The Trusted Expert and Internationally Recognized Leader
for all Postsecondary Student Transitions
SA FYE SUMMIT:
The Role of the National Resource Center in the FYE Movement

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Let’s be sure to begin at the beginning...
FYE: A Working Definition

“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)
Criteria for FYE “Excellence”

• “Evidence of an intentional, comprehensive approach to improving the first year 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 first-year students, including, but not limited to special student subpopulations.”

• “Strong administrative support for first-year initiatives, evidence of institutionalization, and durability over time.”

• “Involvement of a wide range of faculty, student affairs professionals, academic administrators, and other constituent groups.”
• What do we mean when we say “first-year experience”? 
  – Comprehensive 
  – Intentional 
  – Integrated 
  – Flexible 
  – Systemic 
  – Organizationally horizontal 
  – Student centered
“Students in Transition?”

Macro
- High school - college (FYE)
- Second year
- Transfer
- Senior-year/transition out of college into:
  - Careers
  - Graduate school

Micro
- Major change
- Study abroad/study away
- Shifts in interpersonal relationships
- Living situation
- Stages of:
  - Skill development
  - Identity

National Resource Center
First-Year Experience® and Students in Transition
University of South Carolina

www.sc.edu/fye
FYE: FOUNDATIONS AND BEGINNINGS

374 YEARS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

1636
Harvard College is the first U.S. higher education institution

1791
The Bill of Rights is passed by the first Congress of the new United States. Education becomes a function of the state

1848
Massachusetts School for Insane Females/Normal School for Insane Females established. The first school of its kind in the U.S.

1862
The Land Grant Act becomes law. Public lands donated to the states and sold. Money collected is used for endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college

1865
The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is first administered. It is based on the Army Alpha test

1866
The G.I. Bill is signed by FDR. More than 2 million WWII veterans go back to school, nearly doubling the college population. About 238,000 become teachers

1905
The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching is founded

1931
Alvarez v. the Board of Trustees of the Lemon Grove (California) School District becomes the first successful school desegregation court case in the U.S.

1954
On May 17th, the U.S. Supreme Court announces its decision in the case of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, ruling that separate educational facilities are inherently unequal

1955
The Higher Education Act is amended and reauthorized, expanding access for low and middle income students, providing additional funds for graduate students, and increasing accountability

1964
Whiteboards begin to replace the blackboard in U.S. classrooms

1986
Christa McAuliffe is chosen by NASA to be the first teacher-astronaut

2003
The Higher Education Act is amended and reauthorized, expanding access for low and middle income students, providing additional funds for graduate students, and increasing accountability

2010
The National Resource Center for First-Year Experience and Student Development is founded at the University of South Carolina
FYE: Foundations and Beginnings

• Mass Higher Education Era in the U.S. (1945-1975)
  – WWII GIs: GI Bill and Baby Boom
  – Civil rights and desegregation led to greater access
  – Institutional expansion especially large public and CC
  – Increased financial aid (Higher Education Act)

• Access does not equal success

• “Rediscovery” of student support initiatives
  – Orientation
  – Learning communities
  – Service learning
  – First-year seminars
FYE: A History

1982: First “National Conference on the Freshman Seminar/Freshman Orientation Course Concept” held at USC

1983: Annual conference series on The Freshman Year Experience begins

1986: National Center for the Study of The Freshman Year Experience established

1986: First “International Conference on The First-Year Experience” held in the UK

1988: First monograph and FYE newsletter published

1989: Journal of The Freshman Year Experience introduced

1989: First National Survey on Freshman Seminar Programs conducted

1990: National campaign to recognize Outstanding Freshman Advocates begins

1991: Center name changed to the National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience

1994: First-Year Experience listserv (FYE-List) established
FYE: History

1997: Senior Year Experience listserv (SYE-List) established

1999: Transfer Year Experience listserv (TYE-List) established
Center founder, John Gardner, retires, and named Senior Fellow
Stuart Hunter becomes the second Director of the National Resource Center

1995: First National Conference on Students in Transition
assisted Queensland University of Technology in launching Pacific Rim Conference on the First Year in Higher Education

1998: Center name changes to National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition

2000: First Year Assessment listserv (FYA-list) established

2001: Joint international conference held with Pacific Rim Conference on the First Year in Higher Education

2004: Sophomore Year listserv (SOPH-List) established

2006: 25th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience

2005: Establishment of Paul P. Fidler Research Grant
First National Survey of Sophomore-Year Initiatives conducted

2003: Launch of an electronic newsletter, E-Source for College Transitions
FYE: History

2008: Jennifer R. Keup becomes the third Director of the National Resource Center
National Resource Center receives 2008 ASHE Special Merit Award

2010: Launch of online courses National Award for Excellence in Teaching First-Year Seminars established
National Resource Center awarded a Spencer grant to study the impact of first-year seminars on student outcomes

2013: Administration of the 2nd National Survey of Peer Leaders
25th volume of the Journal of the First-Year Experience & Student in Transition published
Developing and Sustaining Successful First-Year Programs published with Jossey-Bass

2007: Annual First-Year Experience Conference Undergraduate Student Fellowships established Stuart Hunter named Executive Director of University 101 Programs and the National Resource Center

2009: Graduate Student Transitions listserv (GRAD-List) established Helping Sophomores Succeed: Understanding and Improving the Second-Year Experience published with Jossey-Bass Launch of The Toolbox, an online professional development newsletter


2014: Administration of the 3rd National Survey of Sophomore-Year Initiatives National award for Institutional Excellence for Students in Transition established

www.sc.edu/fye
International Movement

- 1986-2013: **International Conferences** on the First-Year Experience (cohosted with Teesside University in the United Kingdom)
- 1995: Assist Queensland University of Technology in launching the **Pacific Rim** Conference on the FYE
- 1997: Publish *From Best Intentions to Best Practices: The First-Year Experience in Canadian Postsecondary Education*
- 2009: Publish *International Perspectives on The First-Year Experience in Higher Education*
International Movement

- 2010: Participate in 3+3+4 Symposium in Hong Kong
- 2011 & 2014: Collaborate with European FYE Network to host international conference
- 2013: Keynote the Teaching & Learning FYE Conference in South Africa
- 2014-2015: Administer the “International Survey of Peer Leaders” with Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and the UK
- 2015: 17 countries send delegates to the 34th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience
- 2015: Keynote address at the First National Conference on Prep Year in Saudi Arabia
Mission

“Building upon its history of excellence as the founder and leader of the first-year experience movement, the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition serves education professionals by supporting and advancing efforts to improve student learning and transitions into and through higher education.”
Core Commitments

• **STUDENT TRANSITIONS** are critical junctures in the educational pipeline & unique opportunities for postsecondary student learning & development
• The Center advances & supports the CONNECTION BETWEEN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE
• **COLLABORATION** draws from the interdisciplinary nature of higher education, communicates a commitment to INCLUSION, and enhances the success of our efforts to support student transitions
• All educators are dedicated to **LIFELONG LEARNING** and engage in an ongoing process of inquiry, exploration, and discovery.
Who Do We Serve?

• **Constituents/Clients**: Educators from all sectors of the institution and beyond
  – FYE is a very horizontal structure (*Keeling, 2007*)
  – Inclusive of external partners (parents, companies, other associations, policy makers)

• **Beneficiaries**: Students

• Ultimately, we are in service to the national and international movement
Functional Areas

• Conferences & Continuing Education
• Publications
• Online Resources
• Research, Grants, and Assessment
What we provide

• Leadership
  – Responsiveness to a constituency
  – Charting a path (Thought Leader)
• Resources for decision making (practice and policy)
• A research agenda to inform practice and scholarship
• Connection and collaboration
• Advocacy
• Recognition
What we DON’T provide

• Regulation, accountability, or accreditation
• A “one-size-fits-all” approach
• Endorsement
• Membership
• Limited provision of
  – Institutional-level support or evaluation
  – Consultancy
  – Financial support
THE FUTURE:
MEETING NEEDS, SETTING AGENDAS
FYE: Current Challenges & Looking Ahead

• FYE maturing into a subspecialty of Higher Ed
• Moving beyond retention framework & employability
• Welcoming new voices in the field and preparing the next generation of leaders
• **Advancing research and scholarship on student transition and success**
• Growing presence of FYE in accreditation
• Internationalization of FYE
• Integration
Directions for Future Research

1. Quality of data
2. Replicating findings
3. Expand the notion of diversity
4. Conditional effects
5. Systemic inquiry to higher education “myths”
6. Inquiry on previous ignored students & institutions
7. Information technology
8. Uncover the “why” of an intervention’s impact
9. Life after college
10. Revisit research literature for future directions

How College Affects Students: Ten Directions for Future Research
Ernest T. Pascarella

The research literature on how college affects students is expanding at an exponential rate. This paper identifies and discusses ten directions for future research on college impact that have the potential to enhance the quality and importance of the evidence produced.

As a total body of evidence, research on college students is perhaps the single largest area of inquiry in the field of higher education. Over the past 50 years, thousands, perhaps even tens of thousands, of studies have been conducted with college student samples. Only a subset of this massive body of scholarship is actually concerned with estimating the net or unique impact of the postsecondary experience on students. This subset of studies is distinguishable from the larger body of research primarily by its specific concern with identifying causal linkages between various aspects of the postsecondary experience and different dimensions of student development (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005).

Yet, even if one considers only the research on college impact on students, he or she confronts a huge and complex body of literature that is expanding at an accelerated rate. Based on the number of studies cited in the four most comprehensive reviews conducted to date (Bowen, 1977; Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005), and allowing for some overlap, it would not be an exaggeration to estimate that somewhere between 6,000 and 7,000 studies of college impact have been conducted. This estimate may actually be conservative in that it is nearly impossible for any review of such a large body of evidence to be absolutely encyclopedic. Thus, an unknown, though hopefully small, percentage of the evidence is likely to have been missed in existing reviews. Furthermore, the volume of research produced for any given time period is increasing at a dramatic rate. For example, the pioneering review of Feldman and Newcomb, published in 1969, reviewed approximately 1,500 studies covering a 45-year period. This translates into an average of roughly 37 studies per decade. Pascarella and Terenzini’s 1991 synthesis covered the 20 years of research after 1969 and reviewed about 2,600 studies—roughly 130 studies per decade; and the 2005 synthesis published by Pascarella and Terenzini reviewed approximately 2,400 studies produced primarily in a single decade, the 1990s.

Should this current trend of a dramatically increasing volume of research continue, and there is no obvious reason to suspect that it will not, we can anticipate that an enormous number of studies of college impact, perhaps 5,000 to 10,000, may be produced in the next 20 years. In short, the next two decades may be a time of unprecedented advances in our understanding of how college affects students. In this paper, I discuss a number of recommendations and directions for future inquiry on college impact that I believe have the potential to enhance the quality and importance of the evidence produced. These recommendations and directions deal with both the...

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FYE: Current Challenges & Looking Ahead

• Continuing to define and advance best practice
• New issues in FYE
  – Peer leadership
  – Developmental education
• Engage new FYE advocates
  – K-12 sector
  – “Business” services
  – New institutional types
• Address new FYE constituents (e.g., parents, public)
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Future Directions for Practice

• Attend to issues of quality
• Broaden reach
• Identify potential and emergent HIPs
• Effective “bundling” an sequence of HIPs
• Advance equity
• Greater impact on historically underserved students
• May be able to “compensate for shortcomings in academic preparation”
• Have the potential to shape campus culture
Qualities of High-Impact Practice

- Creates an investment of time and energy
- Includes interaction with faculty and peers about substantive matters
- Real-world applications
- High expectations
- Includes frequent feedback
- Exposure to diverse perspectives
- Demands reflection and integrated learning
- Accountability
Questions & Comments

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