

Stars in the Constellation: National Research on The First-Year Experience as a Collection of High-Impact Curricular and Cocurricular Initiatives

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Session Learning Objectives

As the result of attending this sessions, participants will:

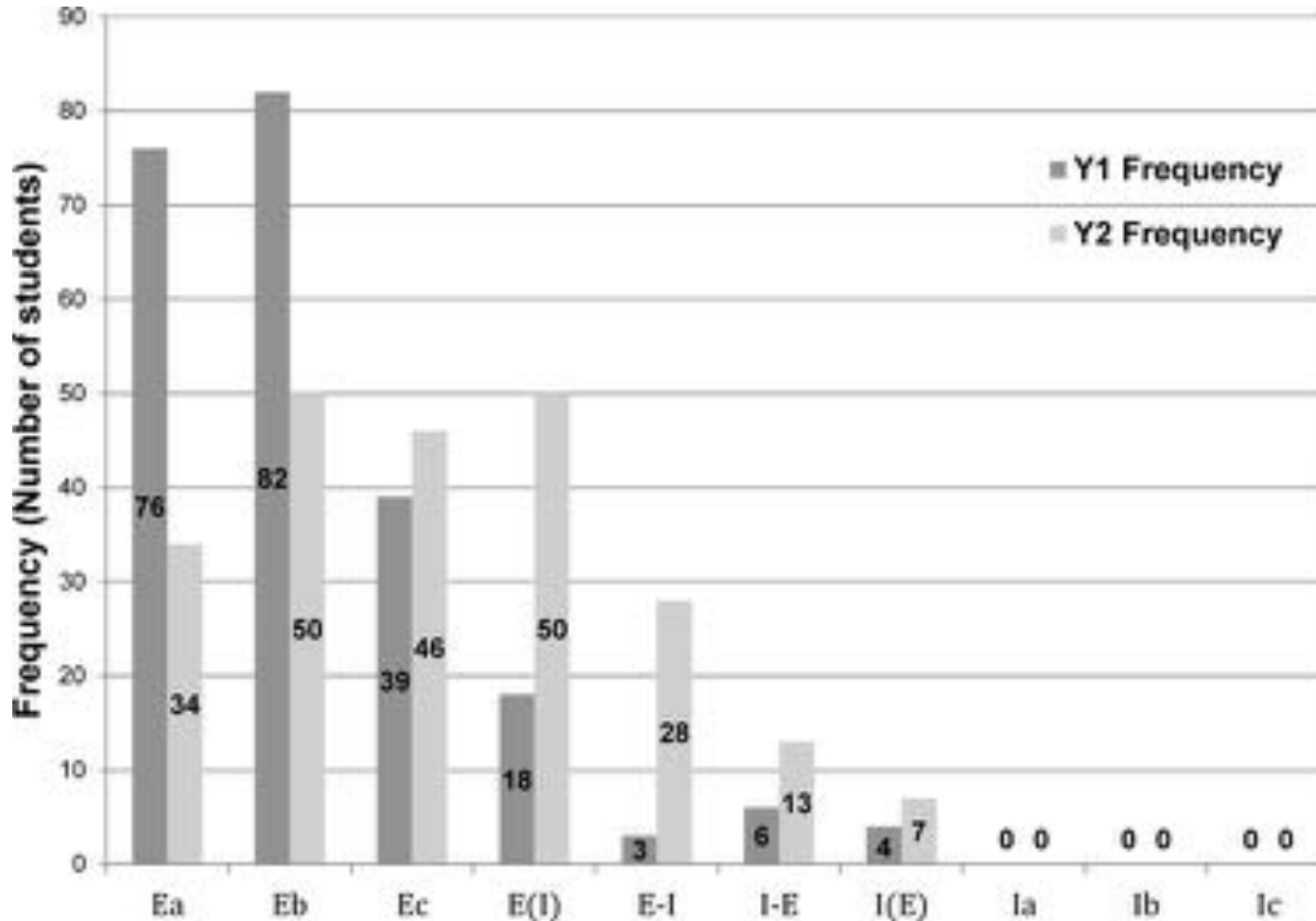
- enhance their knowledge of FYE, how it is organized, the purpose it serves in the undergraduate experience, and outcomes.
- gain a greater understanding of how high-impact practices are integrated in FYE to to create a system of effective interventions.
- have the opportunity to compare the pedagogies and practices used in their FYE to a national profile and to consider innovations or refinements.



Section 1:

DEFINITION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF FYE & HIPS

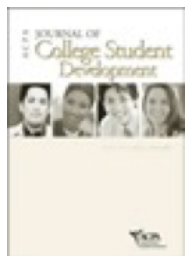
First-Year Developmental Potential



Source of identity and meaning-making:

- Ea-External voice-unquestioning
- Eb-External voice-low tension
- Ec-External voice-high tension
- E(I)-External with awareness of internal
- E-I or I-E: Balanced
- I(E)-Internal with acknowledgement of external
- I(a-c): External

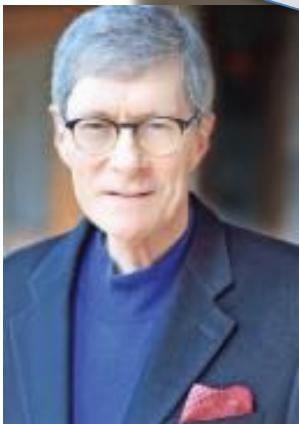
Baxter-Magolda, M.B., King, P.M., Taylor, K.B., & Wakefield, K.M. (2012). Decreasing authority dependence during the first year of college. *Journal of College Student Development*, 53(3), 481-435.



WHAT? A Working Definition of FYE



A Working Definition of FYE



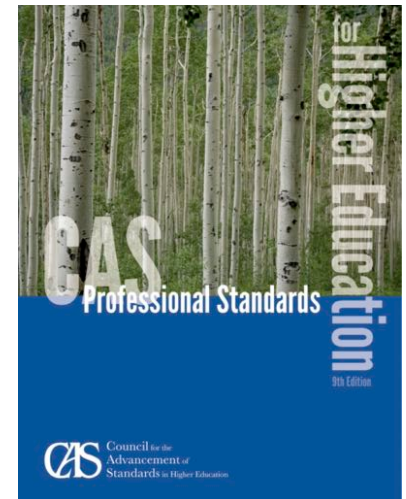
“The first-year experience is not a single program or initiative, but rather an intentional [*and comprehensive*] combination of academic and co-curricular efforts within and across postsecondary institutions.”

(Koch & Gardner, 2006)

Guidelines for Excellence in FYE

Young & Keup (2018) CAS First-Year Experience Cross-Functional Team Framework

- Is guided by goals related to institutional mission
- Includes more than one and preferably many elements of the curriculum and cocurriculum
- Focuses on the success of a large number of first-year students, including those from special populations
- Has strong administrative supporting leading to institutionalization, resource allocation, and sustainability
- Built on assessment activity leading to constant improvement



FYE is More Than Passing a Baton



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FYE is a Constellation of Support



FYE as HIP

“High-impact practices are **curricular and cocurricular structures that tend to draw upon high-quality pedagogies and practices **in pursuit of 21st century learning outcomes**; they are “teaching and learning practices that have been **widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial for college students**..,[toward] increase rates of retention and student engagement.”**

Kuh, 2008



High-Impact Educational Practices



First-Year Seminars and Experiences

Many schools now build into the curriculum first-year seminars or other programs that bring small groups of students together with faculty or staff on a regular basis. The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students' intellectual and practical competencies. First-year seminars can also involve students with cutting-edge questions in scholarship and with faculty members' own research.

Common Intellectual Experiences

The older idea of a "core" curriculum has evolved into a variety of modern forms, such as a set of required common courses or a critically designed general education program that includes advanced integrative studies and/or required participation in a learning community (see below). These programs often combine broad themes—e.g., technology and society, global interdependence—with a variety of curricular and cocurricular options for students.

Learning Communities

The key goals for learning communities are to encourage integration of learning across courses and to involve students with "big questions" that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with their professors. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some deliberately link "liberal arts" and "professional courses"; others feature service learning.

Writing-Intensive Courses

These courses emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum, including first-year projects. Students are encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences in different disciplines. The effectiveness of this repeated practice "across the curriculum" has led to parallel efforts in such areas as quantitative reasoning, oral communication, information literacy, and, on some campuses, ethical inquiry.

Collaborative Assignments and Projects

Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one's own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.

Undergraduate Research

Many colleges and universities are now providing research experiences for students in all disciplines. Undergraduate research, however, has been most prominently used in science disciplines. With strong support from the National Science Foundation and the research community, scientists are reshaping their courses to connect key concepts and questions with students' early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research. The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.

Diversity/Global Learning

Many colleges and universities now emphasize courses and programs that help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These studies—which may address U.S. diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore "difficult differences" such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequalities, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. Frequently, interdisciplinary studies are augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad.

Service Learning, Community-Based Learning

In these programs, field-based "experiential learning" with community partners is an instructional strategy—and often a required part of the course. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

Internships

Internships are another increasingly common form of experiential learning. The idea is to provide students with direct experience in a work setting—usually related to their career interests—and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field. If the internship is taken for course credit, students complete a project or paper that is approved by a faculty member.

Capstone Courses and Projects

Whether they're called "senior capstones" or some other name, these culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they've learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of "best work," or an exhibit of artwork. Capstones are offered both in departmental programs and, increasingly, in general education as well.

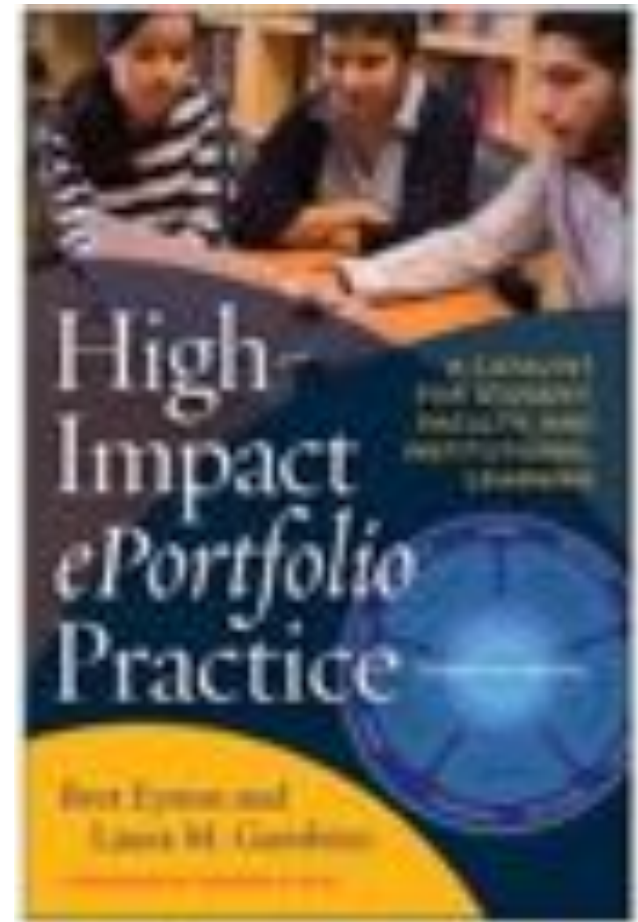


Association
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Colleges and
Universities

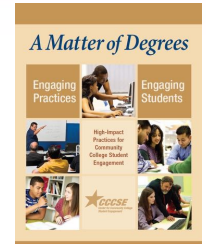


10....no 11 High-Impact Practices

The electronic or digital portfolio is an ideal format for collecting evidence of student learning, especially for those outcomes not amenable nor appropriate for standardized measurement. Additionally, ePortfolios can facilitate student reflection upon and engagement with their own learning across multi-year degree programs, across different institutions, and across diverse learning styles while helping students to set and achieve personal learning goals. ePortfolios provide both a transparent and portable medium for showcasing the broad range of complex ways students are asked to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities for purposes, such as graduate school and job applications as well as to benchmark achievement among peer institutions.



HIPs for CC Student Engagement

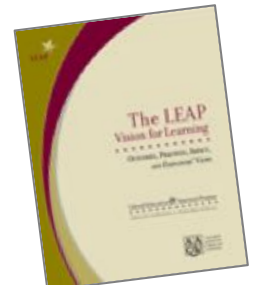


- Assessment & Placement
- Orientation
- Academic Goal Setting & Planning
- Timely Registration
- Accelerated or Fast-Track Developmental Ed
- First-Year Experience*
- Student Success Course
- Learning Community
- Class Attendance
- Alert & Intervention
- Experiential Education Beyond the Classroom
- Tutoring
- Supplemental Instruction

FYS/E as High-Impact Practice

First-Year Seminars and Experiences

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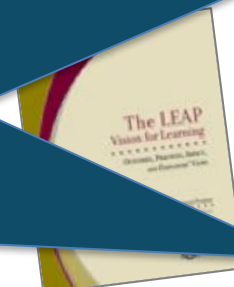
FYS as High-Impact Practice

First-Year Seminars and Experiences

"In schools now, into the curriculum first-year seminars of

groups of FYS/E typically set the precedent and establish expectations for what high-impact learning experiences are for students. They also are usually hubs for other HIPs.

develop student **competencies** First-year seminars also involve students with **cutting-edge questions in scholarship** and with faculty members' own research."



FYE is More than Just About Retention



“Excuse me,” said Alice, “how do I get out of here?”

“That depends a great deal on where you want to end up” said the cat.

“I don’t care where I end up,” said Alice, “I just want out!”

“Well,” said the cat, “if it doesn’t matter where you end up, it doesn’t matter which road you take.”

Carroll, 1865

Outcomes of FYE



“First-year and transition programs...should have a greater influence on **setting the tone for what it means to be an educated individual and the responsibilities that come with gaining a postsecondary education.**”
(Torres & LePeau, 2013)





Outcomes of FYE

“Student persistence, or retention to the sophomore year, and academic achievement...are common measures [and] are of great importance as metrics for student success [but] learning outcomes desirable for all college students, such as **written and oral communication, information literacy, problem solving, civic engagement, and intercultural and global understanding** are also worthy of study.”

(Kinzie, 2013)



Outcomes of FYE

“The almost singular focus on retention and graduation rates as...student success is inadequate, [there must be] a revised definition grounded in student learning outcomes.”
“Definitions of student success must include not only retention and graduation rates, but also **a wide range of student learning and developmental outcomes.**”
(Reason & Gansemer-Topf, 2013)



Recap

- **Why?**
 - INPUTS: Students' developmental readiness and potential during the first year
 - OUTCOMES: Success as measured by transition, learning, and development as well as persistence
- **What?** FYE is an integrated constellation of HIPs
- **How?** Guidelines for excellence in FYE practice



Section 2:

2017 NATIONAL SURVEY OF THE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE (NSFYE)

Overview of the 2017 NSFYE: Content

- Adaptation of the National Survey of First-Year Seminars offered 9 times from 1988-2013
- Institution-/program-level survey
- Online instrument
 - General info about institutional attention to the first year
 - Extended modules on first-year seminars, pre-term orientation, and first-year academic advising
 - Other modules on first-year learning communities, residential programs/initiatives, early-alert systems, and common reading programs

Overview of the 2017 NSFYE: Sample

- 3,977 two- and four-year institutions across the United States were invited to participate
- 537 campuses responded (13% response rate)
 - Two-year institutions underrepresented
 - Public institutions overrepresented
 - Very small institutions (≤ 500 first-year students) seem to be underrepresented
- 525 institutions reported offering at least one FYE program

Overview of the 2017 NSFYE: Sample

Institutional Characteristic	National Representation		NSFYE Respondents	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<i>Level of institution</i>				
Four or more years	2,963	65.2	410	76.4
At least 2 but less than 4 years	1,582	34.8	127	23.6
<i>Control of institution</i>				
Public	1,714	37.7	312	58.1
Private not-for-profit	1,743	38.3	219	40.8
Private for-profit	1,088	23.9	6	1.1
<i>First-year enrollment</i>				
500 or less	2,962	66.9	224	41.7
501-1,000	615	13.9	103	19.2
1,001-2,000	465	10.5	105	19.6
2,0001-4,000	266	6.0	60	11.2
4,001 or more	119	2.7	45	8.4



Section 3:

NATIONAL TRENDS & ISSUES FOR THE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE

525 campuses surveyed,
top eight answers on the board.

**Name the most important
objectives for a first-year
experience program.**



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FAMILY FEUD

Acad success strategies [80]

Intro to college acad expectations [70]

Acad planning/explore major [76]

Retention [63]

Know about campus resources [76]

Common first-year experience [62]

Connection with campus [75]

Student-faculty interaction [61]

Team A

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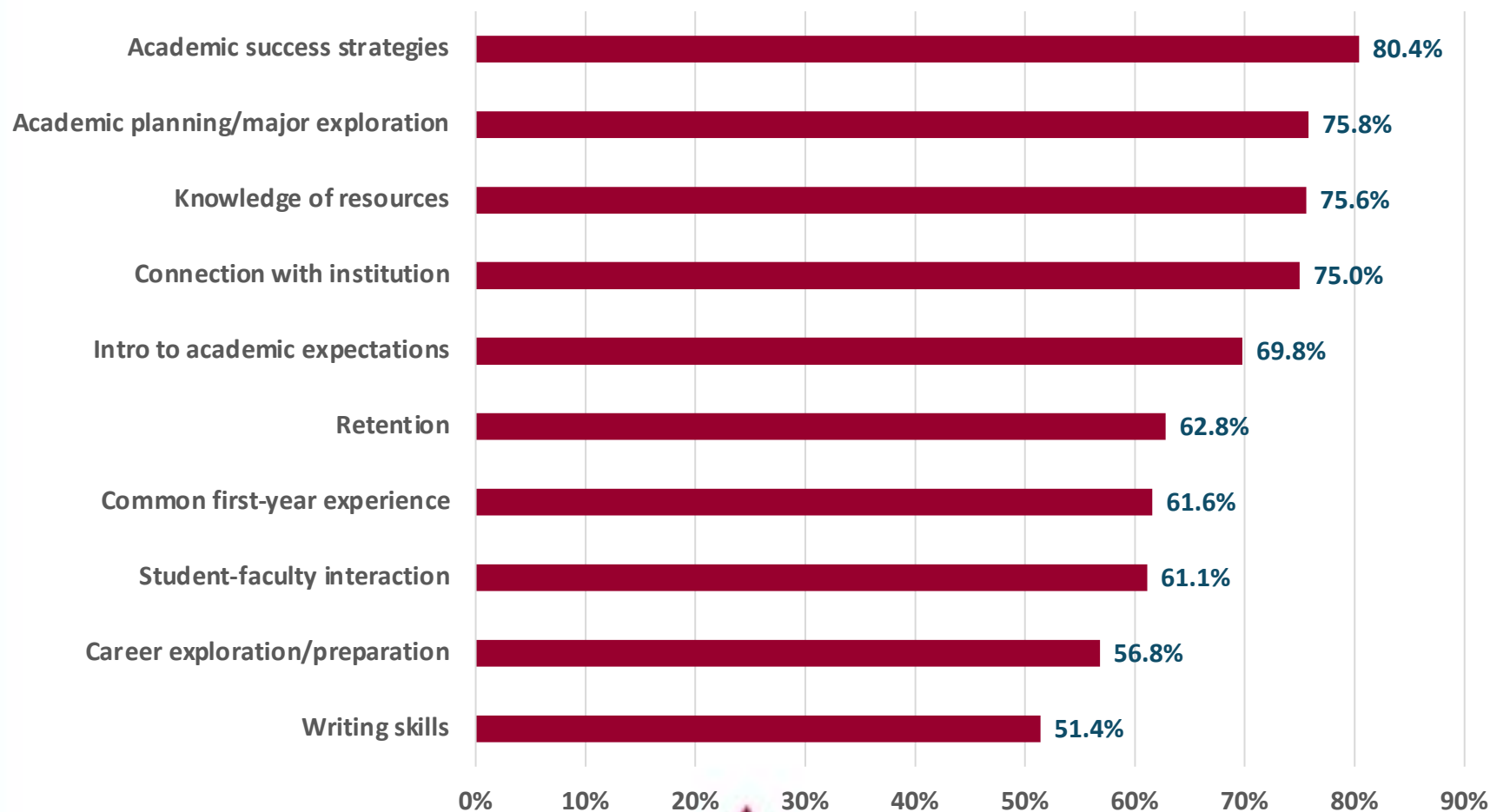


Team B

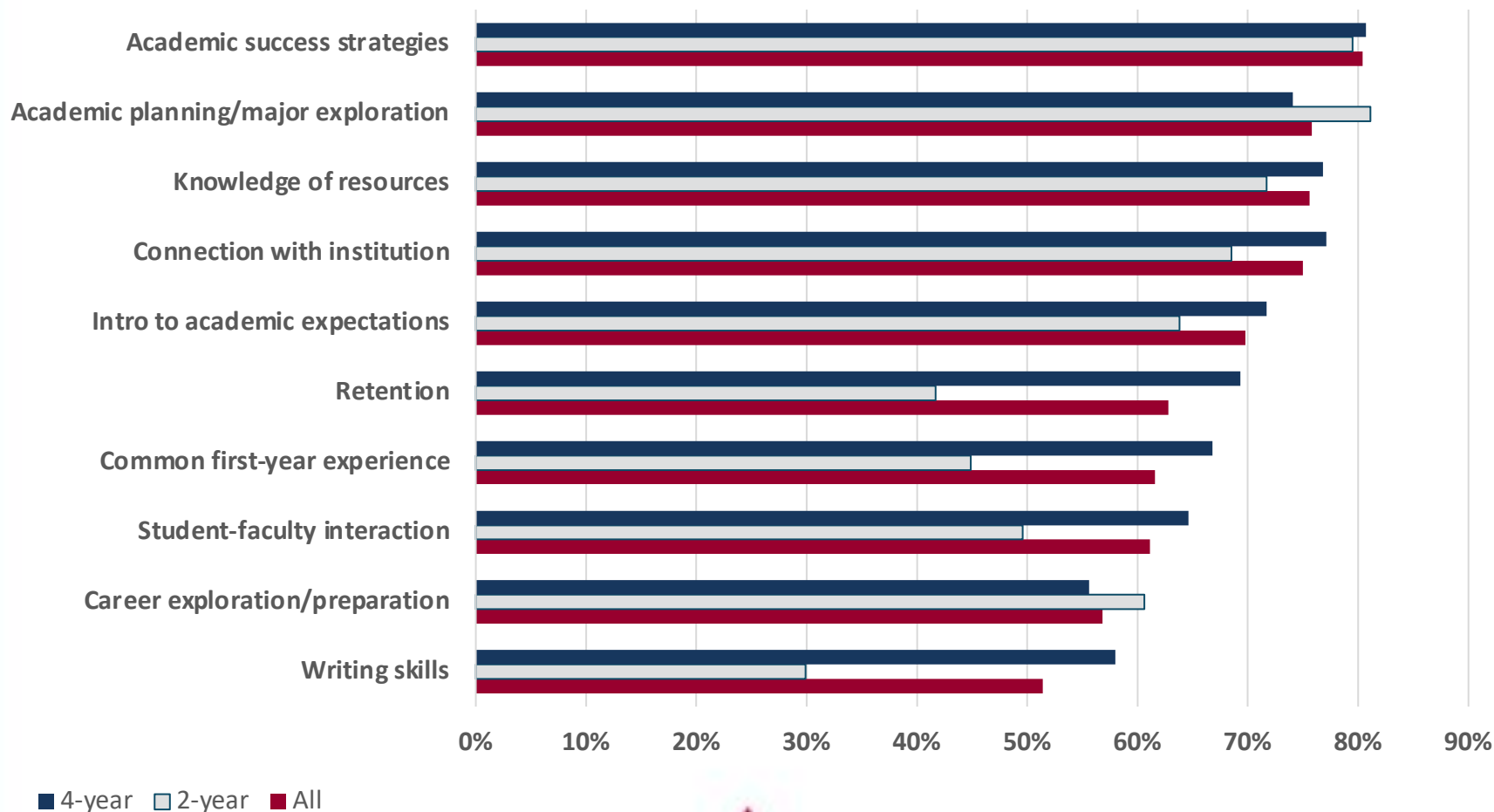
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- Discipline-specific knowledge [23]
- Project planning, teamwork, management [22]
- Digital literacy [21]
- Grad/professional school prep [8]

Campus-Wide Objectives for FYE



Campus-wide Objectives for FYE



WHAT can
we do?



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Does your institution offer any of the following first-year student success programs, initiatives, or courses specifically or intentionally geared toward first-year students?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common reading | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring by campus professionals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Convocation | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer education (e.g., SI, tutoring, PLTL) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Developmental or remedial education | <input type="checkbox"/> Placement testing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early alert systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-term orientation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Experiential learning or learning beyond the classroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Residential programs or initiatives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First-year academic advising | <input type="checkbox"/> Service-learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First-year gateway courses | <input type="checkbox"/> Student success center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First-year seminars | <input type="checkbox"/> Study abroad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General education | <input type="checkbox"/> Summer bridge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learning communities | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing-intensive coursework |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Does your institution offer any of the following first-year student success programs, initiatives, or courses specifically or intentionally geared toward first-year students?

- Which of these programs, initiatives, or courses are the primary efforts by which your first-year objectives are met? PLEASE SELECT UP TO 5.**

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PLEASE SELECT UP TO 5.**

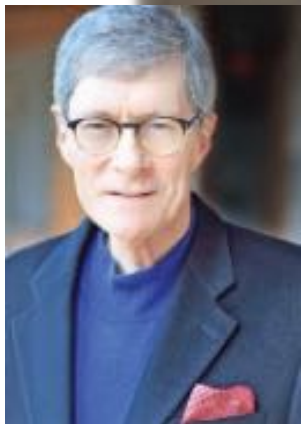
Most Common FYE Initiatives

FYE Initiatives	%
First-year academic advising (ADV)	78.7
Pre-term orientation (OR)	74.0
Early alert systems (EA)	72.3
First-year seminars (FYS)	71.6
Placement testing (PT)	65.0
Peer education (PE)	59.9
Developmental/remedial education (DEV)	54.8
Student success center (SSC)	54.4
General education (GE)	52.8
Convocation (CNV)	52.3

Less Common FYE Initiatives

FYE Initiative	%
Residential programs or initiatives (RES)	47.2
Learning communities (LC)	45.4
First-year gateway courses (GATE)	39.5
Common reading (CR)	37.0
Summer bridge (SB)	35.8
Leadership programs (LEAD)	35.4
Writing-intensive coursework (WR)	34.8
Service learning (SL)	32.1
Experiential learning/learning beyond the classroom (EXP)	31.3
Mentoring by campus professionals (MT)	30.9
Undergraduate Research (UGR)	21.3
Study Abroad (SA)	18.6

A Working Definition of FYE



“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)

Which FYE programs are individual stars and which form a constellation?



Legend:

Lines represent correlations $p < .25$

Colors of boxes represent percentage of institutions reporting FYE program offered

Dark Blue = 70%

Orange = 10%

Light Blue = 30-69%

Grey = 20%

3Cs: Characteristics of Constellation Connections

Existent  Nonexistent

Formal  Informal

Strong  Weak

Strategic  Operational

Recent  Longstanding



Section 4:

DIFFERENCES IN FYE AND HIPS BY INSTITUTIONAL TYPE

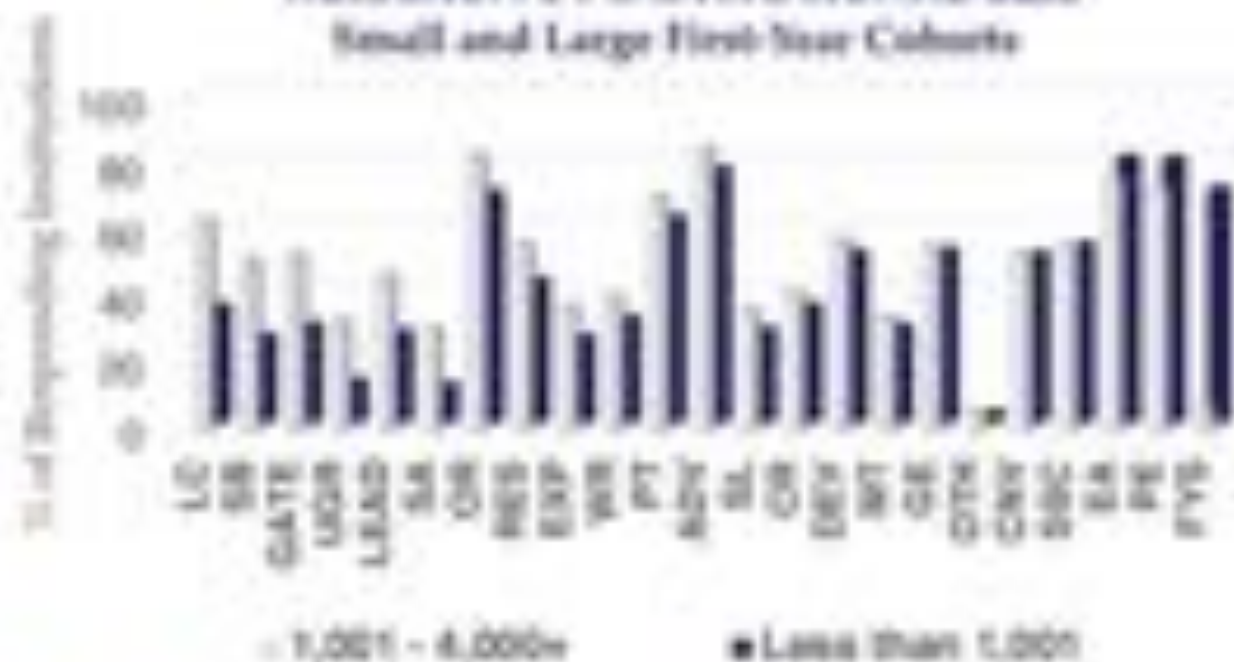
Data Interpretation: Please accept our invitation to the “nerd herd”



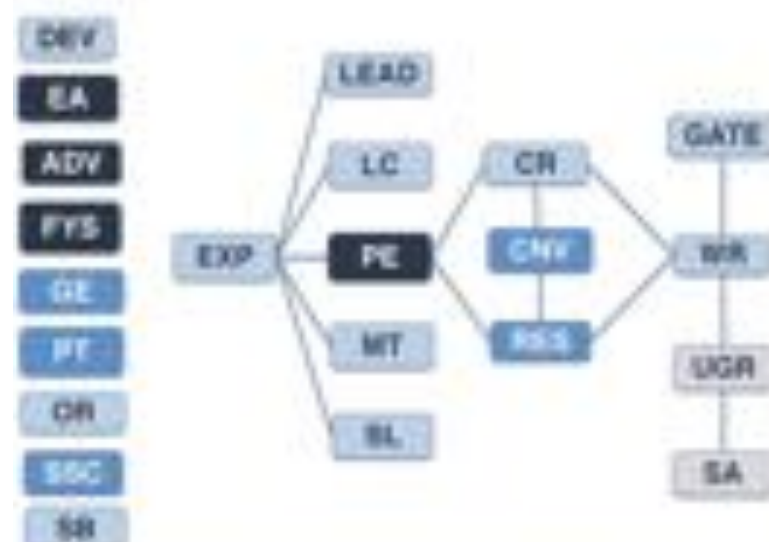
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VARIATION BY INSTITUTIONAL SIZE Small and Large First-Year Cohorts



LARGE FIRST-YEAR COHORT (1,000 - 4,000+)



SMALL FIRST-YEAR COHORT (Less than 1,000)

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VARIATION BY INSTITUTIONAL Control
Public and Private Institutions



PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS



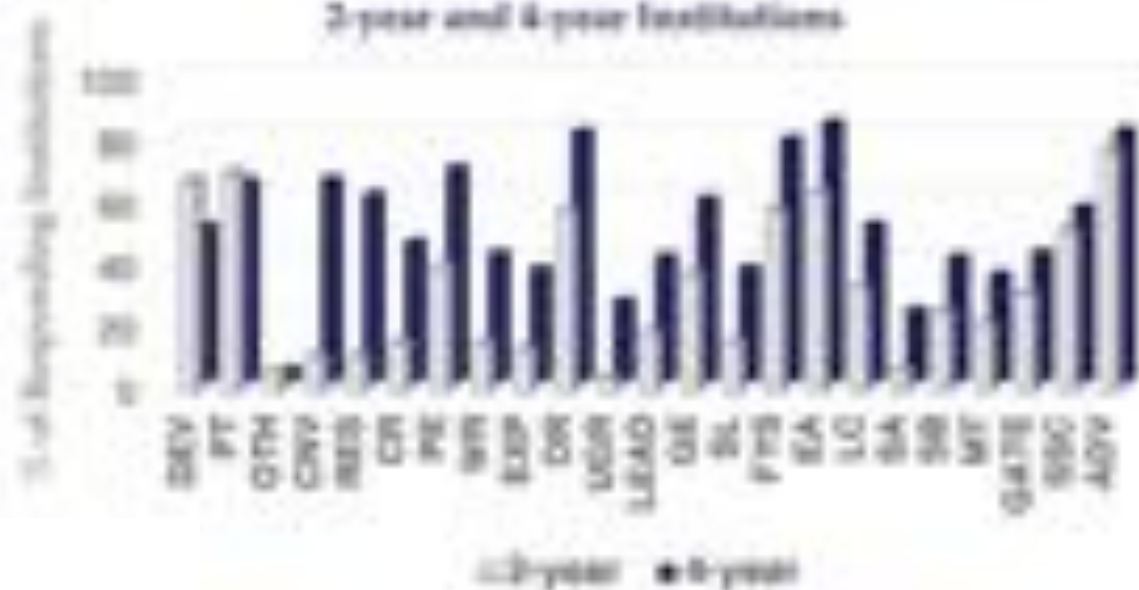
PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS



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VARIATION BY INSTITUTIONAL TYPE
2-year and 4-year institutions



TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS



What Would Your FYE Constellation Look Like?





Section 5:

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS AND TAKEAWAYS

What Does It All Mean?

- FYE includes general constellations, floating clusters, and solo stars
 - The most common programs are often solo stars
 - Certain pairings of star programs seem to be consistent
- There is not such thing as “THE” first-year experience and context and institutional characteristics matter
- “Success has many parents; disaster is an orphan”
 - FYE is an integrated collection of HIPs
 - FYE should include intra- and inter-campus partnerships
 - Do you have “star” programs or a FYE “constellation”?

Patterns in the FYE Sky

- **FY residential programs, common reading, and convocation** tend to show up together.
- Four-year institutions that offer **FY residential programs** likely offer a wider range of first-year programs, **including leadership, orientation, learning communities, and writing in the first year**
- **Leadership** tends to be a FY program that shows up with greatest number of other programs on large campuses, public campuses, and institutions regardless of type.
- **First-year writing** is an important signal of the presence of other **academically-focused first year initiatives**

Patterns in the FYE Sky

- **Study abroad and undergraduate research** tend to show up together - with the exception of two-year institutions.
- **Orientation, early alert, and placement** testing showing up together in two-year campuses stands to reason as it is usually when placement testing happens on those campuses.
- Two of the “stars” that tend to be very connected nodes in these constellations - **writing-intensive coursework and experiential education** - are pedagogical approaches more than they are programs.

What Does It All Mean?

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Reflections and Action Items for FYE

- What are three things you will **take away** from today's presentation?
- What are three things you are going to **start doing** as the result of today's presentation?
- What are three things you are going to **improve** as the result of today's presentation?
- What are three things you are going to **stop doing** as the result of today's presentation?

Questions & Comments



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