



NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE® AND
STUDENTS IN TRANSITION

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Community, Access, and Thriving: Theory-based approaches to supporting first-year transitions

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First-Year Experience and Students in Transition**



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ACPA-College Student Educators International would like to acknowledge that the land we are meeting on today has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst a number of Indigenous peoples, specifically the Apache, Caddo, Comanche, Kiowa and Wichita nations.

Additionally, Texas is home to the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo, the Lipan Apache Tribe, and the Texas Band of Yaqui Indians.

ACPA-College Student Educators International honors and respects the diverse Indigenous peoples connected to this territory on which we gather.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

#ACPA18 provides an opportunity to discuss concepts that span a variety of audiences and contexts in higher, post-secondary, and tertiary education. As such, we ask that session participants consider:

- Recognizing individual gender pronoun use
- Utilizing contemporary and relevant language around social identities
- Utilizing language that recognizes varying abilities and is not ableist
- Utilizing language inclusive of diverse global contexts
- Utilizing this space for developmental and educational support of attendees who may be unfamiliar with inclusive language practices

Looking back . . .



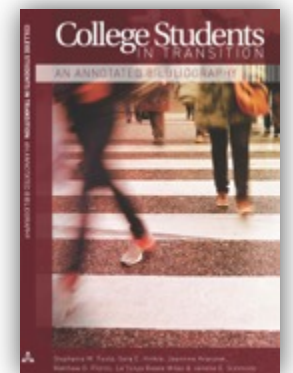
- Think of one of your own transitions
 - How did you become a member of your new community?
 - What were the steps along the way?
 - What were the challenges? Barriers?
 - What were the key factors in making a successful transition?

Goals for this Session

- Introduce a new way of thinking about transitions
- Engage in a dialogue around how this perspective can be applied in various FYE contexts

Toward a Definition of Transition

- A transition is “a point or period in which a student encounters an event or non-event that may impact his or her progression toward educational and personal goals.”
(Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006)
- A student in transition refers to any student entering an academic community with unfamiliar rules, people, tools, roles, and expectations for behavior and identity.



Programs for First-Year Students

- **Common reading**
- **Convocation**
- **Developmental or remedial education**
- **Early alert systems**
- **Experiential learning**
- **First-year academic advising**
- **First-year gateway courses**
- **First-year seminars**
- **General education**
- **Leadership programs**
- **Learning communities**
- **Mentoring by campus professionals**
- **Peer education**
- **Placement testing**
- **Pre-term orientation**
- **Residential programs or initiatives**
- **Service-learning**
- **Student success center**
- **Study abroad**
- **Summer bridge**
- **Undergraduate research**
- **Writing-intensive coursework**
- **Others?**

Most Common FYE Programs/Initiatives	Freq.	%
First-year academic advising (ADV)	422	80.4
Early alert systems (EA)	415	79.0
Pre-term orientation (OR)	396	75.4
First-year seminars (FYS)	386	73.5
Placement testing (PT)	346	65.9
Peer education (PE)	327	62.3
Student success center (SSC)	290	55.2
Developmental education (DEV)	286	54.5
General education (GE)	284	54.1
Convocation (CNV)	276	52.6

Notes: n = 525.

Source: NSFYE 2017

Less Common FYE Programs/Initiatives	Freq.	%
Residential programs (RES)	256	48.8
Learning communities (LC)	245	46.7
First-year gateway courses (GATE)	206	39.2
Common reading (CR)	201	38.3
Summer bridge (SB)	193	36.8
Leadership programs (LEAD)	186	35.4
Writing-intensive coursework (WR)	186	35.4
Service-learning (SL)	167	31.8
Mentor by campus professionals (MT)	166	31.6
Experiential learning or learning beyond the classroom (EXP)	163	31.0

Notes: n = 525.

Source: NSFYE 2017

Least Common FYE Programs/Initiatives	Freq.	%
Undergraduate research (UGR)	111	21.1
Study abroad (SA)	102	19.4
Other (OTH)	24	4.6
None	0	0.0

Notes: n = 525.

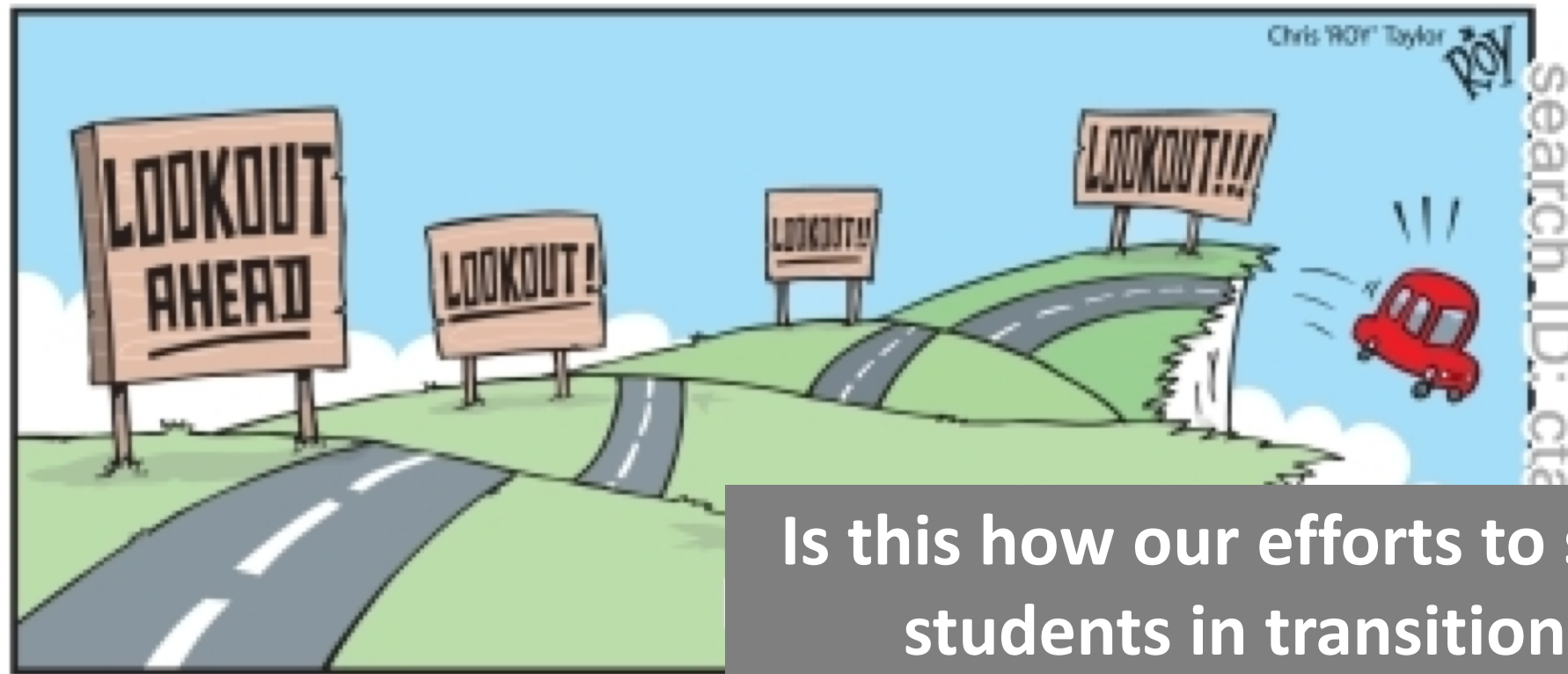
Aims of First-Year Programs

Campuswide institutional objectives for the first year:

Objectives	Freq.	%
Academic success strategies	432	80.4%
Academic planning or major exploration	407	75.8%
Knowledge of campus resources and services	406	75.6%
Connection with the institution or campus	403	75.0%
Introduction to college-level academic expectations	375	69.8%
Retention or second-year return rates	337	62.8%
Common first-year experience	331	61.6%
Student-faculty interaction	328	61.1%
Career exploration and/or preparation	305	56.8%
Writing skills	276	51.4%

Source: NSFYE 2017

Challenge in Perception of Supporting Students in Transition: “Moving the cliff”



Is this how our efforts to support students in transition are perceived?

Learning, Community, and Thriving

THEORETICAL GROUNDING



What does it mean to *learn*?



What does it mean to *teach*?



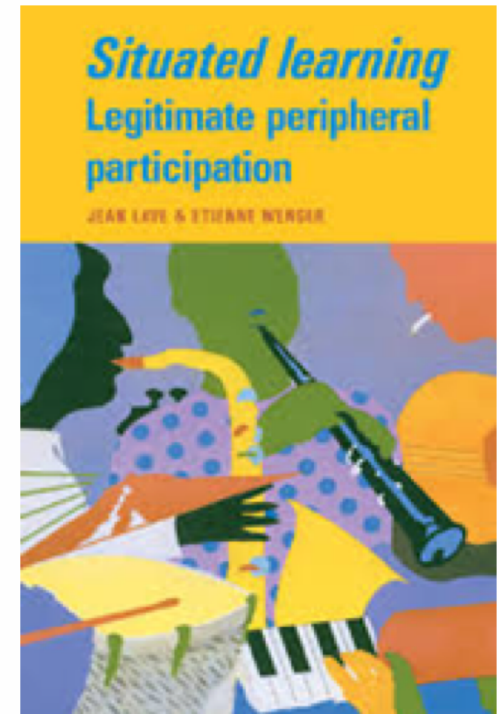
An Alternative Paradigm



Learning as *participating* in a *community of practice*

Legitimate Peripheral Participation

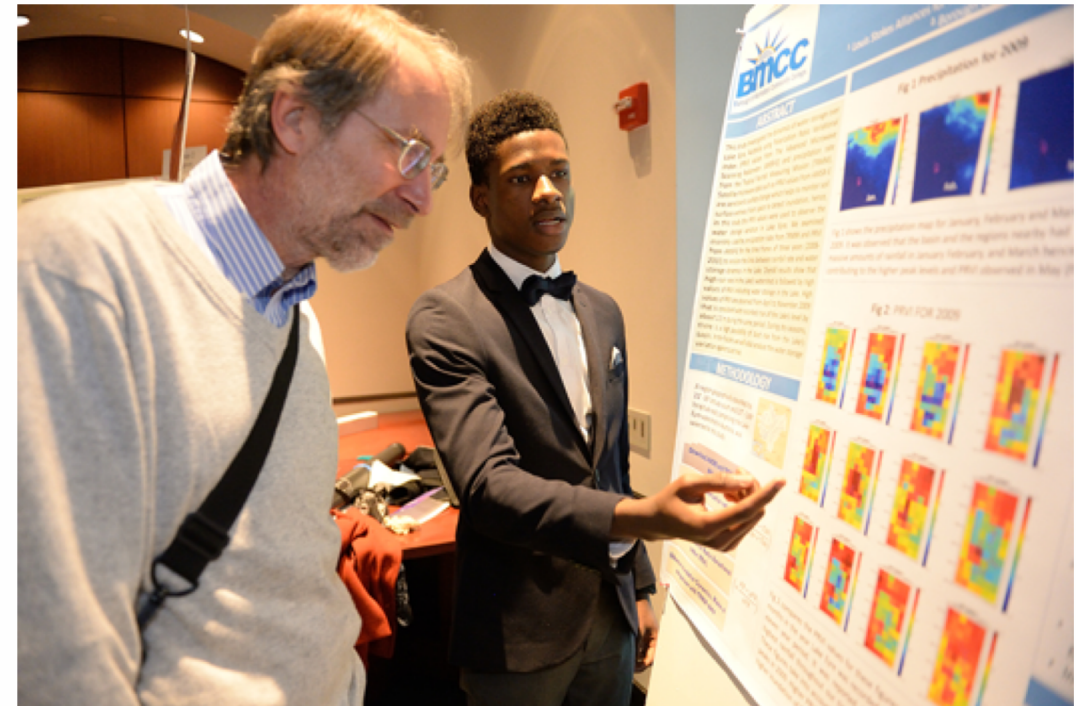
- *Learning* = moving toward full participation in a "community of practice"
- Learning occurs through
 - a) Acting or participating,
 - b) In legitimate/authentic practices,
 - c) With more experienced members of the community,
 - d) In ways that facilitate meaning and understanding



Lave & Wenger, 1991

The FYE through the lens of participation

- **Goal: Participate with students in the academic and social practices of the campus community**
 - Knowledge & Skills
 - Tools & Resources
 - Attitudes/Values/Purposes
 - Relationships



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Source: NSFYE 2017

A (New) Framework for the First Year

"The curriculum is not simply a set of courses [or learning outcomes], it is a description of ***learning experiences organized as frameworks for learning***. In other words, it is primarily about what students do." (Tagg, 2007)



A new paradigm for the FYE



(a) Membership – Participate with a community of learners

(b) Meaning – Connect participation to shared purpose

(c) Identity – Become a learner

Guiding Q?s

- What should we require students to **do**?
- **With whom** should they be participating?
- What types of **environments** will best facilitate the process of becoming?
- What will this require of campus-wide stakeholders?

How can first-year programs encourage Legitimate Peripheral Participation?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION



Common Features of First-Year Programs

- Desire to create community
- Communicate values of the institution
- Break students down into smaller groups
 - Orientation clusters, small FYS sections, common reading discussion groups
- Timing
 - First six weeks, the first semester, the full first year

Common Features of First-Year Programs

- Information
 - Rules, policies, procedures of larger community
- Relationships
 - Peer-to-peer, meaningful faculty and staff interaction, role of peer leadership
- Meaning-making activities
 - Discussions, reflection
- Engagement
 - Value and importance is communicated through these programs

How do these programs encourage LPP?

First-Year Seminar

- Course comprised of various skill-based "units" (e.g. note-taking, test-prep, reading comprehension)
- Campus resource "day" where students learn about a large number of key resources
- Pass-fail grading
- Small class
- Social events with faculty member

Orientation

- Orientation schedule framed around presentations from key offices on campus
- Students scheduled to complete course registration in large computer labs with instruction forms and advisors on stand-by
- Orientation leaders give tours and presentations
- Lunch time with faculty member

How do these programs encourage LPP?

First-Year Seminar

- Course structured around interdisciplinary problem-solving
- Students access campus resources in order to complete coursework (e.g. library research)
- Graded, credit-bearing course
- Small class
- Meet w/ faculty member to review/revise major writing assignment

Orientation

- Schedule developed around conversations about successfully entering college, representatives from key offices engage in conversations about how they support student success
- Students engage in small-group advising around major or meta-major
- Orientation leaders facilitate small-group conversations about transition to college
- Meet w/ faculty member to discuss topics such as academic expectations and major selection

Example: Kennesaw State - Owl Expedition



- Camp-based
- Small groups: ~10 people
- Peer leaders – extend beyond orientation
- Discussions about traditions and
- Faculty host discussions about academic expectations

Example: Fort Lewis College



- Small Groups: ~30
- Orientation leader guides small groups throughout process
- Sessions built broader topics rather than functional area services
- Faculty and staff engage in purposeful conversations with groups about student success
- Built-in reflection activities
- Concludes with convocation

Example: *UNIV 104 @ Washington State Univ.*



**Expand your knowledge;
participate in learning**

**Discover the real you;
develop confidence**

**Cornerstones of
your first-year
experience**

**Build relationships;
seek all kinds of people**

**Map your future;
fulfill your dreams**

- Small class sizes
- Integration with common read
- Focus on *becoming a learner*
- "structured opportunities (and academic credit) for doing the work that every student must do to make a successful transition to college"

Example: *Signature Courses @ UT-Austin*



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Participation as a Pathway to Thriving

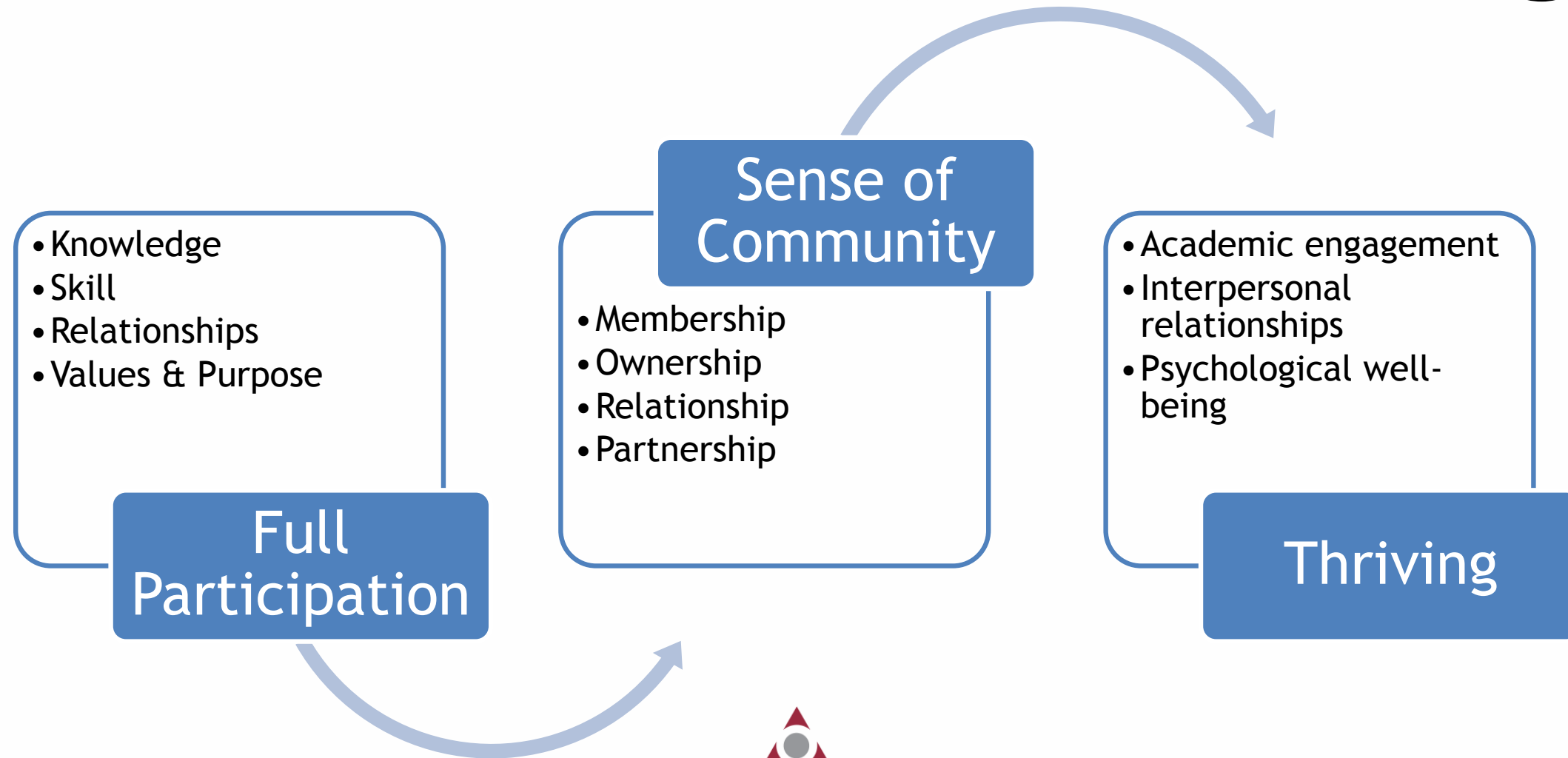


Meaningful participation
leads to . . .

- Academic engagement
- Healthy interpersonal relationships
- Psychological well-being
(*belonging & community*)

****Overall sense of thriving***
(Schreiner, 2012)

FYE as a Pathway to Thriving



Thank You!

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SESSION EVALUATION

Thank you for learning with us!

In order to provide feedback, please find this session in the ACPA18 Guidebook application and once there, click on the “ACPA18 Program Session Evaluation” and complete.

*Please take a few minutes right now
to complete the this evaluation.*

Your feedback is valuable to help ensure our curriculum is meeting the needs of attendees as well as helping presenters in their development.

Situating Learning in First-Year Programs

APPLICATION FOR PRACTICE



What are some shared features of first-year programs?



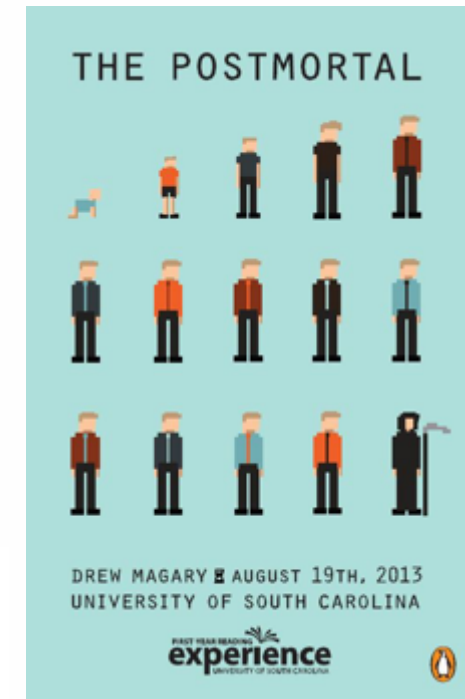
FIRST YEAR SEMINAR:

Your first introduction to college. Your first chance to sharpen the skills to launch your YOP career. Your first step to awesome things.

Keep an eye out for FYS materials. The discussion-based course helps incoming students get challenged by faculty, meet new people, and see what college learning is all about.

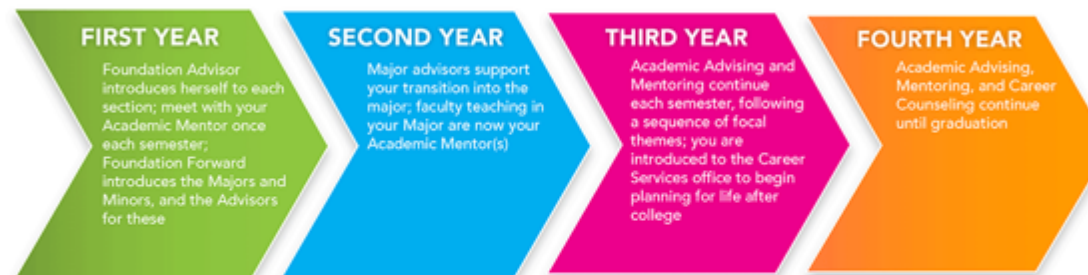
SAMPLE SEMINAR TOPICS:

Beasts, Bugs and Fishes	Who Let the Wolves Out?
A Musical Life	Paper to Pixels
The Science of Deliciousness	A Hero's Journey



ADVISING AT OTIS COLLEGE

Academic Advising and Mentoring are available through the Foundation program, each Major and Minor, the Academic Mentoring office, and the One Stop, as follows:



CORE PROGRAMS and ACADEMIC ADVISING (Centralized)

You have access to pointed advising around individual pathways such as minors, choice of CA:IL courses, LAS electives, and course makeup opportunities throughout your undergraduate studies.

In addition to Major/Minor advising, the Academic Advising Office, or central advising unit, is located in the One-Stop center with Registration, Financial Aid, and Student Accounts. The central Advisors provide Liberal Arts and Sciences advising and serve as anchors in your navigation from your first course at Otis College to your senior thesis show and graduation.

Key Questions for LPP in FYE

- What should we require/invite first-year students **to do**?
- **With whom** should they be participating?
- What type of **environments** will best facilitate this learning?
- Macro-level questions:
 - How are campus-wide actors all working together to achieve this?
 - What level of coordination is necessary?
 - What level of differentiation is necessary?

Participation and Discussion

- Divide room into smaller groups based on interest/first-year programs
- Discuss the implications of LPP in designing a first-year initiative

Questions and Conclusion



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Spot the Fake

(Approximations that don't count)



- Being auto-registered for courses
- Taking a campus tour
- Reading the common read book
- Attending First-Year Convocation
- Registering for a first-year seminar course
- Joining a club
- Undergraduate Research

Orientation

- Common Features:
 - Campus resources, services, and facilities
 - Academic advising
 - Registration
 - Involvement and community building
 - Faculty and staff Interaction

First-Year Seminars



- *Common components*
 - Core academic skills
 - Campus resources
 - Expectations
 - Faculty Interaction