS Assessment

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## Percent

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### Focus Groups

Instructors

51.3%

Students

42.6%

### Interviews

Instructors

45.6%

Students

30.2%

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# 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

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**FYS Objective**

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**Percent**

Develop academic skills

54.6

Develop connection w/the institution

50.2

Provide orientation to campus  
resources & services47.6

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**FYS Assessment Outcome**

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**Percent**

Persistence to sophomore year

73.7

Satisfaction with faculty

70.9

Satisfaction with institution

65.3

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# Misalignment

“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?**



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# High-Impact Practices

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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

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<b>Most Common Sophomore Initiatives</b>	<b>Percent</b>
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<b>Career planning</b>	<b>76.7</b>
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<b>Leadership development</b>	<b>58.8</b>
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<b>Academic advising</b>	<b>57.4</b>
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<b>Class Events</b>	<b>50.9</b>
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Online resources	43.2
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Peer mentoring <u>by</u> sophomores	38.6
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Residence life	38.2
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Study abroad	35.7
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Community service/Service-learning	32.5
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Faculty/staff mentors	32.1
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<b>Less Common Sophomore Initiatives</b>	<b>Percent</b>
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Student government	31.8
Print publications	31.0
Undergraduate research	27.0
Cultural enrichment activities	25.0
Retreats	20.4
Opportunities to co-teach a class/TA	17.1
Financial aid	17.0
Peer mentoring <u>for</u> sophomores	16.7
Curricular learning communities	16.1
Credit-bearing course	14.7

# Learning Objectives for Sophomore Initiatives

- Academic planning
- Career Planning
- Personal exploration & development
- Social connections & campus engagement



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# 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**



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# 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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