

Interdisciplinary Learning Communities and Outcomes Assessment: A Formula for the Enhanced First-Year Learning and Retention

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Summary: This session will share the evidence gathered from our first-year learning community program in response to the following questions. Do learning communities enhance student learning and retention? What strategies can faculty use to develop community in the classroom? What concepts are essential in the development of learning communities? What impact do interdisciplinary, team-taught courses have on student learning? How can faculty incorporate outcome/competency skill assessment in a traditional grade-based program? How can outcome assessment assist students chart their learning development?

We will describe the program and report the assessment results, outline and review what students gained and learned from this interdisciplinary experience, model how one can develop community in the classroom by engaging participants in a community-building exercise, and share our outcome assessment matrix our students use to chart their own learning development.

Participants will be asked to assume the role of the student. They will be met at the door as any student on the first day of class, with a syllabus. They will receive orientation to the learning community program and then they will have the opportunity to observe and participate in a demonstration of the effectiveness of our approach by experiencing an abbreviated version of an active learning community-building exercise we use to connect themes in the works of Isak Dinesen and Wolfgang Mozart by actually singing a duet from an opera. They will observe how learning outcomes can help students chart their own learning development and gain an understanding of the impact that interdisciplinary/team-taught courses have on student learning.

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Making the Transition to University-An Evaluation of Academic Orientation

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Measuring the Impact of Faculty Development Efforts on Retention and Success

Summary: Indiana State University's Lilly Project to transform the First-Year Experience allowed us to spend significant time and money on faculty development surrounding first-year issues. During the summers from 1998 to 2002 more than 200 faculty and staff received stipends to participate in development sessions that ranged from passive (sitting and listening to nationally recognized presenters on first-year issues) to active (working with colleagues to develop learning communities). Coincident to this, first-year retention rates rose substantially. This, in and of itself, is not evidence that this money was well spent. This session, and the paper that will follow, will attempt to determine whether the link between the two is more than a fortunate coincidence.

The paper proposes a measure of exposure by faculty to development and then measures student exposure to developed faculty. Thus students who took more courses from faculty who had more development would be expected to be retained and succeed at higher rates than students who took fewer courses from that faculty. Thus an index of faculty exposure would be created and from it an index of student exposure to exposed faculty would be created. That student-exposure index would be used as an independent variable, along with other programmatic variables (learning communities and first-year residence halls) and pre-entry variables (SAT, high school GPA etc.) in a logistic regression to explain retention and a linear regression to explain GPA attainment. A positive and statistically significant parameter on the student-exposure index could then be used to determine how much of the increase in retention was attributable to the development offered by the project. With this information in hand you could answer the question how much extra retention related tuition is generated per dollar spent on faculty development?

An Orientation Course for Adult First-Year Students Transitioning to Higher Education

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Summary: Our adult student demographics indicated an increase in the number of students with little or no college-level experience. Professional staff and faculty observed the difficulties and frustrations these students encountered making the transition to higher education. These difficulties were compounded by the fact that these students work full-time and have family responsibilities, both of which make education a secondary priority. There are other factors which put our population at risk. Many are first generation college students for whom English is a second language. Many are limited by lower socio-economic status.

Staff identified a need to offer an orientation course specifically designed for this population. Pre-existing orientation programs fail to meet the needs of this group due to the course content and methodology.

Some of the topics included in the adult orientation include study skills, time management, learning styles, classroom environment, career planning, peer support network, and a program matrix for successful degree completion. Materials for the class feature adult learners and address these topics from an adult perspective. For example, the career session discusses re-entry into the job market, rather than how to dress for an interview.

Class sizes are purposely kept low to allow for maximum interaction and networking. This provides a safe forum for student questions and response to individual needs. Only academic advisors and directors teach the orientation from the adult academic unit because of their thorough understanding of all aspects of the University and the needs of the adult learners.

An increase in orientation enrollments, positive assessments from class members, and reports from academic advisors and faculty of student persistence and success all suggest that consideration be given to make the course mandatory.

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The Way (and Why) They Do the Things They Do: Understanding the Classroom Behavior of First-Year Students

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Summary: Three main themes under gird this session: The profound influence of the structure of American high schools on the development and learning behavior of novice college students; the sometimes misunderstood relationship between student academic/social development and the complex organization of institutions of higher education; and, synthesis and application of selected research from a variety of disciplines related to teaching and college student learning, growth, and development. Each of these themes will be more fully addressed and woven into the activities of the session to examine novice college students' patterns of behaviors and the strategies they employ for learning.

Beginning with a description of the affective, cognitive, and sociological characteristics of college bound high school students, the session journeys with these same students as they struggle to master their college learning tasks. The learning strategies they use, especially in times of academic stress, their interpretations and reactions to their college experience, the ways in which they seek help, and their growth and development as a result of this experience will be explored. Several of the exercises mirror for participants the difficulties faced by new college students as they attempt to navigate the higher education landscape, where the once clearly understood rules of the academic game seem to change with regularity.

The exercises also provide participants a sequenced glimpse into the oft emotional and disconcerting life experience of novice college students struggling to attain academic success. Armed with the insights gained through this process, participants will be challenged to rethink institutional and personal expectations for and assumptions about student learning in higher education. Although research on student development, teaching, and learning infuse the presentation, that theory is embedded in accessible and practical applications and interpretations of student and college/university culture.

Participants will receive copies of the PowerPoint presentation, the bibliography, and exercises.

The Use of Morita Therapy in a FYE Course

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Summary: Objectives. To explain the principles and theory of Morita Therapy as it applies to dealing with anxiety. To demonstrate how it can be integrated into a FYE course to help students deal with emotions. To provide references so participants can examine the area in more depth. To accomplish these objectives there will be handouts, presentations and discussion. There will be opportunity to experience the theory by completing some exercises.

Theory of emotions. Morita Therapy was originally designed to treat clients who were inactive because their mind was internally focused on anxieties. The original target group was very perfectionistic on their anxieties. It is an action-oriented therapy that encourages taking action instead of focusing on emotions. The original treatment group were very perfectionistic and often self critical to the point of inaction not unlike many university students I have encountered.

While discussing the theory of emotions the western viewpoint will be acknowledge and the differences discussed. Participants will probably be willing to list emotions under good or bad headings. The Morita view is that all emotions are normal human experiences and neither good nor bad.

We tend to believe emotions should be controlled whereas the Morita view is that emotions cannot be controlled nor chosen.

Anxiety is viewed as a positive force that is essential to existence. An objective is to have students accept their emotions and take action when they are feeling anxious. This contrasts with the western idea that we must control anxiety by various methods such as relaxation before we can take action. This part of the presentation should stimulate some questions and discussion.

The relationship between fear and desire. The idea is to have students look behind their fear of anxiety to find the hidden desire. Participants will complete an exercise to uncover the desire behind their worries or concerns.

The strength of the fear is equal to the strength of the desire. For example, if one is extremely worried about doing a test then one has a very strong desire to do very well on the test. This concept is illustrated by the fact that those turning up for test anxiety workshops are normally very high achievers. The course handouts on test anxiety, procrastination, and public speaking will be distributed and discussed. A period for questions and answers will be available but I am quite comfortable with questions during the presentation.

Kwantlen (www.kwantlen.ca) is located in the Greater Vancouver area and serves a population that is approximately one third Asian. The FYE course is called Career and Academic Success (CAAS 1100). The textbook is the Canadian edition of becoming a Master Student by Dave Ellis. Counselors teach the course.

Enhancing First-Year Student Learning: The Science Learning Center at the University of Michigan

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Summary: In 1998, the Boyer issued a report in which it recommended that institutions of higher education create learning environments conducive to: inquiry-based learning; an interdisciplinary approach; the utilization and development of communication skills; the effective use of information skills; and the cultivation of a sense of community. The University of Michigan's Science Learning Center (SLC) helps to achieve many of these goals by offering an efficient, effective, and well-utilized set of programs targeting first-year students enrolled in introductory science courses.

Since its inception, the SLC was conceived as a learning or study center, rather than as a library or computing center. Although some of the resources offered through the SLC are library materials and computing services, many of its programs and services involve collaborative, cooperative, and/or peer instruction.

The emphasis at the SLC has always been on students and learning rather than on materials or resources. In essence, the SLC serves as a clearinghouse where many outside-of-classroom science learning activities are coordinated, and first-year students' opportunities to learn are strengthened by the availability of personnel, textual, and technology resources. The consistent focus on students and learning has been a major reason for its success in realizing the Boyer Commission's vision.

The SLC is home to several areas of activity including instructional computing labs, weekly office hours offered by graduate student instructors (teaching assistants), formal peer-led study groups, a circulating collection of course and research materials, small to medium-sized study spaces and periodic special programming. We will present evidence of how housing such a variety of programs in one location serves to strengthen each of the individual programs and how clustering science learning support services in this way also helps to build and maintain a vibrant and comfortable student-oriented culture.

Greater Expectations of the Library: The Role of the Academic Library in A New Vision for Learning

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Summary: The Association of American Colleges and Universities' report "Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College" mentions the Intentional Learner, or one who is empowered, informed, and responsible.

The presenters believe that the academic library is essential to the development of the intentional learner. The library is where the first-year student begins to master intellectual and practical skills (the empowered learner); finds knowledge about the natural and social worlds and about forms of inquiry (the informed learner); and develops an understanding and discernment of social complexities (the responsible learner).

This paper will discuss the development of library programs at Northern Arizona University (NAU) for the first-year experience. Emphasis will be placed on the library's strong working relationship with the freshman composition program, especially how it has evolved through the last five years to its current integral place. Discussion will focus on how the library component is assessed, and how learning outcomes are redefined based on that assessment.

The presenters will look at the practical aspects of developing a dynamic assessment plan that impacts first-year programs at NAU. They will share their experiences in developing these initiatives through partnerships with faculty, administrators, students and librarians. Participants will be able to form a knowledge base to begin planning similar processes at their home institutions through a candid analysis of the opportunities and pitfalls such initiatives demand of librarians and their institutional colleagues.

The paper will conclude that an empowered, informed, and responsible learner is only possible with a basic understanding of the concepts and skills of information seeking, retrieval, and evaluation.

While the presenters speak from a librarian's perspective, much of what they have to say is appropriate to all first-year experience initiatives which are trying to create the ideal of the intentional learner.

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"Summer Academic Orientations and First-Year Student Performance"

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Summary: In order to assess our pilot project, we wanted to see if the ASO assisted first-year students with transitional issues between high school and first year at York University.

This one-day orientation (offered on four different days) highlights academic issues such as:

- + Meeting Chairs of departments as well as first-year course directors,
- + Walking tours of the campus,
- + "This Year Has Sixty Minutes" simulation of student life in the first year,
- + "How to Get A's" session led by upper classmen and a faculty member
- + A visit to the Career Centre,
- + Other related events.

We administered the first paper/pencil survey when students arrived in the morning of the orientation and a second at the end of the day. We also sent a follow up survey via e-mail at the end of the fall term in December of 2002. The results reveal that students benefited from both our pilot project summer orientation and our annual fall orientation. They also provided important feedback regarding things they would change in the second survey. In the third survey, we garnered information regarding suggestions for what they would have liked to see in both orientations, after completing the fall term. Overall, our results suggest that specific students benefited from various events during the fall and summer orientations. Academically, students found that they were more prepared for the transition between high school and university, but there were things they could have benefited from if we included certain information to ensure a smooth transition for first-year students.

Tackling the FYE Challenge: Using Developmental Theory and Pop Culture to Engage First-Year Students

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Summary: Brief Outline of Session Format:

Presentation utilizing multimedia of student work and assessment results. After the presentation, there will be an opportunity for questions.

Handouts with further information will be provided.

Description:

During the session, we will describe the link between using ill-structured problems and facilitating intellectual development of first-year students.

I. This will include a brief description of how the first-year seminar described was configured:

- a. Students in a linked first-year seminar investigated the interrelationships between a logic and biology course, by developing arguments and gathering evidence for a group hypothesis on whether or not Sasquatch is a real animal.
- b. Students worked in groups using computer web-based discussion software developed by the Center for Applied Cognitive Science at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

II. The next portion of the presentation will describe how the Sasquatch assignment used students' innate interest in popular culture to facilitate significant student learning. It is an example of an ill-structured problem, which is defined as those which are the object of ongoing controversy, even among qualified experts.

III. At this point in the session, we will have an interactive activity designed to provoke in the audience some of the same feelings that arise as students are exposed to ill-structured problems.

IV. The assessment of the seminar will be described.

V. Time will be saved for questions from the audience.

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Shop Until You Don't Drop (out): Putting a Little S.A.S.S. in the Centres for Academic Success

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Summary: The development of student-focused academic support services at the University of Ottawa continues at pace. Central to this development is the growth and strengthening of faculty-based Centres for Academic Success. These Centres place the expertise and support of the university regarding academic and social integration at the service of students through peer-based mentoring and student-initiated referrals to professional psychological counseling, writing assistance, health services, special needs support and career counseling. Through the regrouping of its services, the Student Academic Success Service (S.A.S.S.) has supported this initiative by making these referral-based services available at the level of the Centre at the university community level. In doing this, the Centres now represent faculty-based "one-stop shops." Centres where student-based services run by students for students integrate the broader support services offered by the university into their programs.

This approach is particularly important given the 40-50% increase in first-year registrations for 2003-2004, an increase resulting from the double cohort of students graduating from Ontario high schools. Registration rates are not the only effect of this double cohort phenomenon. First-year students are now one year younger, and face many different challenges in both their social and academic integration into university life.

The Faculties of Social Sciences, and Arts continue to be the largest welcoming faculties on campus, accepting 60% of new students to the university. These two faculties have combined resources in one Centre for Academic Success, and have been leading the development of the peer-based mentoring approach through the Centre's first two years of operation. Through their one-on-one mentoring, and small-group peer-based workshops, the 13 Mentors at this Centre have had a direct impact on the success of students in both faculties. They have also created an environment where students can be at home, away from home and benefit from the experience and expertise of the Mentors.

This presentation will serve as an update on the progress of the Arts' and Social Sciences' Centre for Academic Success, and as a way of identifying what new programs and initiatives are being undertaken by the Centre and the S.A.S.S. in order to ensure that students are using the Centres and their services to shop until they don't drop (out).

Student Parents: How to Serve This Invisible Population

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Summary: This presentation discusses current public policy around funding for student parents, demographic trends toward students with more non-traditional characteristics attending post-secondary education institutions in greater numbers, and the lack of community student parents report experiencing on campus shape programming at the Student Parent HELP Center at the University of Minnesota.

Student parents are an invisible, traditionally underserved, yet growing population. More than a quarter (27 percent) of undergraduates had dependents, (in 1999-2000), and fully three-quarters of all undergraduates in 1999-2000 had at least one non-traditional characteristic (i.e., they delayed their enrollment in postsecondary education, attended part time for at least part of the academic year, worked full time while enrolled, were considered financially independent for purposes of determining financial aid

eligibility, had dependents other than a spouse, were single parents, or did not have a high school diploma), according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

The Student Parent HELP Center has a long history of serving student parent needs through the employment of two full-time MSW-level staff, an undergraduate and graduate teaching assistant, ongoing research, outreach to the community and area high schools, a mentoring program, resource and referral services, a weekly parent education group, study areas and a lounge, a bi-weekly e-newsletter, advocacy and linkages within the greater University of Minnesota community, administration of various childcare, emergency, book-lending grants, and a scholarship.

The Student Parent HELP Center appreciates the parent perspective and all that student parents bring to higher education settings, a unique package of life experiences, skills, abilities, and challenges. We recognize that this population is at risk of dropping out, and our programs are built around retention.

This mixed media presentation will give voice to student parents, combining videotaped interviews with student parents, art, poetry and prose about their experiences, along with program information.

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Leadership, Advocacy, and Change-No Money-No Problem-Will All Work Together

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Summary: Institutions of higher education are currently experiencing budget problems and finding it increasingly difficult to fund new programs and initiatives. In a recent study in the Spring 2002 issue of *The Journal of the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition*, Anttonen and Chaskes argued that national award winning first year advocates were leaders in the post modern style, and as such, were able to "play politics, work across boundaries, present well articulated plans, co-opt the opposition, garner faculty support, gather data, take risks, be creative, and empower others." In addition, "they were able to promote programmatic change even when the resources were scarce." Coupled with this research and the session's chairs building of a 16-year undeclared/undecided program, a discussion will be initiated about developing first-year ventures that take advantage of campus wide resources and often do not require large budgeting expenditures. Such programs can be built and maintained if all offices, academic, administrative, and student affairs, work together to share the cost and exhibit, "the post modern leadership process."

Round table participants will be encouraged to discuss any of their tactics or strategies which have been successful in developing first-year programs which exhibit minimal costs and are a joint funded venture cutting across traditional administrative boundaries. Some topics for discussion will include creative use of campus internships, ways to involve campus offices so that they are not threatened by change, and use of resources to avoid duplication of effort and costs.

This round table discussion will allow the participants to gather ideas and procedures to take back to their campus and develop and implement university wide programs where costs can be shared by a variety of offices. In a time of decreasing funding, this postmodern approach to leadership and change in higher education is essential.

A Beginner's Guide to Using Technology in Traditional and Online FYE Courses: Choices and Challenges

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Summary: It is no longer a case of if, but rather when and how technology will have an impact on the way that we teach first-year students. Designed for those with little or no technological expertise and perhaps some degree of wariness about technology, this presentation will discuss the scope of technologies now available for use both within traditional classrooms and in online, distance learning FYE courses.

In the presentation, we provide an overview of the technological transformations taking place in and outside of classrooms. These innovative technologies are changing the nature of classroom dynamics and requiring the development of new skills, both on the part of students and instructors.

The presentation begins with a discussion of in-classroom technologies that can enhance first-year experience courses. Specifically, we examine the use of smart presentation media such as electronic whiteboards and computer presentations, as well as addressing the use of the Internet and World Wide Web for instructional purposes. We consider how instructors may place course material on the web, including course syllabi, assignments, class outlines, and grades. Finally, we consider the use of interactive classroom technologies. These technologies, which consist of student response units and receivers, permit instantaneous feedback from students during classes.

We then will examine the use of distance learning for FYE courses from the perspective of both students and instructors. The pros and cons of online venues will be discussed, and issues regarding student involvement and personalization will be considered.

Finally, we will consider the overall benefits and disadvantages of the use of technology, addressing the practical and philosophical issues of whether the use of technologies will improve educational outcomes. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of technology for student success.

Steps to Success: Strategies for Academic Recovery

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Summary: Receipt of first semester grades provides students, and their families, with opportunities for reflection. Many will discover that the study habits employed in high school are largely ineffectual in the collegiate environment. Colleges and universities try to stress the differences between the requirements of high school and college during traditional summer orientation programs. However, numerous students do not heed the given advice and instruction until they have proof (first-term grade reports) that their past academic behaviors were not successful in terms of producing acceptable grades.

At The University of Mississippi, the Office of Student Housing and Residence Life partnered with colleagues at other institutions, to offer Steps to Success in January 2003. Steps to Success is a three-hour weekend workshop that was developed to help students evaluate their learning styles, develop a semester plan for managing their assignments and preparing for tests, and learn about on-campus resources to help with particular courses. In the program, students learn the typical reasons as to why they may not have achieved academic success including procrastination, poor time management, difficulty with active listening, inadequate class attendance, and lack of appropriate preparation for tests, term papers, and presentations. The program also includes segments on setting academic goals, selecting an appropriate study location, note-taking and test-taking strategies, paper and presentation development, and faculty relations. The basic academic strategies have also been taught and used to enhance student success at three other institutions.

The session will include information on workshop audience, promotion, and content. Grade and test score data has been collected on workshop participants that has been compared with similar data for those students who registered for the workshop but who failed to attend. Additionally, this session will include additional comparative data for the workshop participants, the registered non-attendees, and the general first-year student population.

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Start Right Program

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Summary: The literature is rich with studies that prove that affiliations enhance retention and satisfaction, especially with community college students. It is proven that study skills in preparatory courses have a high correlation with success and retention. Although extracurricular involvement is a strong contributor to retention, it is not as accessible to most non-traditional or commuter students. Those supplemental developmental experiences that lead to community identification and personal growth must be incorporated into the classroom. In small, supportive units, under prepared students can most easily transition to college.

The Start Right Program study skills class and the proposed Start Right Learning Academy exemplify connections to learning and the institution. After a mathematics-related ice breaker, participants in this interactive session will experience a few of the successful community and skills' building techniques used in Start Right that can be adapted to any course. In small groups, the participants will examine an actual student profile and predict if that student will succeed on a five-point scale.

The components of the present and proposed program will be outlined with an emphasis on the Learning Partners interactions with students based on the results of the CSI Pre/Post Tests. Math, study, and life skills supplemental seminars will be reviewed. (10 minutes)

Start Right and the expanded Academy learning outcomes, Title III grant objectives, and assessment measures will be reviewed. The reports will be supplemented by a literature review, bibliography, and readings on learning initiatives for the under prepared student. (10 minutes)

As a follow-up to the student scenarios, the original groups will be shown "end of the story" videos for each of the students depicted. They will then be asked to re-evaluate their original assumptions in the process. (10 minutes)

Questions and discussion. (10 minutes)

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Early Engagement: A Strategy to Help College Freshman Get Off to a Fast Start

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Summary: The transition from high school to college can often be traumatic, with the average grade point dropping by a full grade point (3.8 to 2.9 for Cal-University System, for example). The reasons are easy to understand. In high school students spend 30 hours per week in class and less than 5 hours per week outside of class studying. In college, students will spend less than 15 hours per week in class and should study about 25 hours per week outside of class. The required 400% increase in study time must be managed in a new environment with many interesting diversions, and without parental supervision. It is not surprising that many students flounder in this transition. A three-hour seminar that could be included in orientation or welcome week can help students to see that their high school academic habits will not serve them well in college and must be changed if they are to have the same academic success in college that they had in high school.

Early engagement is crucial to help students avoid the usual problem of getting so far behind that their in-class learning is partially or completely compromised. They must be persuaded that staying absolutely caught up is the single, most important habit they must develop to be successful in college. Weekly planning is equally important to make possible the necessary study time to stay caught up, particularly since the amount of out-of-class study time will be 400% greater than high school. Other habits to maximize their in-class learning will also be identified.

A total of ten habits that students must develop to maximize their academic performance will be presented. Data from two studies of freshman students will be used to demonstrate the correlation between the development of these habits and academic performance.

Strategies and resources to help students begin to develop these habits from the first week of the semester will be presented, with results from four studies used to illustrate the efficacy of a half-day seminar with twelve weeks of internet based reinforcement to help students develop the necessary time management and study skills habits. The impact of this simple approach on student GPA will also be presented.

Brain-Compatible Teaching Helps First-Year Students Be Motivated, Successful Learners

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Summary: The brain has a natural process of learning and an innate need and desire to learn. Brain-compatible curriculum and pedagogy help students be the naturally motivated, successful learners they are born to be. Teachers are better able to help students succeed when both teachers and students understand how the brain learns. This interactive session will present the newest brain research including how emotions affect the brain's ability to learn, think, and remember. It will also demonstrate how to develop brain-compatible curricula and lesson plans across the disciplines as well as how to employ brain-compatible instructional strategies. To this end, participants will have hands-on experiences with brain-based curricula and pedagogy and will look at strategies for applying this knowledge in their own classrooms with their first-year students.

Participants will also engage in a research activity that explores their own natural learning process. They can then duplicate this activity with their own students to help them understand how they learn, with implications for their self-efficacy and taking responsibility for their own learning, all of which is essential knowledge--even survival skills--for first-year students.

The session will include illustrations, on overhead transparencies and in handouts, of the concepts and processes discussed in the session. There will also be examples of student work, including pre- and post-tests and statistical evidence of the success of brain-compatible teaching. In addition, overhead

transparencies will be used to record and organize the contributions of participants during their hands-on activities and discussion.

Participants will receive a packet of materials that includes copies of the illustrations, which they can share with their students, and a bibliography. Questions and comments from the audience will be welcomed throughout the session.

"Survivor": The First-Year Experience at a Small Rural Campus

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Summary: The presentation is a chronological discussion of where Dickinson State was at when the freshmen retention was below 53% to the present date. The focus of the presentation will be the freshman seminar course, learning communities, and academic advising. Orientation and assessment are two other areas that are part of the first-year experience and will be touched upon.

A majority of our freshman seminar courses are directly tied to the majors and are the cornerstone course of the learning community. The courses for exploratory students have an extensive career development component. Faculty teaches most of the sections and each class has a peer mentor. The mentors play a vital role in the class. Many have already made a connection with the students while serving as summer orientation leaders. The learning communities are tied to a major or an interest group. Each learning community is a cluster of two or three courses plus the seminar. The courses meet major or general education requirements.

Advisement serves a critical role in the first-year experience. The seminar instructor advises the students in their class for their first year, and has two scheduled meetings outside of class for advisement. During the first session they review the results of the CSI and the second meeting focuses on registration.

The summer orientation program provides students with an opportunity to learn more about campus and college life. Some assessment is completed at orientation. Students complete the CSI, placement test, and the predictive index (PI). The results of the CSI and PI are used in the seminar class. Other assessment is administered in the seminar class such as the CAAP and the Academic Profile.

The presentation will conclude with a discussion covering some of the successful and unsuccessful ventures. Finally, we will explore what is the next step.

The Impact of Expectations and Expectation Violations on Retention and Academic Performance

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Summary: This study considers the impact of student expectations and experiences regarding interaction with faculty and relationships with other students on retention and GPA of first-year students. The data used were collected from two freshman cohorts in 2001-02 and 2002-03. As suggested by researchers such as Vincent Tinto, it is predicted that increased interaction with faculty and other students will be instrumental in positively affecting the persistence rate into the second year and their first-year GPA. Students who report interacting with faculty and those who have positive relationships with other students will be more likely to continue into their second year. Additionally, based on literature regarding expectation violations in several disciplines such as communication and management, it is predicted that violation of expectations will be related to more negative outcomes. In other words, the less actual experiences are similar to early expectations, the less likely students are to persist and perform well academically. This area of study is particularly important because our data, as well as other national

research, indicate that first-year students tend to have unrealistically high expectations about their college experience. Such high expectations may prove to be detrimental to their persistence in college.

The presentation will outline the results of the study based on the above predictions. Data collected through the CSXQ and CSEQ from two first-year cohorts and university records of persistence and GPA will be used to consider the above relationships (the data for 2003 will be collected in April). The link between expectations, experiences, and outcome measures will be presented. The implications for managing student expectations will be discussed.

Reaffirming Retention: A Qualitative Student-Focused Model

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Summary: The persistence of first-year students has increasingly become a national issue for the higher education community. As a result, colleges and universities have diligently endeavored to ensure the success of their students by providing a myriad of services and programs. Exemplary retention programs and models have been developed, implemented, emulated, and evaluated. While these efforts were intended to bring about increased retention and graduation rates, the results seem to indicate otherwise.

This presentation speaks to the issue of why and how retention efforts should be from the vantage points of students. Research strategies need to focus more on first-year students and their total satisfaction. Retention is a complex issue and requires extensive analytical approaches. Retention is both a process as well as an end result. Therefore, some critical retention variables do not necessarily lend themselves to quantification. The qualitative methods employed by social scientists have appeal as a much more viable strategy. The utilization of student focus groups offers not only a different way of looking at this phenomenon but also a different way of analyzing the retention issues of first-year students. The benefit of this procedure allows for a holistic and dynamic understanding by verbally interacting directly with students on a focused issue "retention". For the most part, qualitative research offers insights into what students are thinking and why they are making decisions to stay or leave an institution after their first year of matriculation.

The presentation will center primarily on the design and implementation of qualitative retention research method that focuses more on deriving focused information from the primary source: STUDENTS. The presenter will share a qualitative research model that was recently developed and implemented with prospective and currently enrolled first-year students. Explicit in this presentation is how the data was utilized to improve the retention of first-year students.

Managing retention requires an understanding of students; attitude, aspirations, expectations, and satisfaction. To this end, qualitative data derived from focus group interviews will enable institutions to improve the learning life of students in all aspects of their collegiate experience and will enjoy the benefits of sustained and improved retention.

Using Problem Based Learning as a Tool to Enhance the Transition Experience

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Summary: This presentation will examine the use of problem based learning as a tool to enhance the freshman year transition period. Millersville University has just completed the second year of a two-year pilot program targeting undecided freshman in a living/learning community. One of the pivotal pieces used was the incorporation of problem based learning as a means to engage students in real-life situations they

may experience on a college campus. Problems were designed to address many of the key issues identified by the most recent research on first-year experiences as well as on-going assessment being conducted at Millersville. Topics include plagiarism & academic integrity, diversity, alcohol abuse, conflict resolution and choosing a major.

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Improving Student Engagement through Critical Thinking

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Summary: An important element of a college education is to introduce students to new and different ideas in an effort to expand their view of the world. An essential tenet of this effort is to encourage students to question their underlying assumptions through critical thinking.

This program will show how a commitment to student learning led to a critical thinking campaign in the residence halls. The presentation will show how the idea for the campaign was first conceived along with the various steps taken to implement it. The various phases of the effort (common reading discussions, guide for movies, table tents in dining halls, pocket guide for critical thinking, discussion guide for parents, floor section activities in the residence halls, posters, and videos) will be covered in the session.

In some cases, a direct link was made between the efforts of faculty in the classroom through their use of the common reading and the campaign in the residence halls. In other cases the link was indirect, the campaign promoted the general notion of critical thinking that faculty generally ascribe to through their teaching.

In the residence halls, the campaign encouraged students to engage in the risky business of questioning their peer culture, the status quo, and their own biases. The presenters will show the various phases of the campaign; who was involved in the planning and how the entire university community (faculty, president, provost, and other administrators) was invited to join. The critical thinking effort will be a foundation for the development of future educational campaigns on campus (e.g. sexual assault, racism, alcohol abuse, heterosexism).

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A Multicultural Learning Community on a Predominantly White Campus

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Summary: This session will provide a detailed, 30-minute description of the Multicultural Learning Community (MLC) followed by 30 minutes for discussion. I will provide a brief history and description of the program, the players who have made this program a reality, assessment results to date, challenges, and future directions.

The Multicultural Learning Community is a complicated collaboration connecting three university units: departments of Residence, English, and Cross Disciplinary Studies (African American, Native American, Asian, Latino/a, Women's Studies). The program is four years old and currently has 42 freshmen enrolled: 12 African American, 11 White, 10 Asian American, 5 Hispanic, one Native American (3 didn't indicate). The goal of the program is to have 60 students, equally balanced by ethnicity.

The primary objectives of the MLC are to: improve retention, promote academic achievement, and increase awareness and appreciation of a variety of student perspectives and social experiences. The program includes: upper division peer mentors, a student advisory board, community service, co-curricular activities, coordinated English and Social Science courses, and a common residential experience.

It has been a tremendous administrative challenge to bring together a diverse group of faculty and staff to develop and implement this program. However early qualitative and quantitative assessment results have been very encouraging. Discussion will focus on how to achieve improvements in student academic achievement and retention, and the qualities needed in faculty and staff to create a cohesive and comprehensive program. The administration of this program has often been filled with conflict as we've dealt with issues of conflicting vision, faculty/staff turnover, and our own academic culture differences. I will briefly discuss the kind of administrative support required.

Session Title: Retention of Adult and Online Students: Why do they come and why do they leave?

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Summary: To begin to understand retention for adult and online students, one must first consider traditional models of attrition and then adjust them to fit adult education. Tinto's (1987) model of undergraduate attrition is considered to be the classic work in the field. It is adapted here for adult and online students with insights from developmental psychology.

According to Tinto's model, when a student has values that are inconsistent to the college, it can produce social isolation and subsequent departure. Does this model have relevance for non-traditional students? Ashar and Skenes (1993), in studying adult students in a nontraditional program, found that classes that were professionally more homogeneous, and thus socially more integrated, and smaller classes lost fewer students than less socially integrated and larger classes (p. 96). So it appears that adults, too, are very dependent on social factors for success in college. Online students especially benefit from social support within the cyber-classroom setting.

The College of Adult and Professional Studies at Indiana Wesleyan University has tailored an educational program for the needs of an adult population. As a result, retention for adult students is high. The online programs replicate the on site programs and, while retention online is slightly lower than on site, graduation rates still exceed national averages.

In analyzing the responses of entering, withdrawing and graduating students and comparing online with on site students, a few characteristics of the program emerge as significant to retention. These characteristics are:

1. Homogeneous groups
2. Strong goal commitment
3. Good orientation
4. Study group format
5. Close faculty-student relations
6. Ease of contact with main campus
7. Seeing the end in sight

This presentation explores the implementation of strategies which foster these characteristics. Adult students thrive in programs which emphasize the experiential nature of learning, providing students with a supportive cohort group that aids in the practical application of learning. The scattered sites with evening scheduling, makes this education accessible and attainable when other programs would create barriers. The interactive nature of the classes and a curriculum rooted in their everyday experiences motivates these learners to make the sacrifices necessary to meet their educational goals

Evolution by Trial and Error and Assessment

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Summary: Over the past eight years, Dakota State University has been defining and refining the freshman orientation program. The goals of the first years were primarily to make the transition a smooth one for students as they moved from the relatively protected environment of their homes and high schools to the freedom and responsibilities of higher education. Underlying that goal was always student retention. Now, however, that goal of retention has been brought to the forefront of campus strategic planning. The Board of Regents for the state universities of South Dakota has placed a great emphasis on retaining students in the public higher education system. Therefore, in addition to providing a transition to the university, we have the added goal of being far more proactive in retaining students until they have successfully completed their degree.

During the struggle to find the best way to transition our students into the university and to start them solidly on their journey that ends with a completed degree, we have formed a partnership between the faculty of each of the colleges on campus and the Student Services administrators. The refinement of the program has resulted in a close association with the deans of each college, the Dean of Student Services, faculty coordinators from each college, and faculty facilitators. Our panel session will look at the history of our Freshman Success Seminar, the institutional working partnership we have development in, and the assessments we have used and done to help us in defining and refining of our current system.

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A Toolbox to Stimulate Cognition and Metacognition

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Summary: You've probably all heard about writing-across-the-curriculum, and maybe even reading-across-the-curriculum; but have you heard about or thought about teaching for thinking-across-the-curriculum? It's a "thinking skills" approach to teaching and learning, based in large part on research into cognition and metacognition. In this approach, instructors are less interested in the answers than in the thinking behind them. This "teachable point of view" shows your students how you look at the world, interpret information, and think through problems. It's the best kind of teaching in that you're helping people learn how to think on their own rather than telling them what to think. Theories of cognition see learners as active creators of their knowledge and frameworks of interpretation. Cognitive learning theory focuses on internal thoughts and motivations behind learning, making learning about searching out meaning and imposing structure. The simple question, "Why do you think that?" can become a strategy for metacognition or "thinking about thinking." Instructors of all subjects can use some simple "tools," or techniques, to improve their students' learning, their ability to reflect on that learning, and to develop students' self-esteem, motivation, and willingness to learn. These improvements and developments are especially important for first-year students. For the most part, it takes no special training to incorporate these tools into one's teaching; all it takes is a willingness to alter one's approach, preparation strategies, presentation methods, and/or feedback/evaluation mechanisms. Participants in this session will be presented more than thirty cognitive/metacognitive "stimulators," most of which can be used in any university-level course. The presenter, herself, has used, and thus tested the appropriateness of, each of these techniques. Participants will be encouraged to share any experience they may have with these tools.

The American Freshman: Findings from Thirty-Five Years of CIRP Surveys

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Summary: The CIRP Freshman Survey is the nation's largest and longest-running empirical study of students in American higher education. The CIRP was established in 1966 at the American Council on Education and transferred to UCLA in 1973. Since then, it has been housed within the Higher Education Research Institute in the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies.

Each year some 700 two-year colleges, four-year colleges and universities administer the Freshman Survey to each new freshman during orientation or registration. Approximately 350,000 students complete the freshman survey each year. The survey covers a wide range of student characteristics: parental income and education, ethnicity, and other demographic items; financial aid; secondary school achievement and activities; educational and career plans; and values, attitudes, beliefs and self-concept. Published each December in *The American Freshman*, the results from these surveys continue to provide a comprehensive portrait of the changing character of entering freshmen and American society at large. The annual survey results are watched closely in the higher education community and by state and federal policy makers; the findings also receive widespread attention in the national press.

There will be a discussion of major trends in the 35-year history of the CIRP Freshman Survey. Trends in the following areas will be examined: academic goals and behaviors, financial concerns, health attitudes and behaviors, politics, social activism, and gender. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which the trends are different for male and female freshmen, thus shedding light on the nature of the gender gap among incoming college students. Discussion will focus on the implications these trends have for higher education institutions.

The First-Year Experience---Again

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Summary: This presentation will document the cumulative process of the establishment and implementation of a new freshman seminar course at a research extensive university. Particular attention will focus on the political approval process by faculty, the selection and training of faculty and peer leaders, the development and implementation of the course content, and the assessment tools and redesign.

Quality Improvement in First Year Large Enrollment Courses

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Summary: Instruction in first-year courses usually involves large enrollment classes. We surveyed students in such courses in Science (Biological Sciences) and Arts (Psychology) and compared their thoughts, attitudes, and expectations of those courses. Senior students were asked to reflect on their experience in both first-year and upper-level large enrollment courses. Small groups of first-years, seniors and instructors then took part in separate semi-structured focus groups to reflect on large enrollment courses.

If the major goal of first-year courses is to disseminate facts and knowledge, then they are appropriately taught and assessed. More evidence based practice criteria on what constitutes effective learning requires rethinking our class sizes, instructional style, delivery and supports, and assessment methods.

Despite similarities, Biology and Psychology student experiences and needs differed, indicating that there is no ideal first-year experience. Different solutions to enhancing the first-year experience need to be developed based on student and course needs. From student responses, classes would be improved by making the material covered more relevant to learner's lives with classroom activities that allow them to become actively engaged with the course material. Students seem legitimately concerned that they be given appropriate learning objectives and they want to see some linkage between the learning activities and the assessment practices used to verify that learning.

Faculty development could be directed toward assisting instructors in achieving the goals identified by the students. Our program of occasional voluntary workshops for instructors has not enhanced student opinion on the quality of first-year instruction. Students want to see effective teachers in first-year classes and they also want to see instructors who have a great deal of experience in both the institution and specific discipline. The use of casual and junior staff in large enrollment courses should be weighed against those desires.

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First-Year Responders: Student Case Management at Lesley College

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Summary: Dr. Schulte will present the process and rationale for establishing the "First-Year Responders" group as a student case management approach.

1. Description of the group and its process:

A group of administrators and faculty with responsibility for working directly with new students meets monthly to identify students with academic or social issues and discuss and design strategies for working with students to address them.

Student names are identified at the meeting and the discussion proceeds in a student-by-student manner with each participant adding information from one's own perspective or scope of responsibility.

The circumstances of each individual case are discussed and the participants identify a strategy or strategies to address the issues identified. Responses range from contacting advisors to follow-up with a student, finding a peer mentor for a student, contacting parents when appropriate, to requiring a student to develop a self-care plan. All of the resources of the college are considered during the strategy sessions: peer mentors, residence life supports, counseling center, disability services, center for academic achievement, and faculty advisors.

2. Rationale for developing the First-Year Responders group:

- + Need for coordinated, systematic and thoughtful response to student issues before they reached a crisis state.
- + Helps to identify patterns of student behavior that can be responded to with direct programming.
- + Establishes a sense of confidence and degree of competence in our ability to respond to student issues.
- + Gives faculty and administrators a place to direct concerns about student behavior.
- + Supports retention efforts to promote a quality undergraduate experience by responding thoughtfully to situations that might detract from that experience.

3. Impact on campus-based programming:

- Spring 2003 seminars
- changes in Fall 2003 Orientation programming
- identifying faculty/staff channels of communication to the working group.

First-Year Students Success Indicators: Exploring Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive Predictors

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Summary: The focus of the proposed session is two-fold. First, an inquiry of how first-year student success indicators are identified and measured at different institutions. The program outcome assessment conducted at the University of Manitoba will be highlighted as one successful model. Second, the development of a conceptual framework that will help guide the various ways, both quantitatively and qualitatively, that first-year student success indicators are assessed.

A current literature review on success indicators of first-year students will guide the discussion among participants. A categorizing exercise is intended to provide clarity to the extensive literature and the various types of student success indicators introduced by participants. A conceptual framework for gathering quantitative and qualitative information focused on student success will be developed and refined. Of importance will be a perspective of first-year student success and how this translates into effective faculty development of instructors teaching first-year students in colleges and universities.

Proposed as a 60-minute session, graduate students, faculty, faculty developers, and administrators concerned with first-year student issues will have an opportunity to contribute their experiences, discuss their opinions, and help further refine the process of identifying first-year student success indicators.

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Piloting a First-Year University Program in the Arab World

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Summary: UAEU is in the process of redesigning the first-year program, University General Requirements Unit (UGRU) for all entering students. As a bridge from the secondary school system in the United Arab Emirates, the previous program design was based almost entirely on remediation in four curriculum areas: Math, English, Information Technology, and Arabic Language. Through a careful analysis of data collected over the past two years, including a series of International Benchmark Tests, it was determined that changes were needed to effectively prepare students for the rigors of academic life in the university and provide them with an understanding of what it means to be a university student.

Assessment of UGRU programs helped the leadership team and UAEU administration realize a redesign of the entire program was necessary. Demographic data revealed that most entering students are first-generation university students, bringing with them unique needs to be addressed to help ensure their success. Data also indicated relationships between English competency and performance in other curricula, as well as a correlation between student behaviors, such as attendance, and their performance in classes.

Five underlying principals guided the redesign: Student Focus, Academic Skills, Quality Instruction, Integrated Curriculum, and Program Evaluation. Two significant changes resulted: 1) an increased

emphasis on English language skills; and, 2) the infusion of performance objectives, across all curriculum areas, to assist students in acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will help them be successful university students.

Several challenges have presented themselves to UGRU's leadership team. Two significant challenges are: 1) There are no model first-year programs in other Arabic universities to study and build upon; and, 2) The concept of a developmental versus a remedial program is a shift in thinking for most UGRU faculty, indicating a need for training and professional development.

The session will conclude with a feedback session to exchange ideas with participants.

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Promoting Critical Thinking in a Freshman Seminar Program

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Summary: At Washington State University, we have developed an assessment instrument, the WSU Guide to Rating Critical Thinking, which can be used as a diagnostic of student learning outcomes as well as a heuristic for faculty to reflect upon and revise their teaching and evaluative practices. This project encourages faculty to adapt the seven-dimension Guide to suit their individual teaching styles as well as their disciplinary conventions and contexts. Recently, the WSU Freshman Seminar Program made an adaptation of the WSU Guide to Rating Critical Thinking as an effort to promote critical thinking throughout the program. We wanted to make a meaningful adaptation--one that would work for faculty, graduate level facilitators, peer facilitators, and the students enrolled in Freshman Seminar. Historically, at our institution, Freshman Seminar has been place in which a great deal of pedagogical experimentation has occurred--not always with the best interests of students or the program at the center. The effort to overtly adopt critical thinking objectives was carried about by internal program personnel, and shed a great deal of light on the importance of including all of the stakeholders in the process. The process resulted in an adaptation of the Guide to Rating Critical Thinking that is meaningful for the many layers of our program. For this roundtable, we will briefly present about the WSU Critical Thinking Project, and about our experiences in creating an adaptation of the Guide for our Freshman Seminar Program. We will use most of the time to talk with the participants about lessons we learned in this effort to promote critical thinking in our program.

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Case Study Discussion - A Tool to Enhance Learning

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Summary: Case Studies are an effective vehicle to introduce topics that are central to FYE classes. A major value of the case study approach to FYE is the use of discussion to enhance student learning. Unlike lectures where students are passive recipients of information, which often results in minimal interest and attention to the content being presented; case studies involve students in their education by actively soliciting student perspectives and opinions on topics related to their college experience. This practical approach results in greater student interest, participation and ultimate learning through the use of classroom discussion. To maximize the effectiveness of case studies there are certain strategies, which will assist with initiating and maintaining discussion while focusing upon the desired learning objectives. This workshop will address techniques and issues surrounding the effective use of discussion to enhance student learning through the analysis of case studies.

Specific topics include:

- * Guidelines for effective discussion
- * Guiding discussion toward learning objectives
- * Enhancing critical thinking through discussion
- * Overcoming obstacles to effective discussion

Classroom discussion, although sometimes difficult to achieve, is valuable in that it can result in increased student learning. However, through the use of specific strategies, student participation in classroom discussion and ultimately their learning can be enhanced. This will positively influence the effectiveness of any FYE class.

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Developing Team Taught Interdisciplinary Courses to Address Issues of Diversity and Democracy

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The Rowan University team will briefly describe the process of developing team taught interdisciplinary courses that specifically address issues of diversity and democracy for first-year students in Rowan Seminar (RS), the academic component of the Rowan First-Year Experience (FYE) program. These courses infuse the FYE program with opportunities for students to think in broader perspectives. Early exposure to issues of diversity and democracy in the US ensure that students' subsequent curricular and extracurricular experiences will extend their understanding of and appreciation for the multiplicity of peoples and cultures in American society today. We want students to think beyond the immediate confines of their own lives and begin a process that will enhance their level of critical thinking and problem solving that will continue during the rest of their educational endeavors.

We will share the design of a workshop for faculty for the development of interdisciplinary team taught courses. The workshop runs for one week and involves mornings devoted to providing opportunities to discuss issues of diversity and democracy, interdisciplinary teaching, team building, collaborative learning, problem solving, critical thinking and service learning. The afternoons provide uninterrupted time to allow teams to develop the interdisciplinary RS courses. We will discuss the resources available at Rowan, thereby providing examples of what may be available on any campus. We will address the mechanics of running and funding the workshop and the implementation and curricular effect of the new courses.

The audience will receive a detailed bibliography of the readings, short biographies of the facilitators, and copies of the handouts used during the workshop. A significant portion of the session will be devoted to questions from the participants regarding any facet of this type of curriculum development from philosophy to financial concerns.

This workshop at Rowan University is supported by a grant from the New Jersey Campus Diversity Initiative funded by the Bildner Foundation.

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The University-College Center: A Collaborative Model

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Summary: Arizona State University West campus partnered with Glendale Community College in 1997 to create the University-College Center. The UCC program offered lower-division general studies courses from the community college on the university campus of ASU West. This collaborative effort of administrators, faculty, and staff is aimed to inspire community college students to pursue a baccalaureate degree. This presentation will focus on the community college partnership development process, student and faculty services, and data gathered on increased transfer rate for students enrolled in the partnership program versus general transfer rate from the community college to the university. The joint admission process for UCC students will be discussed. A joint application for admission was developed to ensure access to university resources such as tutoring, university library privileges, student employment, and academic advising. Students enrolled in the UCC partnership program are given joint admission status at

the university as non-degree seeking for ensured access to services and ease in the transfer process to the university. University-College Center students were offered the best of both worlds: a university experience in their first two years of college while paying the lower tuition of the community college.

Training Peer Educators via a Credit-Bearing Course

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Summary: At the presenter's university, prospective peer educators must successfully complete a one-credit training course the term prior to the beginning of their paid positions as Peer Tutors, Supplemental Instruction Leaders, or Workshop Leaders. This comprehensive pre-training creates prepared, skillful peer leaders, thereby strengthening the quality of the overall first-year academic support programming. Through participation in the course, SI leaders have a foundation in communication skills and the learning process, as well as practice observing and leading peer-lead sessions. Also, because these undergraduate students start work being knowledgeable about their roles and approaches as peer educators, their need for intense supervision is greatly diminished.

In this session, the presenter will trace the development, purpose, and theoretical framework of this course (see list of references). Included will be a hands-on activity using Knowles' Principles of Learning (1984):

Pedagogy (teaching of children) vs. Andragogy (teaching of adults)

Self Concept: Dependent (Teacher-Directed) vs. Increasingly Independent (Self-Directed)

Experience: Limited vs. Experience is Valued as a Resource

Readiness for Learning: Biological vs. Social

Time Perspective: Future Application vs. Immediacy of Application

Orientation to Learning: Subject Centered vs. Problem Centered

The presenter will describe course content (in-class activities, out-of-class assignments, and evaluation procedures) related to the following course objectives:

- Describe the purposes and impacts of the specific peer educator roles.
- Assess their personal strengths/weaknesses with college-level learning strategies.
- Observe and describe characteristics of effective peer-lead sessions.
- Demonstrate an understanding of collaborative learning.
- Assess their trial performance as a peer educator.
- Demonstrate effective group leadership and problem solving skills.
- Assist other students with how to effectively and efficiently learn subject-related content.
- Refer other students to appropriate resources and agencies.

The presenter will provide: copies of the syllabus (course title, catalogue description, requirements, sequence of topics, grading); samples of required peer observations; a copy of the text; and sample assignments and evaluations. These illustrate the quality of work accomplished within the course, as well as the value of the course to the peer educators and, ultimately, first-year programming.

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Accelerated vs. Regular Track Nursing Programs: Measuring the Differences Among First-Year Students

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Summary: In response to the changing health care environment and the shortage of registered nurses in Canada, two new programs (a four-year Bachelor of Nursing, Regular Track and a two year Bachelor of Nursing, Accelerated Track) commenced in September, 2001. The two programs are basically the same relative to the desired outcomes, course content, and sequencing of courses. Differences include, but are not limited to, aspects such as student demographics, scheduling of courses, and program completion dates. The advent of the two programs raised the following questions: To what extent will each program meet the nursing needs of society, (e.g., health promotion, illness prevention, illness intervention, rehabilitation, palliation)? To what extent will each program meet the requirements of the various employers? Should both programs continue to be offered?

The first intake of students has completed their first academic year. To determine if there is a difference between the two programs relative to competencies that reflect evidence-based knowledge and skill sets acquired by the students in their first year, a three phase evaluative study was initiated. Eight measurement tools were identified as being needed. The first phase of the study was to identify existing measurement tools, develop tools which were not currently available, and test the tools for their fit. The tools included three instruments to measure critical thinking: California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory, California Critical Thinking Skills Test, and the Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric; State-Trait Anxiety Inventory to measure stress; Tennessee Self-Concept Scale to ascertain self-concept; Gregorc Style Delineator to identify learning styles; a clinical competency evaluation tool; and a sociodemographic questionnaire to gather information on highest educational level, work history, reasons for entering the nursing program, age gender, marital status, and dependents. In this presentation, the methods used to test the tools for their usefulness in measuring first-year outcomes and the results of the testing will be described.

How Self-Talk Influences Success

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Summary: FYE courses are a proven mechanism to increase the adjustment and success of first semester students. Yet even with the emphasis given to entering students a percentage encounter difficulties. The search to assist these students has resulted in a number of strategies and programs.

One possible reason for the lack of success for some students is their explanatory style. Whenever we encounter an event we say something to ourselves about that event. What we say about any event or how we try to explain it is known as our explanatory style. Taken broadly explanatory style can be categorized as either optimistic or pessimistic. Research has shown that optimists tend to lead more productive and fulfilling lives than pessimists. Pessimism has been correlated to depression, helplessness and anxiety.

Studies have indicated that the explanatory style for first semester students is correlated to a student's GPA, use of supportive services, and overall adjustment and success. Students with a pessimistic style tend to

have lower GPA's, use supportive services less, and have increased adjustment difficulties. When these pessimistic students encounter difficulties their explanatory style often results in the event creating an obstacle to their achievement. And their fatalistic and passive manner is likely to accentuate the problem. Research indicates that a pessimistic style can be modified to become more positive by challenging the negative belief system of the student. To impact a pessimistic explanatory style we must challenge the belief system of the student. We must ask students to examine how they explain various events that happen to them. And whenever those explanations are pessimistic we must challenge those thoughts and suggest positive alternatives. FYE courses are a viable forum in which to effect a positive change in a student's explanatory style. The session will detail specific methods to encourage student explanations, methods to challenge pessimistic thoughts, and ways to reframe thoughts into a more optimistic style.

Making Connections: SI & "Wise Mentoring" in FY Gateway Courses: An Integrated Learning Initiative

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Summary: We begin by discussing why we started our program, which began as a retention initiative. In the three years at our college before implementing this program, one fifth of students taking introductory chemistry earned Ds or Fs or withdrew from the course. Over three quarters of those who earned DFWs, a disproportionately high percentage of whom were students of color, then dropped out of chemistry. Next, we discuss distinguishing features of the program. SI sessions are structured, peer-led, highly interactive, and subject-specific; strategies mobilize multiple intelligences and urge interdependent collaboration. Students focus on how to learn, not just what to learn, and they are repeatedly asked to explain their reasoning behind answers and to teach each other. At Trinity, the SI leader goes through a training workshop at the beginning of the semester which includes understanding how Claude Steele's studies on stereotype threat might bear on students; learning and developing wise mentoring skills which couple statement of high standards with constructive criticism. We then show how SI not only decreased failure rates but also increased high achievement for participants. Finally, we discuss what key factors to consider when implementing such a program and how to adapt the national model to a small college. What's the best gateway course to choose? How do you identify strong SI peer leaders and train them to become effective session facilitators? How do you work with faculty? How do you supervise the sessions? How do you find funding? Why might you form cross-campus partnerships? This session shows how a proactive, integrative program emphasizing teamwork in a safe environment and challenging students to understand why not just what opens students' minds to ways of learning that make better connections between concepts, courses, and people, all of which improve performance, build confidence, and ease transition to college.

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From Study Hall to Lecture Hall--Through the Eyes of High School Seniors

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Summary: This program will begin with a brief review of theories related to transition and identity development. Following this review, results from focus groups conducted with high school seniors and first-year college students will help participants understand how students attending a large, public, midwest university describe thinking about, anticipating, and planning for the conclusion of high school and the onset of their freshman year. The remainder of the program will be devoted to exploring ways institutions might begin to effectively dialogue with those seniors who will soon be their first-year cohort.

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Issues Affecting the Development and Persistence of Nontraditional/Adult Students

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Summary: The fastest growing population on college and university campuses across the United States and around the world is the nontraditional/adult student population. This population, however can no longer be defined by age, but rather by life circumstances. Such factors as divorce, career redefinition, downsizing, early retirement and finances all contribute to the appearance of these students on campus. In fact, in a recent report published by the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. (2002), nontraditional students were described as being students who have at least one of the following characteristics associated with their student status: financial independence, part-time attendance, delayed enrollment, full-time work, dependents, single parenthood, and the lack of high school diploma. According to this report, nontraditional students can be defined on a continuum based on the numbers of these characteristics present. Students are considered to be "minimally nontraditional" if they have only one nontraditional characteristic, "moderately nontraditional" if they have two or three, and "highly nontraditional" if they have four or more.

Utilizing research data (anecdotal and statistical) and the personal experience of the facilitator, this Roundtable discussion will focus on addressing the profiles of nontraditional/adult students on campus, the factors that contribute to the development and persistence of these students and the sharing of strategies that have been developed to help these students persist. Participants should be prepared to discuss and share their experiences regarding these students.

Courage and Candor: Essential Elements of Inclusive First-Year Programs

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Summary: The program chair will open the session with a series of questions designed to examine the development readiness of students to embrace diverse populations and issues, the benefits and limitations of experiences designed specifically for a targeted population & the successful management of competing and sometimes conflictual agendas. The added potency of the institution's political environment will also be examined.

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Locus-of Control

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Summary: Experience has shown that students who maintain a strong sense of individual control and empowerment over their first-year experience in university tend to be successful. This contrasts with the less successful experience of students who feel disempowered and are seemingly unable to gain control over their first year.

Utilizing research from the health sciences field and from research into self-regulated learning, it is proposed that one approach to the early identification of students who may be at potential risk of failure, dropping-out, or of significant disengagement from their first-year experience, would be to develop an instrument able to assess a student's sense of their "locus-of-control."

Locus-of-control (LOC) refers to an individual's sense of whether control of their lives is in their hands or is at the mercy of external forces. LOC research in health behaviors indicates that people with a strong sense of an internal-locus-of control are healthier, better able to successfully address life challenges and enjoy higher success rates than do people with a strong external locus-of -control orientation. This research has strong correlations to evidence that self-regulated learners (students with a strong ability to manage their learning) enjoy much higher rates of academic success than students with limited self-regulatory skills. There is evidence that a sense of a strong internal LOC is evident in students with strong self-regulated learning skills.

This paper examines an attempt to develop a locus-of-control indicator and its success at identifying students who are potentially at-risk of experiencing poor academic engagement in their first-year at universities.

Additional Presenter 1:

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The Use of Data to Encourage Faculty to Engage in Widening Participation Strategies

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Summary: The presentation will focus on how faculty can be encouraged to engage with, and begin to own, the issue of widening the profile of their student intake by being provided with a number of sources of data. These sources include an analysis of student profiles of those who apply, receive offers and accept places on their programmes (social class, ethnicity, gender, entry qualification, disability and age).

Similar student profiles are then linked to the students' first-year experience, those who drop out, those who repeat, those who succeed. Faculty are then encouraged to implement mechanisms to improve the admissions process, the transition period and the first-year experience; and are then provided with data so they can judge the effectiveness of their approaches.

The session will argue that this approach with faculty encourages the raising of awareness, the changing of attitudes, the engagement with institutional wide strategies and with regional and national initiatives. This is achieved by promoting a sense of ownership by faculty and encouraging subject disciplines to engage with and own their particular issues.

Computer Enhanced Classroom Instruction: Critical Thinking and Beyond

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Summary: The freshman experience course offered at Saint Leo University (Introduction to the World of Thought) has traditionally focused on the development of discussion, writing and, critical thinking skills. Now, all faculty and entering freshmen at Saint Leo University are issued Apple eBooks. Because there has been no training or coursework on how to effectively use these machines to enhance classroom learning and instruction, we have added the use of computers to enhance the academic component of the university experience as a dimension of the course curriculum. This session will provide a basic overview for the computer literate professor covering some easy ways to use computers to both facilitate the first-year experience instructor's teaching and to enhance student skill in using the computer as a tool to aid in writing, learning and critical thinking.

A review of the uses of course resource sites will explain how such websites can both improve the efficiency of the instructor and enhance freshmen understanding of the role that can be played by websites integrated into the classroom experience. One of the features of a course resource site is the use of message boards. Message boards can enhance classroom discussions by allowing students to thoughtfully compose their responses to topic questions prior to class. The other students who must also respond can consider these answers. As a result, the instructor can then use their own analysis of the student's response to ask more specific and probing questions. Also covered will be the use of group research projects that enhance the skills of freshmen in working effectively within a group, presenting professional power point presentations, and doing effective and critical internet research. Electronic paper submissions through Turnitin.com streamline the evaluation of writing skills and at the same time sensitize freshmen to the issues of academic honesty.

Encouraging Faculty to Own Improvements in the First-Year Experience

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Summary: Kingston University, like other institutions of higher education in the UK, has received funding for the government's "Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund". It has also received funding under initiatives to widen participation in higher education from under-represented groups.

This session will describe the ways in which funds were made available for faculty to develop initiatives around the first-year experience. Faculty had expressed concern about students' lack of preparedness for university in terms of study skills. It was decided that the university's approach to skills development would be through delivering them as part of the curriculum so that all faculty would become involved in delivering the skills elements of their own disciplines.

The session will also consider the staff development implications of this initiative and the role of the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. This is a programme for all new faculty at the university. It involves faculty attending a weekly workshop for a year and building a portfolio in which they reflect on their approach to learning and teaching. They are encouraged to reflect on the needs of their learners in an attempt to encourage them to understand that their students will not be "clones" of them - ie people who have always had a satisfactory learning experience.

Thus it will be shown that Kingston University has adopted a strategic approach to enriching the first-year experience through developing its faculty.

Success In Student Retention and Career Exploration Through Academic Introductory Courses.

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Summary: The session would begin with a background presentation explaining the needs of a rapidly growing state university of 40,000 students and how the development of a course to introduce the declining public affairs majors would meet those needs. This would include university demographics and specific academic issues in the College of Health and Public Affairs. A description would follow of how and why the structure of the course was designed and how involvement of the four academic disciplines helped to shape the curriculum and contribute to the success of the course. Student recruitment, registration and course enrollment procedures would be explained. The second major area of the presentation would center on the course curriculum and how class topics were developed. Details of class objectives, what changes have occurred over time, what has not been successful, and how service learning has now been implemented into the course would be shared. Required assignments and class projects that contribute to the grade for the two-credit hour class would be discussed and examples of student work presented. The success of the class can be measured in many ways but three-year statistics from tracking the students would be given as they show good retention results of students remaining at the university and in the public affairs majors. Ideas for future course changes and challenges for this course and other introductory courses within the college disciplines would be shared. If time allows, the session participants would be able to ask questions and contribute their thoughts on introductory courses as a means to retention.

A Contrast and Comparison of FYE Programs for Cult. Diverse Student Pop. in a Rural vs. Urban CC.

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Summary: Central Arizona College is a rural community college located in Southwestern Arizona between Phoenix and Tucson. We will be discussing (comparing and contrasting) the differences and the similarities of implementing an FYE program in a small rural community as opposed to one of the larger schools in the Maricopa Community College District.

While we will be doing some contrast and comparisons, a heavier emphasis will be placed on how the culture in which we operate greatly influences how the program is implemented. The national census has shown that the Hispanic community is the fastest growing segment of the population in the country. It is my assumption that most post-secondary schools operate in an urban setting and should be able to relate easily to the Maricopa school. Learning and knowing how to deal with a rural and minority serving institution might provide some insight.

The underlying theme will be "Moving Toward Transformative Action: The Challenges and Possibilities of an Intergrated Approach and Long-Range Impact of Implementing an FYE Program at a Rural Arizona Community College".

Being a rural farming community in the Southwestern United States means that you have a high concentration of migrant workers, and a high percentage of non-English speaking people looking to make a home and live the American dream. This is not so unlike many inner city colleges in our larger cities. But, what makes us unique is that we are actively recruiting these people as potential students as a community initiative.

Some of the issues that we are addressing include the following:

- * Being a Hispanic serving institution we are developing an enhanced ESL program, through K-12 partnerships we are addressing the community issues of chronic low income among this segment of the population, elevated Jr. high and high school dropout rates, high teen pregnancy, across all segments of the community we are seeing low academic proficiency in Reading, Writing/English, Math and Critical Thinking skills, and a growing concern that the skills needed for high school graduation do not meet or match college entrance requirements.

At a community college we do not measure success by degree completion. If we can get a student to the point where they feel they are successful and in the process have achieved an elevated level of self-esteem, then we have served our mission and are also successful as an institution.

Some solutions we have implemented and will present for discussion include the following:

- * A First-Step program providing Middle School students full scholarships to attend Central Arizona College provided they stay enrolled and graduate from high school with a minimum G.P.A. of 2.75.
- * Curriculum development K-12 partnerships to ensure academic preparedness of our entering freshmen.
- * Linked, for credit, CPD courses that will transfer with developmental courses.
- * Serving the previously described population and to alleviating the county dropout rate, we would naturally offer a GED program.
- * We are implementing transition programs for our Returning Adult population.
- * We are offering Occupational Partnerships with area employers where we provide academic and occupational training and they provide tuition reimbursement.
- * We are offering a variety of modalities to capture a wider audience (i.e.; On-site classes, ITV classes at area high schools and community centers, on-line classes, and alternative class scheduling).
- * Also as a part of the FYE program we provide an "Early Alert" advising session for those who may be finding themselves in academic jeopardy.

Each bullet is designed to offer points, counter points, and opportunities for discussion to enhance opportunities and provide ideas for minority students to advance within our educational system.

Additional Presenter 1:

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Academic Learning Communities - More than a Place to Live!

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Summary: The session will begin with an opportunity for participants to meet one another and share their experience with Academic Learning Communities (ALC). This will be followed by a brief introduction to the characteristics of the University of Guelph. Guelph is a mid-sized public university in Southern Ontario, recently rated as the "best comprehensive university in Canada" by the Maclean's University Rating System. The university has strong science and agricultural traditions, with over 80% of entering students living in residence. The students generally come from outside our local community, have high admission averages, 70% are women, and a high retention rate (~92% from year 1 to 2). Student Affairs has a strong influence on the campus culture, and the University has clearly stated Learning Objectives. All of these characteristics are significant when considering the manner in which our ALC were developed and are supported by the institution.

Participation in the ALC is a residence option at U. of Guelph, and the "clusters" are not tied to specific core courses. Rather, the clusters are designed to accommodate students with a wide range of courses within their academic discipline. With about 30 students living in a common area, students can always identify someone from their cluster in their introductory classes. Goals and objectives for the Communities reflect this opportunity for students to make connections with a primary and secondary reference groups, and empower them to become independent learners. Clusters are staffed by "cluster leaders" who offer programming and support to the students. Previously, students were required to pay a registration fee for the program, but dropping this fee has increased participation rates. Budget implications will be shared.

The Office of First-Year Studies formerly offered ALC, but the program was transferred to Student Housing Services about 2 years ago. This has been a positive move, with Cluster Leaders and other Academic student staff now being a part of the Residence Life Staff. The relationship of the student staff with each other and the residence student government is an important consideration when working with a program that operates in the same area as other university departments and groups. Core training and programming requirements will be reviewed in detail.

Evaluations of the program have been extensive, including student satisfaction surveys during, and one year after their participation. Characteristics of the cluster experience, such as meeting people in the same academic program, knowing and feeling comfortable about accessing university resources were rated extremely positive. They strongly agreed with statements about the helpfulness of living with other people in their academic program. A comparison of marks and retention rates of cluster participants and all other students has been compiled for several years. Data from Falls 1999 - 2001, shows that the admission averages for cluster members were approximately 1.7% higher than for those who did not choose to live in an academic cluster. At the end of the fall semester for these years, the cluster members' academic averages were 2.5% higher than all others, and 2.7% higher than others at the end of winter semester. All of these differences were statistically significant. There was no significant difference between the retention rates of cluster members and others for these years. These findings will be discussed in relation to other North American research on learning communities, and on the experiences of the participants of this session.

Rx for Retention

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Summary: The program will begin with a Power Point presentation stating the purpose and background for the creation of the program. The academic advising program is based on a developmental approach that promotes both the human and intellectual growth of the students. The advisee and advisor work together to: define and assess academic goals; select appropriate courses for meeting the students academic goals; gain a clear understanding of institutional policies, procedures and resources; develop decision-making skills; and assist the student in becoming self-directed and self-sufficient. Some of the topics discussed will be: choosing the team, setting up the advising suite, the role of the advisor, meetings, measurement techniques advising events, the role of peer mentors, parents and family programs, transition services and the role of the learning center.

A film will also be presented displaying the role of the weekly "Tuesdays With" sessions that include representatives from all the major departments that impact our freshman. Some of the members of this group include representatives from the following: registrars office, residential life, arts and science faculty, Dean of the Hospitality College, Office of Student Success, Office of Student Affairs, Student Financial Services, etc.

Romancing the Disciplines: Faculty and the Interdisciplinary First-Year Seminar

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Summary: Recruiting and working with diverse faculty to teach in the first-year seminar is often a challenging task. Faculty is reticent to teach a course outside of their discipline and their comfort zone. Faculty report that they are also hesitant to teach a course which appears on the surface to have no interesting content, especially if it means sacrificing a course in their own field. UNV 101: Introduction to the World of Thought, the model designed by Saint Leo University, marries the more traditional survival skills first-year course with an interdisciplinary, thematic, and academically challenging companion course. This latter course focuses on teaching critical thinking, reading, and writing skills through an intense discussion /seminar format. Each year faculty chooses a thematic, provocative, scholarly, interdisciplinary text which will help build students' critical skills and introduces them to the academic world of thought.

The interdisciplinary nature of the seminar course also interests faculty who see the content as challenging, giving them an added opportunity to "teach outside of the box." The coordinators of the seminar provide training, weekly faculty meetings, and guide faculty in how to teach using an interdisciplinary perspective. During the semester, the faculty goes through a developmental process of integrating the interdisciplinary model into their own teaching style. Questions often asked include, "How do I teach an interdisciplinary course?" "How is teaching a first-year interdisciplinary seminar different from teaching my other courses?" The weekly meetings foster an environment for academic discussion among diverse faculty, which increases their teaching effectiveness with first-year students.

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CAPS (Career, Academic and Personal Success) A Multidimensional Approach to Student Success

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Summary: At most community colleges, the majority of students begin their education by placing into developmental English, math, or both courses. Improving the status and success of these students is critical, not only to the student but to the overall mission of community colleges. Addressing the complexity of factors that contribute to true student success involves a campus-wide, multidimensional approach. At Quinsigamond Community College, the redesign of developmental level English and math courses served as the catalyst for the evaluation and on-going improvement of the many factors relating to student success. Four distinct areas were identified to address: the important role of technology in curriculum design; planful and data driven retention strategies; a community college-focused orientation course; along with a developmental academic advising mechanism. The use of technology has been instrumental not only in the design or re-design of curriculum, but also in allowing faculty to develop skills to utilize and implement new curricula with ease, accuracy, and creativity. Technology has also enabled both faculty and students to test out innovative instructional and learning strategies that are directly applicable to multiple learning styles. In addition, utilizing web-based faculty development is useful as both a supplement and sometimes a viable alternative to timely and costly training.

Comprehensive research and data collection, aimed at identifying specific factors that promote or detract from student success, is necessary to develop targeted and useful strategies. A 4-part student survey, student course evaluations, along with GPA's, grades, and success and attrition patterns have all proven to be valuable in the construction of retention initiatives.

Historically, college orientation courses have been designed for 4-year residential institutions, with minimal emphasis on career and academic planning. QCC's new course Strategies for College and Career addresses the 3 major areas that research has shown to be critical to student improvement and success: connection to the college, study and learning skills, and detailed career and academic planning. Students leave the course with an electronic portfolio that illustrates their CAPS (career, academic and personal success) Plan. A larger scope CAPS Plan initiative is being piloted to assist with the implementation of a developmental academic advising model.

The presenter will report results, share information, and address questions on the strategies, procedures, programs, and curriculum that have resulted in improving the status of developmental students.

An Embarrassment of Riches: Tapping the Resources of a Research University

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Summary: Michelle O'Grady, Faculty Director of the Health Sciences Scholars Program, and Wallace Genser, HSSP Program Manager, will use a PowerPoint presentation and discussion format to describe the development of a pre-health learning community for first-year undergraduates at the University of Michigan. The mission of HSSP is to establish a diverse community supportive of the exploration of issues and opportunities in the health sciences and professions. HSSP is in its second year and has access to a rich, diverse, but thinly stretched array of resources. These include faculty from all the health schools as well as

the School of Information and Colleges of Engineering and LS&A, programs such as the Science Learning Center and the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, health care providers from the University of Michigan Health System and the community, and advising and tutoring services. We will illustrate the process of utilizing these resources identifying them, bringing them into the program, and providing connections to them for students toward the achievement of program objectives. We will share results and conclusions from program-specific evaluations as well as campus-wide surveys, and encourage discussion of shared experiences and innovations.

Additional Presenter 1:

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Promoting New Student Success: The Relationship Between College Experiences & Student Outcomes

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Summary: One of the challenges of assessment of higher education is to come to a consensus on the outcomes of college in general and the first year of college in particular. However, it is equally as challenging to determine how to measure these gains in our students over time. While national surveys of the college student experience have proliferated over the years, only recently has a national survey emerged that comprehensively assesses the experiences of students over the first year of college and can provide both institutional and nationwide data on key student outcomes of the first year. This new survey, titled Your First College Year (YFCY), was developed as collaboration between the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA and the Policy Center in the First Year of College at Brevard College. After two successful pilot administrations in 2000 and 2001, YFCY was first opened for national administration in 2002.

The purpose of this session is to share with the audience a national perspective on how student experiences and campus programs impact key outcomes of the first year of college. Specifically, the session will report on findings from a study that draws from a national longitudinal sample of almost 13,000 first-year students who returned both the 2001 Freshman Survey and the 2002 YFCY. This valuable longitudinal data set was utilized to evaluate six key aspects of student development during the first year of college including academic achievement and student self-rated change in five areas: general knowledge, knowledge of a particular field or discipline, critical thinking skills, knowledge of people from different races and cultures, and ability to get along with others. Further, the presenters will discuss how these results can inform campus policy and influence institutional practices to facilitate students' transition to college and development during the first year.

Coping with Math Anxiety in College: Guidelines for New Students

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Summary: Math anxiety is prevalent on college campuses. Many incoming students dread taking their required mathematics courses and most faculty are at a loss when they encounter these students in their

classrooms. What does the phrase "math anxiety" really mean? Why do some students experience it while others do not? What is the etiology of math anxiety and most importantly, how can students cope with it? None of the above questions have a simple answer. The presenter has given many faculty development workshops on this topic at national and international conferences and is currently completing the third year of a research grant exploring coping strategies in math anxious students in freshman level courses. This work will be presented while simultaneously engaging the audience in interactive, learning activities (which are also a lot of fun). These short activities can be completed individually or in small groups and are designed to increase participants' awareness of their own feelings about math anxiety. The presenter will compare the audience's responses with the results from his research. This format has proven EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE at his numerous past workshops. Participants especially appreciate having the chance to compare academic research to their own experience. They leave the session with a heightened sensitivity to the needs of math anxious students (as well as an extensive resource guide in the form of a "learning packet" that may be shared with students and colleagues at their schools). Using past workshops as a template, the presenter will discuss his latest findings on the effects of gender and age on math anxiety coping strategies. These findings are particularly important today since now, more than ever before, mathematics classrooms are filled with returning adult students (no longer fresh out of high school). The goal of the proposed session is to enhance the audience's awareness and understanding of a major stumbling block encountered by a very large number of students in many countries. Through this understanding, it is hoped that participants will be able to increasingly facilitate the relief of student distress when entering college.

Important Factors for the Retention of First-Year Students at Yonsei University in South Korea

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Summary: Retention rates for first-year students at Yonsei University have decreased from 88.7% to 82.5% from 2000-2002. This represents a significant decrease from retention rates in the early 1990's, and is related to the increased number of students who retook the college entrance examination and to students who transferred. Retention rates showed a large fluctuation depending on the division and type of entrance system. Ninety-three percent of the fall term (early decision) students who were admitted by their high school records persisted. However, only 80.3% of the winter term (regular term) students who enrolled through the national standardized college entrance test (CET) persisted. One partial explanation is that students who did not prepare for the CET showed hesitation in trying the college entrance system. A series of programs including curricular and extra-curricular activities for pre-enrolled students supported and enhanced their adjustment and transition from high school to the university and positively influenced their success. GPA's for the fall term were significantly higher than for other groups ($p < 0.001$) and supported their successful adjustment. Approximately 8% of Science and 5% of Engineering students left the university after their first year. Also 23% of Science and 15% of Engineering students are on a leave of absence. Preparing for the CET was the predominant reason found for the temporary leave of absence. The retention rates for science and engineering divisions were significantly lower than those in the Social Sciences and Humanities. Results from statistical analysis for student retention with GPA, enrollment type, division, and other factors will be presented in order to illustrate the factors influencing student behavior.

Moving to a Collaborative Intake Advising Model Incorporating First-Year Seminar Faculty

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Summary: Brown and Sanstead (1999) link effective academic advising to student persistence, improved GPA, positive influence on educational goals, and satisfaction with the college experience. In response to a Noel-Levitz assessment in the late 90's and the work of two committees on our campus, a collaborative intake advising model between academic departments and First-Year Seminar faculty was proposed. After the implementation of the model, the number of first-year students who reported being either satisfied or very satisfied with academic advising rose from 64% in 1999 to 86.1% in 2000, and rose further to 93.9% in 2001.

There were a complex array of tasks involved in implementing this initiative including: training First-Year Seminar faculty to advise multiple majors, developing sample first-year schedules for all majors to assist in the advising process, increasing the First-Year Seminar faculty stipend to include compensation for additional duties, encouraging departments to relinquish the advising task to First-Year Seminar faculty, and restructuring of current departmental advising models. Other subsequent changes included modifying the First-Year Seminar curriculum to more fully integrate developmental advising issues, and modifying the advising component of orientation programs.

Participants will receive information to guide them in designing and implementing a first-year advising strategy which incorporates First-Year Seminar faculty. Specific topics which will be addressed are: developmental advising models, institutional challenges to implementation, promotion of institutional buy-in, reasons for the increase in student satisfaction, advisor/faculty training and development, relationship of advising to retention, rewards and recognition for faculty/advisors, utilization of peer leaders in the advising process, variations which could be adapted to other institutions, and criteria for assessment.

A Multi-Faceted Approach Creates an Institution of Excellence in the First College Year

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Summary: Elon University, an Institution of Excellence in the First College Year, offers a First-Year Experience 17 months in length, beginning before a student's first college class. Intentional and multi-faceted, Elon's program weaves together the academic mission, student life, and a challenging learning environment that shapes both the students and the university. Elon offers a wide range of integrated first-year experiences designed to significantly improve student learning.

These integrated experiences involve three levels of orientation. Spring and Fall experiences include interactive sessions ranging from advising for the fall semester to making the transition to the academic and social climate of the Elon community. Summer Orientation includes student opportunities for both leadership and service.

Fall orientation groups become Elon 101 classes, a fall semester one-credit course. In classes of 15, nearly all first-year students meet to discuss issues important to students making the transition to college life. Taught by academic advisors and student leaders, the course links to the academic curriculum by discussing the Common Reading, Elon Honor Code, the study abroad program, and by advising for preregistration and the choosing of majors and minors.

The First-Year Core, 14 hours of common academic requirements for all first-year students, forms the center of the First-Year Experience. Based upon the developmental educational theories of William Perry, this core initiates the intellectual and civic challenge that serves as the foundation of all Elon programs.

Additionally, Elon experiences such as living/learning communities, service projects, leadership-designated courses and orientation for international and African American students meet sub-population needs.

Elon uses diverse national assessments such as CIRP, CORE, and NSSE. Surveys targeting student leaders, freshmen, sophomores, and Parent's Council are developed locally to measure success.

Nearly every aspect of Elon University participates in these initiatives, no matter their role in the institution.

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Sleepless in Saint Benny's: Student Filmmaking and the First-Year Experience"

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Summary: My presentation will begin by explaining Saint Vincent College's First-Year Experience program the reasons for its initiation, the problems it was designed to solve, and the specifics of its implementation. As a way to adapt my existing introductory literature course to the goals of the First-Year Experience program, I suggested to my class that we make a movie. My presentation will then describe the process by which my Freshman Seminar section made this movie, *Sleepless in Saint Benny's* (the name of the new freshman residence hall). I will describe how we created roles and production teams that involved the entire class; how we arrived at an idea for a screenplay and the composition process; how we rehearsed and ultimately filmed the movie; and how the raw film was edited on computers. Following this description, and a viewing of the film, I will outline the benefits of this classroom strategy to any First-Year Experience program. These benefits include the student's ownership of the project by coming up with the idea, writing the screenplay, and producing the film. Also, students learned how to work together, both in the small groups that were assigned to specific tasks and as a class. Student learned how to work responsibly on a task to its completion, including budgeting money, setting timetables and schedules, assigning and completing tasks, communicating professionally among themselves and with the instructor. In the process of making the film, students developed skills sought by the objectives of the first-year experience program, the course, the English department, and the college. Students were attentively engaged in the process, and hence the course, from the moment of its inception to the final screening. Included in my presentation will be comments derived from assessments the students are in the process of completing.

Putting the Digital into Online Portfolios: Insights From a First-Year Experience

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Summary: A growing number of colleges and universities require student online portfolios as part of the student's first-year seminar experience and are sometimes continued through the university experience. This presentation consists of two main parts. First, a rhetorical analysis of existing student electronic portfolios available on the web from various colleges and universities. Second, suggestions for communicating more effectively through digital portfolios.

The first part of the presentation will present strengths and weaknesses of current electronic portfolios from a communication perspective. For example, a large number of existing electronic portfolio web sites include student samples with Page Not Found errors, poor design elements and largely text-based documents. These weaknesses do not contribute to the credibility of the author or represent effective communication strategies in a digital medium. While many student E-portfolios contain quality content, what Aristotle calls invention, they lack considerably in other rhetorical elements, including style, arrangement and delivery.

The second half of the presentation draws upon a first-year experience course taught during Spring Term 2003 at Alma College. The course, Introduction to Digital Media, is a team-taught class by David Lawrence, associate professor of communication, and Raymond Riley, professor of music. This course requires first-year students to read and reflect on their first-year experience and craft a digital portfolio that takes advantage of a full range of digital media, including text, graphics, photos, audio and video. These digital portfolios will be discussed using the same rhetorical criteria mentioned above.

Participants at the presentation will receive a CD-ROM that contains the web site for the first-year experience course, including student digital portfolios, syllabus, tutorials, and resources for crafting digital portfolios.

An Effective University Orientation Course

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Summary: This session will describe the course content of University Orientation and the data collected to determine if the course added value to the students' college work. The course was designed to help at-risk students learn effective learning strategies and apply them in their course work. Motivation and Learning Strategies for College Success, by Myron Dembo is the textbook. This text requires students to reflect upon and describe their learning strategies. A writing exercise describing their application of a particular strategy is required for many chapters.

Students are also required to keep a portfolio. This is a three-ring binder that is a collection of their work and a record of their progress during the semester they are enrolled in University Orientation. Students have three individual portfolio evaluation conferences with the instructor. The portfolios must have eight major sections: 1.) weekly goal sheets, 2.) weekly journals (topics for the journals are in the syllabus, 3.) class notes from another class, 4.) learning strategy application (In this section students demonstrate any skill they learned in orientation that they applied in any other class, such as test preparation, use of a representation using a sequence, hierarchy, matrix or diagram from a lecture or a textbook.) 5.) An essay analyzing their learning and study behavior, 6.) test questions they make up in preparation for another class, 7.) project, either a career search and presentation or research on a learning strategy, and 8.) an analysis of the information in their portfolio.

Students with similar ACT scores who completed University Orientation received an average higher grade in their first English course than those students who did not take University Orientation. The students also took the Learning and Study Strategies (LASSI) as a pre- and post-test to evaluate their change in learning strategies. The LASSI indicates that the students who complete University Orientation increase their learning strategies.

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Using Web-Based Technology to Enhance First-Year Programs

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Summary: The First-Year Experience Program at the University of Connecticut has experienced tremendous growth over its five-year history, with 77% (2,261) of the current first year class enrolled in a one-credit seminar. Program growth has placed an increasing burden on the 100+ staff and faculty volunteers, who serve as seminar instructors, as well as the content experts (learning specialists, health educators, academic advisors and diversity specialists on campus), who serve as guest presenters. To meet the challenges of our growing FYE program and to better prepare first-year students for the technological skills needed to be successful, our FYE program now uses a web-based delivery model to enhance the face-to-face teaching and learning in our FYE courses.

Our session will demonstrate how this model:

- + Improves teaching and learning in FYE by allowing instructors to develop a rapport with the class and deliver information to meet student needs outside of class time
- + Allows us, in partnership with content experts across campus, to create a dynamic, interactive online textbook which has eased the need for resource personnel to make presentations in over 103 sections of classes and across campuses
- + Enables us to work with and train instructors in teaching and in using technology, through our Instructor website
- + Enables FYE to reach students beyond their first semester, through our First Year Interactive portal website

The session will incorporate interactive web demonstration of actual course sites developed by our First-Year Experience Program for use in FYE seminars.

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Initiative For the Betterment of the First-Year Experience at Penn State University, Delaware County

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Summary: The spirit of the First-Year Seminar at Penn State University is to link with 1.) learning communities, 2.) service communities, and 3.) virtual communities. This particular 1 credit stand alone version of the FYS (PSU 008, Section 800: CMWLTH 1st-YR SMNR) is a team taught course, scheduled

to run two days a week, meeting one hour each day, for seven weeks. My inclusion represents a third of the course content, using the text, *The Price of a Child*, by Lorene Cary. This partial curriculum facilitates active learning as students read, discuss, go on a field trip and watch a film on a related topic, with the culmination of student-centered research projects. With a technological focus, students will use multi-media, participating in virtual communities using ANGEL (Penn State's Course Management System) and PowerPoint to develop group presentations.

ONE BOOK ONE PHILADELPHIA is a project of the Office of Mayor John F. Street and the Free Library of Philadelphia. This new program promotes literacy and a common bond experience shared by the residents throughout the Philadelphia area. Thousands of people gather to discuss *The Price of a Child* by Cary, at branches of the Free Library, colleges, schools, and book clubs. Once participants have finished reading *The Price of a Child*, they are encouraged to drop off their used personal copies at local Rite Aid drug stores so others may read the novel.

Philadelphian Cary's, *The Price of a Child* is a novel set in Pre-Civil War Philadelphia in 1855. This is the story of a young female slave, who escapes from her owner while traveling through Philadelphia. She uses the Underground Railroad to find freedom, reclaiming her voice and her life.

Poster Session will include a copy of the text, *The Price of a Child*, a syllabus, and handouts of discussion questions, maps of tours and field trip experiences made throughout Philadelphia. PowerPoint display will include evidence of message board discussions, student research projects, and websites of the ONE BOOK ONE PHILADELPHIA PROJECT and of the field trip students took to The Chester County Historical Society Exhibition entitled Just Over the Line.

<http://www.chestercohistorical.org/ugrr/main.htm>

<http://libwww.library.phila.gov/onebook/>

<https://cms.psu.edu/frameIndex.htm>

Simple, Surprising, Useful? Three Questions for Judging Teaching Methods

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Summary: This session will demonstrate teaching methods based on discovery learning (Bruner) for first-year writing courses. The presenter will examine three questions for judging any teaching method: Is it simple? (Can the method be presented so students readily understand it?) Is it surprising? (Does it contain anything unexpected to stir wonder in students?) Is it useful? (Can students apply it in the future?)

Participants will do activities and assess them. The presenter will encourage participants to practice classroom research (Cross and Angelo) as a way to experiment with pedagogy, to gather and assess data, and to share findings with other teachers.

The presenter will demonstrate and discuss the following:

1) Relying Less on Textbooks and Doing More in Class:

Rather than assign a chapter on narration for students to read, teachers can enable students in class to discover the power of narration to support an idea.

2) Helping Students Create a Notebook of Sentence Tools:

Rather than doing exercises on grammar in a handbook, students can actively learn in class how to write with stylistic maturity. They can discover how to use semicolons, dashes, and colons.

3) Enabling Students to Teach Each Other:

Rather than a teacher always leading discussions of a book, students in small groups can present sections of a book to the class by developing their own activities.

Students learn best by doing, by experiencing the surprise of discovery, and by reflecting on what they have done. Teachers can help students construct knowledge on their own, rather than trying to construct knowledge for them. In this way, students take more responsibility for what they learn and are more able to apply it to other contexts.

Helping Academically-Talented First-Year Students Transition To College: Issues, Solutions, Results

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Summary: The session will begin with some startling statistics and examples of the achievement problems that academically-talented high school students can have upon entry to college. Participants will be asked to form groups and brainstorm possible reasons for the transition difficulties, with special emphasis on the particular factors that might play a role for gifted students. After a few minutes, the ideas of the groups will be collated on a flip chart sheet. The diagnostic approach taken in the University of Cincinnati (UC) Honors Scholars Program (HSP) will be explained, including the results of a qualitative research study that sought to tease out the significant differences between successful and less successful Honors students.

Further small-group brainstorming on possible components of an FYE for talented students will follow, with a brief report back to the plenary group. The rich panoply of strategies that comprise the FYE in the UC HSP will be outlined. It includes, but is not limited to, a special extended orientation including goal setting; a retreat before Autumn Quarter; a Welcome Week conference; an Honors 101 college survival skills course; mentoring by relatively senior students; and smaller sections of "killer courses".

An evaluation of the success of these FYE strategies will be presented in an easy-to-understand format. Key findings include the increasing first-year retention rate in the HSP (from 60% in 1999-2000 to a predicted 80% in 2002-2003), and the positive and significant effect of the FYE course on student achievement and retention.

Implications for the future will be discussed, including plans for more focused diagnostic tests, web-based and software-based modularized interventions, and new first-year seminars. Problems will also be discussed, including making choices in times of shrinking resources, getting non-participants to participate in voluntary activities, and the need for continuing support in a sophomore-year experience.

Overcoming Obstacles to Education: Latinas and Their College in Transition

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Summary: The presentation will describe a Transition Center developed by Mount St. Mary's College that is funded by a Title V grant through the Department of Education. The Transition Center was created to enhance retention and educational success of first-year Latina students. In particular, the Transition Center was designed to assist students in the move from high school to the first year of college. During the first year of the program, the Transition Center conducted two main activities: 1.) provision of professional tutors (referred to as Academic Guides) to provide additional help in writing, mathematics and language skills and 2.) provision of peer and faculty mentors to provide guidance and support. Access to the Transition Center was provided to a random sample of first-year Latina students entering the Associate of Arts degree program.

The successes and challenges of the Transition Center will be discussed. The positive experiences of students, academic guides and mentors will be shared. For example, many students reported that they had received vital assistance as the result of required meetings with the Academic Guides. Challenges faced in developing the Transition Center and reaching the cohort students will also be described. A common problem was encouraging students to prioritize time to meet with the support staff. One purpose of this session is to promote dialogue concerning institutional methods to address such challenges.

After the completion of the first year of the program, cohort students were surveyed for their impressions of the Transition Center. They also provided information about extra-curricular challenges they

faced (e.g., financial, family, child or elder care requirements). Students responded to open-ended questions concerning the best and worst parts of their first year at college. Results of this survey will be discussed.

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First-Year Engineering Courses

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Summary: GE 115 faculty have incorporated elements from some of the best practices in first-year engineering programs from around the country. Campus workshops have included presenters from the Foundation Coalition, the Succeed Coalition, the Gateway Coalition, Rose-Hulman, and the Colorado School of Mines & Technology. In addition to presenting these best practices, the poster will demonstrate a process by which these practices have been incorporated into the current model for the program at SDSM&T.

All curricular elements for the program are available to students online. The student manual, tutorials, supplemental information, and reference links are also available on a course CD. Online elements will be available for review during the poster session and copies of the CD will be available for distribution.

Students are required to author and post a web page for this course. In addition, students are required to post major assignments to a portfolio section of this web page. Sample pages and portfolio elements will be available for review during the poster session.

Finally, early assessments incorporating longitudinal tracking and student attitudes will be posted online and will be available in hard copy. Assessment information will include current results of portfolio analysis of student writing and problem solving skills.

Freshman Year Seminar Plus a Couple More

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Summary: All St. Mary's students are required to complete a sequence of four "Great Books" seminars, two in their freshman year (Greek Thought, Roman, Christian, and Medieval Thought), one (Renaissance, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Thought) in their sophomore year, and one (Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Thought) in their Junior or Senior year. All have 18-20 students and are taught exclusively through discussion. The program has continued to metamorphose over its 50-year history. A longer description of the history explains why we loosely adhere to a "Great Books" model after trying "Great Ideas" and "Anything Goes." We explore the benefits of a uniform syllabus and recount our struggles (ongoing) to achieve it and a consensus methodology. We sketch the disposition of the "warring camps" around methodology and text selection.

We do not have a faculty exclusively dedicated to this program -- rather we draw faculty from all schools and departments, which creates significant difficulties, but which offers distinct benefits to the College as a whole.

Four years ago, we added to this program the Freshman Cohort Advising Program. Now the instructor of the freshman Greek Thought seminar also becomes the academic advisor for that group of students with added responsibilities (and budget) to introduce those students to college life and the cultural/recreational resources of the San Francisco Bay Area. We explore the benefits and challenges of running this program, and the gains we attribute to it.

We conclude with a review of our assessment procedures, abandoned, ongoing and incipient, and the results we have obtained thus far.

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Empirically Verified Study Skills and Learning Community Success

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Summary: In this presentation, we will describe the motivation behind the decision to offer a learning community option to Sam Houston State University students. We will provide a chronology of the design and implementation of the learning community pilot program from the initial committee charge through the lessons learned in our first two years. Rather than presenting a flawless model for others to imitate, we will offer a detailed description and developmental analysis. This will include our successes and also significant challenges that were addressed. We will outline the ongoing evaluation, which helped us clarify the essential characteristics of a successful learning community. The discussion will include initial recruitment efforts, selection procedures and program requirements. We will address the living environment, the interaction with faculty and staff, as well as approaches to academic advising. Throughout the presentation, we will underscore the importance of assessment to continually evaluate the program's effectiveness. We will provide a thorough description of our successes but perhaps more importantly we will include our shortcomings and our attempts to address those issues. In closing, we will provide evidence of the program's present standing and discuss our short and long-term goals for the future.

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Summary: The freshman year program promotes college success by providing support services to students during their first year of college. The effectiveness of the freshman year program depends upon the fit between student needs and program content.

A key issue in identifying student needs is to understand the characteristics of the freshman population and their ecological context for past and current experiences. For example, traditional college students who enter college immediately after completing their secondary education and non-traditional students who enter college older and later, face different issues. In the case of the non-traditional student, parenting and work responsibilities as well as other obligations may compete with the demands of college life. Moreover, the non-traditional student may be academically underprepared for the rigors of college study. Non-traditional students require support services that are specific to the challenges that they face. These issues must be identified and addressed in order to maximize the retention of freshman students in their college programs. In order to attain an appropriate fit between services and student needs, the institution must be engaged in an ongoing and systematic assessment of student needs and evaluation of institutional practices.

This study presents a model for a freshman year program, which incorporates student profile data, and student needs assessments as a part of ongoing formative and periodic summative evaluation of support services. A key component of this model is the collaboration among relevant departments in the provision of comprehensive services for the first-year students. This model is applied at a four-year college with a non-traditional student population of approximately 4,800 in the Northeast U.S. in a densely populated urban area. Preliminary data show that students' personal issues, including psychological problems, present more of a challenge to staying in school than financial difficulties. Freshman Year Program modifications include increases in resource and referral systems, personal counseling and teacher-student interaction. Recent data, which have gained this college national recognition for good practices, indicate that students rate teacher-student interaction favorably.

Further research will track student retention in relation to programmatic changes.

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Creating Avenues to Help Students Connect With Their Discipline: A Multi-Pronged Model

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Summary: The establishment of meaningful connections at the college level represents a major hurdle for beginning students at very large public universities. The College of Biological Sciences at the University of Minnesota, Twin cities, uses a multi-pronged approach to facilitate the incoming student's exploration of their major discipline, connection with fellow biology students, and identification of potential mentors from within the life sciences faculty. As a first step in the process, a sense of community among biology students is established during the Freshman Welcome Fair in the Spring prior to matriculation, and at the Freshman Dinner in the fall during the first week of class. Second, community building is encouraged by setting aside residential housing for students interested in biology (Biology House), offering a weekend retreat at a biological field station (Biology Weekend), and pairing first-year students with upperclassmen in an individual mentoring relationship (BioBuds). Finally, academic connections are offered through two specialized programs: Students for Excellence in Academics and Multiculturalism (SEAM), which provides a support program for students from racial and ethnic groups that are underrepresented in math and the sciences, and the Biology Colloquium Program, which helps students to discover another community of other life sciences students and opens their eyes to a wide range of biology disciplines and careers.

All of the above programs weave a web that connects students, fosters their development, and increases student retention and graduation rates. A secondary effect is the development of student leadership skills and long-term affinity for the College. Each of these multi-approach programs, including a brief overview of the program, resources required, student participation, and assessment results, are discussed. Information given can serve as a model for other small colleges or academic programs that are embedded within large institutions.

COMPETENCY CONTRACTS: A Program for Developing Knowledge and Competent Graduates

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Summary: There is a growing imperative for institutions of higher education to deliver competency based education programs, graduating students both knowledgeable and competent. Companies are experiencing financial strains and competitive challenges that squeeze the time and resources they have for finding and developing future leaders. The expectation is that educational institutions, whether undergraduate or graduate, will provide both knowledge and skills that can be quickly and effectively applied in the workforce. But educational institutions are also under serious resource constraints, new programs with high price tags are being considered under the rubric of potentially interesting to institutional donors. In addition, the expectations of what students need to know to warrant the degree designation has grown. So, how do we add on the requirement of competency development to our already over-priced, resource-strained, course-packed educational system? A possible solution is a Competency Contract.

A Competency Contract is an agreement between the institution, the faculty and the student as to the responsibilities of each in achieving the objective - a knowledgeable and competent graduate. The Competency Contract is a student-focused, self-directed, faculty-guided, institutionally supported program. It is student-focused in terms of the objective - a knowledgeable and competent graduate. It is self-directed in that the student designs the components of his program according to his own needs and the demands of his aspirations. It is faculty guided in that the faculty provides guidance and evaluation throughout their teaching efforts. It is institutionally supported in that the institution provides the systems for initial evaluation and planning as well as tracking progress through the program, the development opportunities in terms of workshops and practicum's, and a peer mentorship program.

This presentation will discuss the imperatives for competency-based education, the objectives and components of Competency Contract programs, specific guidelines on design and implementation, as well as the expected outcomes of such a program.

Discussion Groups Help Students Step Up to College Expectations

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Summary: The Special Discussion Group program at Pace University is an innovative and successful model of supplemental instruction. Our program envisions SI groups not just as a way to strengthen student performance in selected courses, but also attempts to resolve a contradiction fundamental to the first-year experience, namely that faculty expect students to engage intellectually even though most students don't arrive at college prepared to do so. The program helps students build necessary college-level thinking skills in the context of actual intellectual and skill challenges and faculty expectations. One of the program's primary goals is to expose first-year students to ways of knowing that privilege critical inquiry and risk taking and that provide alternatives to the passive learning styles to which most adhere and which ultimately alienate the student from his or her own education. The program's first major innovation is the course instructor determines the content of each peer-led session, directing the focus toward any number of strategies geared toward helping students learn how to learn: asking questions, discovering relationships, applying of theories or concepts, expressing ideas in writing or orally, undertaking group projects. This aspect of the program prevents the sessions from devolving into group homework or test preparation sessions wherein students focus exclusively on their grade performance for the course.

The program's second major innovation is that it brings academically strong and weak students together to form the kind of community recognized in first-year experience programs as a proven key to retention. Because everyone in the parent course must register for and attend one of the special discussion groups each week, these groups of six to eight students will be made up of stronger and weaker students, either of whom might, for different reasons, elect not to participate if attendance were voluntary.

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The CUNY Immersion Program: An Innovative Model For Developmental Mathematics Instruction

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Summary: Students who enter the community colleges of CUNY often require remediation in mathematics. Many must work full time during the academic year due to major family and financial obligations. In addition to traditional courses, an innovative "immersion" program has been offered during the summer and winter modules to meet the needs of the increasingly large number of older "returning" students as well as those of recent high school graduates. By virtue of its name, this intensive program "immerses" students in mathematics during a brief period when they do not have a full course load. Tuition and textbooks are free. Class size is kept small. Special tutors and counselors are assigned to the program.

Arithmetic and algebra courses meet for up to six hours per day in one to five week formats. Courses have been offered for bilingual and ESL students as well as one-week "math express" courses for students who are within a few points of passing the university wide assessment exam. Since 1990, the presenters have found teaching in the immersion program to be tremendously gratifying. It enables students to rapidly complete their remediation requirements so that they can subsequently enroll in credit bearing courses with confidence.

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An Engineering First-Year Experience Seminar

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Summary: EGN 1006, Introduction to the Engineering Profession, was designed as an introduction to the Engineering profession. The course, implemented in 1999 in its current format, provided a tool for improving retention by getting first-year students connected to the college. Previously, most students were not introduced to engineering topics and faculty until the sophomore year or later. Basic study and coping skills are introduced as well as college specific information. The course is a requirement of all first time in college students (FTIC) and is offered as a sequence. EGN 1006 is offered in the fall with a follow-up course, EGN 1007, Engineering Concepts and Methods, in the spring. Each is a one-hour course with lab.

The presentation will detail the specific objectives for both courses and the accompanying labs. The labs are taught by mentors, made up of junior and senior students, who successfully completed the course and are selected by teaching faculty. The EGN 1006 lab allows for group projects while the EGN 1007 lab provides an environment in which students can learn the necessary computer software for their program of study.

Documentation of the lessons presented, group projects, and industry participation will be provided along with examples of how technology is used to enhance the classroom experience. WebCT is used for quizzes and exams while a CPS transmitter is used to track attendance and for in-class quizzes during the lectures.

Student Outcomes are a critical piece of course success. Data will be presented as to the success of the outcomes based on the definition of a common understanding of the information presented in each course. Effects on retention rates within the college due to successful implementation of the course will also be demonstrated.

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Retention Initiatives for Undergraduate Engineering Students

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Summary: Colleges and universities expend large amounts of money establishing programs and support services to assist students to persist to graduation. According to the 2000-2001 Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE) report:

Freshman year is the most crucial period in student retention. Approximately 42 percent of students dropped out of college over a period of six years: 21 percent in the first year; 11 percent in the second year; 10 percent in third and later years. More than half of the dropouts did so in the freshman year. (p.1)

This presentation will cover the retention initiatives, programs, and support services for undergraduates in the College of Engineering and Computer Science (CECS) at the University of Central Florida. CECS is committed to (a) providing the programs and support services needed by students to fulfill their potential as future engineers, and (b) providing the nation with professional engineers to enhance economic and technical development.

College (CECS) initiatives, programs, and support services to retain students are:

Programs

- Orientation
- Academic and Career Advisement
- Mentoring
- Outreach and Bridge Programs
- Freshman Experience

Curricula changes

- Establishment of mandatory introductory seminar courses for engineering students
- EGN 1006 Introduction to the Engineering Profession
- EGN 1007 Engineering Concepts and Methods
- Collaborative approach to Calculus Education with the Math Department
- Service Learning

Support Services

- Math Lab
- Minority Engineering and Computer Science Programs Office

Professional Development

- Professional Societies Student Organizations
- Co-Op Opportunities
- Lockheed-Martin Excellence Program

Providing an environment to meet the academic, professional, and social needs and interests of engineering students is crucial to their success in their programs. Data on engineering student outcomes will be presented.

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Beyond the Freshman Seminar: Achieving Long-Term Retention Gains Through Learning Communities

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Summary: Beyond the Freshman Seminar: Achieving Long-Term Retention Gains Through Interdisciplinary Learning Communities

This session describes a learning community initiative at the University of Alabama at Birmingham which brings together University 101 and the freshman core curriculum in an innovative partnership designed to achieve long-term gains in retention and academic performance. The learning communities, which are being funded by a major institutional grant, build upon the successes of an ongoing program. When U101 was first introduced as a pilot program seven years ago, it targeted conditionally admitted students, and no formal connection existed between University 101 and the freshman core. In contrast, our new learning community initiative features a two-tier curricular model that accommodates both conditionally and non-conditionally admitted students. It also links sections of University 101 with a range of classes in the freshman core. These changes have been instituted in order to develop a systematic and effective approach to maintaining the retention gains we are achieving through our first-year seminar. Students in each learning community will develop the ability to identify and apply critical thinking skills through specific activities generated by the English and/or Chemistry components of the community.

Our session will focus on the curricular design of our learning communities and the institutional assessment data that led to its development. Our presenters will discuss specific links between U101 and the departments of English and Chemistry. We will also provide an overview of our institutional assessment instrument, the data it has yielded, and the way that we are using our assessment data to strengthen our curricular model.

We are particularly interested in hearing how other institutions are exploring ways to maintain retention gains beyond the Freshman Seminar. We hope that the discussion that follows our presentation will provide valuable insight into this far-reaching issue.

Handouts for the session include (1) a sample syllabus; (2) course handouts; and (3) a description of our assessment instrument.

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Freshman Seminar 101: Conceptual Framework, Core Curriculum, and Assessment Results

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Summary: Research studies cite multiple benefits associated with the completion of a college degree. From a societal viewpoint, a college graduate is far less likely to commit a crime or experience unemployment compared to a student who has earned only a high school diploma (Bowen, 1977; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). From an individual perspective, a college degree brings with it a prolonged healthier lifestyle, increased salary, and a happier existence (Santrock, 1999). In addition to increased economic returns, a college graduate also experiences greater occupational prestige (Leslie & Brinkman, 1986). The benefits, then, are attractive and beneficial on the individual level and for society as a whole. In order to

reap these benefits, a student must persist to graduation. For some students, this presents a complex challenge, and for some universities a problem left unsolved.

Robert Frost once said, "Education is hanging around 'till you've caught on." He was not specifically writing about first year students; yet, with first year attrition a serious concern, the question becomes: "What can administrators do to ensure that students hang around?"

Freshmen arrive on campus with many developmental tasks such as managing emotions, establishing an identity, and developing autonomy; at the same time, they are trying to connect to a new environment while dealing with their own misconceptions about college life (Boyer, 1987; Chickering, 1972). Coupled with a lack of self-esteem, this transition becomes more critical.

Southeastern Louisiana University, a four-year, public commuter institution, uses Freshman Seminar 101, a 3-hour elective course, to help bridge the gap between high school and college. The conceptual framework for the course elaborates upon ideas presented by Tinto (1993) and Gardner (Upgraff and Gardner, 1989). Annual research shows the course significantly and positively affects student progression and retention. Approximately 25 sections of the course are taught each semester. This year, we are again expanding the course to meet the needs of additional special populations such as scholarship recipients, athletes, and transfer students. Course information and research results will be shared.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: Motivating the Reluctant Learner -- A Strategic Model Working With Student-Athletes

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Summary: Goal Setting is a means of empowerment that becomes the energy source to stimulate individuals into action. When a student determines a goal is important to him/her, then motivation is no longer an issue. However, there are specific elements that are crucial to setting effective action-focused goals and developing interventions to overcome roadblocks. Our program's success has relied on specific strategies for working with the student-athlete population and facilitating the transfer of skills from the sport setting to the classroom.

As academic advisers for student-athletes, we are charged with the responsibility of fostering success in the academic realm of being a student-athlete. Naturally these students are very comfortable within the sports environment but often have little motivation to explore non-sport roles. This lack of confidence or self-esteem as students compounds their struggle in the classroom. From our experiences, we have recognized 4 major roadblocks that students encounter, particularly in their first transition year to college: lack of knowledge, lack of skill, fear to take risks and lack of social support.

Our population of student-athletes is fairly representative of the general student-population of our university in terms of their diversity in race, culture, language and ability to negotiate the transition to a new and unfamiliar university culture. However, a small group within our student-athlete population comes from ethnic minorities or social backgrounds. Due to a number of factors, including poor preparation in high school, they are critically under prepared for college level work, particularly in the area of language and academic literacy. This problem is even further compounded with the special pressures and demands that they face as an athlete on both the academic and athletic fronts.

The program of services that we offer has emerged from our recognition of a growing trend among our recruitment and a need for an assessment instrument that we generated three years ago. All incoming student-athletes are required to answer a Learning Assessment questionnaire during New Student-Athlete Orientation as well as a program evaluation at the end of each semester. From this information we have created a strong tutorial program that addresses the needs of this special population and gives individualized and effective support in a fast and efficient way.

This session will help conference attendees develop a holistic program for their unique population of students that needs particular motivation and support in increasing their level of competency as university students. Discussion will include identifying roadblocks that these students encounter and how your program can help them overcome these obstacles.

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Surviving in the real world: TWU's creative use of TV trends

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Summary: The purpose behind the class and the video: Now in its second year, University 101 is a one-credit class that students attend their first semester at Trinity. The goal of "real" is to normalize student transition issues and show them that other students are feeling the same things, by showing them three different student experiences.

Before classes began in September, potential students were contacted, and asked if they would be willing to take part in an "experiment" that no student had done before, let alone heard of. In addition to being followed and filmed, these students would be asked self-discovery questions such as, "How do I handle stress?" "How do I manage my homework?" and "Who am I?" - all to be shown on screen in front of 600 of their peers.

Three brave students said "yes," meeting the pre-set quota of three different TWU groups: a male resident, a female resident and a commuter. Two fourth-year students, a Videographer and Production Coordinator, are two key people to thank for "real"'s success.

"Tina and I put our all into it," recalls the Project Coordinator. "We gave it all we had, but we were still quite skeptical of how the video would go over with the students. So once it was shown to the freshman class, we were relieved to find out how much they loved it. And Tina and I were like, really? They really like it?"

"The good thing is that students watching can relate to any one of the video students' diverse personalities, or at least to similar situations," adds the videographer. "And that's the whole purpose of the video. It's not just, 'oh this is fun times', or, 'what a cool class', but it is a time for all first-year students to go on this journey of self discovery-the video sets that in motion."

Students agreed with that. "It was helpful because they had the same fears and worries I was feeling," says first-year nursing student. "I remember when Shayla was talking about how she felt overwhelmed and didn't know if she could do it-well that really hit."

A communications student from Alaska said he "likes that MTV flavor" it has. "We can all relate to the music and to everything. I didn't know Jordan at the time, but to see life from his perspective and the fact that he was totally honest was really cool."

As the semester winds down, Shayla, Trevor, and Jordan, the mini-stars of TWU appear to have survived their first semester, along with their 600 first-year peers. While university life proves itself to be an amazing race of ups and downs, fear and triumph, "real" watchers have learned one thing - no matter what they are feeling, thinking, and experiencing, they are normal and not alone.

We will show the video, talk about the structure, how it was put together and how other schools can duplicate it.

Education for a Lifetime: Training Peer Mentors to Help Students Become "Their Own Best Teachers"

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Summary: This session will describe a highly successful peer mentor training program that is literally changing the lives of thousands of freshmen on our campus. Following is an overview of the information and activities that will be covered.

Description of the peer mentor (UV Leader) program at Utah Valley State College

The UV Leaders are a prestigious group on our campus and are an integral part of our First-Year Experience program. As an open enrollment four-year institution, UVSC admits students of all ability levels. Our First-Year Experience program was created to help “save” the struggling students. Serving as team teachers in our freshmen seminar course, UV Leaders help students develop or refine the academic skills they need to succeed in college, feel connected to the campus and begin to investigate careers. They help students to develop the ability to direct their own education and then take charge of this challenge.

Discussion of the role of metacognition in UV Leader Training

Fundamental to the training of our UV Leader is metacognition or self-awareness. Research is clear that students learn in a variety of ways. We have found that in order for students to achieve their maximum potential, they need to discover their learning styles and then identify study strategies that specifically work for them. Through in-depth metacognitive training, UV Leaders embark on a journey of self-discovery and each create their own personalized study system. Our UV Leaders become independent, self-directed learners who actually become “their own best teachers.”

Hands-on sample metacognitive training activities

UV Leaders participate in a wide range of metacognitive activities designed to help them on their self-discovery journey. This session will demonstrate several of these activities including memory training, active reading, and critical thinking. This will be practical collaborative learning experience designed specifically for implementation on other college campuses.

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Help Seeking Attitudes of International Japanese Students International Poster Proposal

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Summary: In the Japanese culture, seeking professional help to solve personal (especially family issues) problems is not common. This cultural background may reflect Japanese international students' help seeking attitudes even though they live in the United States.

The study found that women (both Japanese and U.S. students) are more willing to seek professional psychological help. However, there were no significant differences between Japanese and U.S. mainland students in any of the subscales or the total attitudes. This suggests that help-seeking attitudes of international Japanese students is similar to U.S. mainland students. The study did not show any evidence that the Japanese culture affected Japanese students' help-seeking attitudes. For example, except two male students, most majorities of the Japanese students answered that it is okay to see a counselor. Compared to Japan, a bias of using counseling services is less in the U.S. This may reduce Japanese students' anxiety of worrying about others' eyes on them. An openness among American University and church school environments also may influence international Japanese students' help-seeking attitudes. Moreover, different types of counseling services may project a better image on university counseling services.

However, only eight out of 46 Japanese students answered that they had used counseling services. Although international Japanese students have positive help-seeking attitudes, most of them do not seek professional help. Since career decision-making is a main concern for many of the Japanese students, providing effective career counseling may help provide a better counseling impression. If Japanese students have a good experience, they may decide to use other counseling services.

Are College Choice Decisions Well-Informed?: An Instrument for Improving Student-Institution Fit

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Summary: Student expectations of college play an important role in their decision to choose a school, remain and complete a degree. Student expectations have been studied from psychological, sociological, and organizational perspectives. This presentation offers an information management perspective as an additional methodology for illuminating a complex process of developing college expectations.

The expansion of the guidebook and ranking industry points out the information paradox. Although there is an abundance of promotional literature supplied by college recruitment offices, prospective students find it increasingly difficult to obtain useful and relevant information. One plausible explanation for this paradox is that prospective students experience significant information overload or, are subjected to a large amount of low quality information. The outcome of information overload is that information requirements of rational college choice process exceed information-processing capacities and prospective students form expectations of schools on limited information that potentially can lead to unrealistic expectations, dissatisfaction, and, then, to transferring or dropping out.

We conceptualize institutional promotional materials as an information system or as a series of value-adding processes. The results of which assist prospective students in choosing and enrolling in a college. Drawing on the theoretical model of adding value to information and our conceptualization, an instrument measuring the value of admissions information was devised. The instrument measures the value of the provided information along five subscales -- weight, truth, guidance, accessibility, and scarcity.

In this presentation, we will describe the steps in developing the instrument and present the results of two pilot studies. The first study was conducted in a very selective traditional doctoral university. The

second study is being conducted in an urban minority-serving comprehensive institution. The purpose of these studies is to validate the instrument, compare information value-adding processes in the two schools, and develop recommendations for increasing quality of admissions information.

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Pixels, Portfolios, & First-Year Success: Networking Resource Roundtable

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Summary: Come join our academic conversations on creating the college student portfolio in first-year experience programs. Whether you are exploring, using, or are a veteran of E-Portfolios in the First-Year Seminar, come prepared to have fun learning at this networking resource roundtable. Bring your stories, samples, resources, and ideas for a lively and insightful exchange of how you can use E-Portfolios to enhance first-year success in college. E-Portfolios weave technology to learning, thus, helping college students honor and understand their first-year experience. Please bring sample E-Portfolios, tips on using the latest software to create E-Portfolio Templates, samples of reflective portfolios on learning, how you assess the portfolios, how you teach students to use E-Portfolios for scholarships, internships, employment, and advising. Come to the conversation roundtable ready for an inspiring exchange of your ideas on the empowerment of our student-learning experience in the first-year seminar; the gateway to success in higher education.

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Interdisciplinary Collaboration and the First-Year Seminar: Theory-Driven Development and Assessment of a Learning Frameworks Course

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Summary: As part of the state vision for increased participation and success in Texas public institutions of higher education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, the University of Houston-Downtown is piloting a new three-hour credit-bearing first-year seminar Learning Frameworks. The course, which involves collaboration among full-time, tenured faculty from across six academic disciplines, uses data-supported theory in the psychology of learning, cognition, and motivation to address the academic underpreparedness of our first-year students.

First-year students entering UH-Downtown are met with a host of barriers to their academic success, including: 1.) underpreparedness and low academic performance in college level curriculum, 2.) limited understanding of university norms, 3.) minimal metacognitive capacity to synthesize content across courses, 4.) minimal academic self-efficacy, 5.) limited knowledge of and access to technology, 6.) lack of financial assistance, 7.) limited psychosocial support from parents and their communities including the student's obligation to earn a portion of the family income and care for their own children or younger siblings, and 8.) immigration issues including citizenship, residency status, and language barriers.

The Learning Frameworks course has been developed to address these barriers through the application of theory and research regarding self-regulated academic learning (SRL). In contrast to theoretical approaches, which emphasize innate abilities or environmental factors in achievement, SRL views learners as proactive participants in the learning process. SRL is conceptualized as a process through which learners are able to transform abilities into specific academic skills. It refers to the planning and monitoring of the cognitive and affective processes that lead to positive outcomes of academic tasks (Corno, 1986). Theoretical explanations of SRL seek to understand what enables students to become self-regulated metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally (Zimmerman 2001).

During the first four weeks of the seminar, psychology professors, serving as instructors of record, use cooperative learning techniques to introduce students to: 1.) self-assessment instruments and 2.) psychological theories of learning from each of the major psychological perspectives (evolutionary, behavioral, cognitive). In week five a rotation of five academic experts; a poet, a mathematician, a political scientist, a biologist, and a sociologist begins in which students learn how each major discipline within the university understands the world, how they as students might apply that methodology to their college reading, what discipline they might choose to major in, and what career opportunities are associated with that field of study.

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Revitalizing the First-Year Experience Through the Use of Independent Inquiry

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Summary: The first-year learning experience establishes the trajectory of a student's college education. In their first year, students begin to match their aspirations with institutional opportunities and resources. In order to enhance the first-year experience, we designed a Preschool Colloquium to socialize top students to the culture of inquiry and started a first-year student tutorial program to cultivate independent scholarly work.

The Preschool Colloquium was designed as a policy-focused discussion of a selected issue. The 2001 colloquium focused on HIV-AIDS and the 2002 colloquium examined bioterrorism. Colloquia students participated in guided discussions and group debates, wrote and presented policy positions, and created service projects. The colloquium provided an opportunity for students to work with motivated peers and effectively channeled students' needs for achievement into an academic culture of inquiry. The colloquium beautifully modeled the ideals of multidisciplinary inquiry and engaged individual learning that are at the core of a liberal arts education.

The first-year tutorial program provided students with an opportunity to: (a) explore intellectual interests of high personal relevance, (b) explore multidisciplinary resources for exploring those interests, and (c) design and complete an independent project in their first year of college. Working with faculty mentors, students designed projects during the fall term and completed them during the winter term. The tutorial model has proven to be a powerful pedagogy through which first-year student-scholars develop habits of inquiry and networks of peers that set them on the course toward extraordinary achievement.

These initiatives have raised important questions about the effects of first-year learning programs on students, participating faculty and the ethos of the institution. After describing these programs and discussing their role in revitalizing the first-year experience at Alma College, we will invite discussion of the programs and how similar initiatives and models may be improved and used at other institutions.

Additional Presenter 1:

Michael Vickery

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A Novel Approach to Survey Question Design Using the Awareness-Interest-Decision-Action Model

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Summary: In order to interpret data on student satisfaction with advising services, it is important to know that student has used those services. If a student has not used the advising services available to them, it is important to understand why that is the case. If the student was unaware of the advising services, a better orientation of the students to the services may be necessary. If the student was aware of the services, but chose not to use them, a different approach may be appropriate.

The confounding nature of the issues of awareness, interest, and use of services led advisors and faculty of Clemson University's General Engineering program to develop a model for a new survey question. These same issues are central to marketing indeed, convincing students to use advising services certainly requires some marketing. For this reason, a new survey question design is based on a model used in marketing. This model focuses on progressive levels of engagement of a potential user of products or services. Those levels are identified by the name of the model Awareness-Interest-Decision-Action.

Using this new model, single survey questions assess whether a student was unaware of the advising services that were available, aware but uninterested, interested but uncommitted to using them, firm in the decision to use them but failing to use them, or acting upon a decision to use the services.

This proposal describes the limitations of traditional survey questions, the AIDA marketing model, and the new approach to designing survey questions based on that model. Sample survey questions designed using this model will be presented along with results from their administration. Statistics characterizing student responses to the new survey questions will be included, but a study of the reliability and validity of the new approach is not yet complete.

Additional Presenter 1:

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First Pilot of our First-Year Seminar: What we Seem to Have Done Right

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Summary: This poster describes in detail Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania's pilot First-Year Student Seminar. Seventeen sections were offered during the fall 2002 semester and enrolled 220 new first-year students from a class of 993. This was a discipline-based course that focused on connecting to the University, peers, faculty, and major. It allowed the students to explore their college education and become engaged with their academic field of interest. Students were randomly selected for enrollment but could opt out if they so desired during the standard drop period.

The seminars were structured so that all sections received a similar experience during the first part of the semester. Students were introduced to basic learning strategies and study skills within the context of their major. They became familiar with many services on campus to help ensure success. Students were also engaged in co-curricular activities and worked closely with a faculty member and peer mentors (chosen by the faculty) to help them connect with fellow students, the University, and the community. Topics toward the end of the semester were more discipline specific and included career exploration.

This poster shows the core goals and objectives of the seminar and how the curriculum met them while keeping best practices as guidelines. It will give examples of specific seminar activities and assess them in terms of attaining the core goals. The poster also addresses the discipline-specific objectives of the seminars (evident towards the end of the semester). It shows and assesses examples of discipline-specific activities and projects. The initial assessment of the project will be clearly outlined, and key findings of the assessment process delineated; however the presenters hope to elicit feedback from colleagues at the conference in order to help us interpret and apply the data we have generated.

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Additional Presenter 2:
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Teaching Multiple Literacies to Multicultural Students

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Summary: Traditional ESL paradigms emphasize syntax rather than rhetoric in ways that poorly serve courses that emphasize cultural and technological literacy. Yet freshmen experience course sequences must accommodate an increasingly diverse student body that often read and write many genres in the home language, particularly epistolary genres. In the Humanities Core Course, a recent survey of almost a thousand students indicated over 54 "home" languages and dialects in the course. In student writing, questions of national identity are problematized by students who write about themselves as transnational subjects who have a complex relationship to the cultural legacy that we are attempting to impart. See <http://e3.uci.edu/faculty/losh/language> for more information.

Additional Presenter 1:

I would like to be on a panel with other similar speakers rather than attempt to sustain a single panel on HCC (despite its size and complexity that might merit such a panel)

Even the Best Laid Plans for the Freshman Experience Go Awry

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Summary: We will share and expand on the following:

For nearly a year, The University of Tulsa director of New Student Orientation and Freshman Experience worked alongside the academic deans and associate deans to reorganize freshman seminar classes that were taught differently in each college. There was some resistance, but there was also a great deal of consensus that incoming students should have timely access to the same student success information. Thus, a goal was established to begin the freshman seminar class during new student orientation with faculty instructors at the helm and student affairs professional staff assisting. Faculty, student affairs staff, deans, the associate provost, and the vice president for enrollment and student services reviewed potential texts. Everyone seemed to agree on the text and how to proceed until it was time to proceed. Then, the question was asked... "Do you really expect us to do this?"

We will then share the results of the FYE class survey and the ensuing discussion with the deans, as well as our plans for the upcoming orientation program. We want to discuss how we dealt with this challenge at our institution and would also like to invite participants to share their experiences in their own areas.

Additional Presenter 1:

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Learn Locally, but Act Globally: Developing a Global Mindset in the First-Year Seminar

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Summary: A critical mission of higher education is to produce productive global citizens that are dedicated to developing a just, equitable and sustainable society. How can we introduce to our first-year seminar students the best practices for developing a global mindset in preparation for their future leadership roles?

Dr. Vladimir Pucik, professor of international human resources and strategy at the International Institute for Management Development, Lausanne Switzerland, provides a definition of global mindset, which includes respect for cultural diversity and human diversity, that is based on the principle of learning locally, but acting globally (Chowdhury, et.al. 2003. Organization 21 C: Someday All Organizations Will Lead This Way. Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. p.50). His definition implies honoring shared ways of thinking, using a global knowledge base combined with a local learning base to produce a rich resource for making the best societal decisions possible.

The Kennesaw State University best practices for developing a global mindset in the first-year seminar are shared in this innovative session, which include, incorporating human diversity issues, framing volunteer/service-learning projects for connecting local and global issues, creation of reflective student e-portfolios, which connect cultural background, educational goals, and global leadership aspirations, and media analysis strategies for understanding local and global perspectives of a just, equitable, and sustainable society.

Additional Presenter 1:
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Study Skills and Context: Developing and Adapting Provision

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Summary: Context is vital to study skills provision, because it must be dealt with by providers of study skills support. Adapting provision effectively to context is important to provide students with parity of opportunity in terms of study skills AND to facilitate their transition to university. Therefore clarifying and responding to context in study skills provision is likely to be directly connected to first-year retention.

This session will report on research done at the University of Teesside on study skills provision in context. As many students attending Teesside are first-generation, orientation in the complex sense is vitally important in enabling them to identify themselves as belonging in higher education. Study skills provision is significantly implicated in orientation. All of the undergraduate programmes at Teesside offer some study skills support as part of the University's commitment to opportunity in a learning environment. But a key issue for the continuing development of this provision is to understand how study skills teaching works in a variety of undergraduate contexts. I am in the process of completing a sabbatical project, which was designed to evaluate the importance of context to provision. While this research project developed to enhance the learning opportunities for students at Teesside, it raises several issues for a broader examination of the ways in which key skills training is adapted, or could be adapted, to context in other HE settings.

The session will include a report on the methods used in the project, the specific findings, and their implication for thinking about the provision of study skills support across the HE sector.

Demographic and Performance Characteristics of Online Learners

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Summary: The topics to be presented will include: demographic profiles of online and traditionally enrolled students, academic performance characteristics of online and traditionally enrolled students, and other research concerned with online learners. The material will be presented with the use of data tables, charts, and graphs. Participants will gain an understanding of the differences and similarities between and among online learners and traditional learners. Participants will be exposed to a simple model of examining online learning outcomes that they can implement at their institution. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions and to share outcomes and observations related to their experience with online learning.

Student Speech Versus Academic Discourse: Competing Classroom > Communication Codes

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Summary:

A vital if sometimes overlooked factor in first encounters between students and faculty is the nature of the language of instruction. The level of incomprehension, sometimes mutual, may be overlooked in the name of etiquette but remains a formidable impediment to learning. Student speech and academic discourse differ dramatically, not only as oral versus written forms, but also in their assumptions and goals, as the linguistic disciplines of speech act theory and pragmatics can illuminate. However, demystifying academic prose should not be the sole responsibility of English or language departments, nor should the mysteries of academic communication be addressed ad hoc in uncertain and unsystematic ways. A sure symptom of failure to communicate is when students memorize undigested clumps of academic prose without making the vocabulary, syntactical patterns, and level of formality their own. A look forward at what to expect in the language(s) of future courses in different academic disciplines can help students avoid fits and starts as they master their own versions of academic prose.

We will discuss practical means by which first-year programs can call attention to this distinction between student speech and academic discourse. Such means include heightening awareness of speech patterns and showing how academic prose changes oral communication by compacting language (eliminating the redundancies of speech) and by establishing a discipline-specific and primarily written vocabulary for academic discourse. Students can also be led to understand that some key syntactical and rhetorical elements of serious writing almost never appear in speech, but are nevertheless integral to how professional writers in a discipline communicate clearly. A wide sampling of the varying discourse models in different academic departments allows students to go beyond simplistic notions of grammatical "correctness" to understand that each discipline has its own linguistic standards.

Additional Presenter 1:

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Using Online Placement to Increase Retention

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Summary: Background information on Malaspina University-College will be provided, as well as the general demographic breakdown of the school. The history of its use of ACCUPLACER will be presented, along with the features of ACCUPLACER that are used. Data at Malaspina as well as other comparable schools will be presented that demonstrate placement accuracy and reliability studies. Reporting features that allow a campus to perform their own performance tracking studies will be shown, as well as the statistical services provided by the College Board.

Additional Presenter 1:

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The College Board

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Additional Presenter 2:

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From Deposit to December-A Comprehensive Orientation Program For First-Year Students

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Summary: The session will review the three major components of Bentley College's program for first-year students. The components are a summer Orientation program, a "First Week" program that brings first-year students back to campus a week before returning students, and a one credit First-Year Seminar course required for all first-year students. The session will look at the history of how these programs were developed and what has been the measurable impact on the retention of students and the quality of their first-year experience. The session will also give ideas on how a collaborative relationship between academic and student affairs divisions can enhance the ability to offer these programs. Copies of program schedules, syllabi and other appropriate material will also be made available to participants.

Additional Presenter 1:
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The Academic and Career Connection

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Summary: The History: Recent surveys have shown that students at Carleton are concerned from their first year about future job possibilities. The survey results also indicated that students expect the university (especially their professors) to connect their studies with career paths. Unfortunately many students are unaware of the services available on campus to help them develop the knowledge and confidence that will ultimately lead to a successful job search. And, most professors are also unaware of these services. A proactive approach that started four years ago resulted in a partnership between Career Services and First-Year Seminar professors. With the assistance of Career Services staff, the professors designed research and writing assignments around a visit to Career Services. Students were asked to research potential careers and then either write their findings on their web pages, in journals or essays, do oral presentations, or have class discussions. They would also sent the task of matching skills and competencies they were learning in their classes with skills valued by employers. As a result of the strong positive responses from students and professors, this program has grown from the original 12 classes to almost 40. The university is now considering making it a part of the First-Year Seminar.

In outlining the history, this presentation will also cover early resistance from faculty. Recommendations will be given on how to build alliances with and overcome resistance from faculty. The presentation will include the benefits of the program for professors and for students.

The participants in this session will have an opportunity to see sample class assignments and to discuss the components of a typical 90-minute class visit to make it easy for them to implement such a program.

Aiding the Transition from the Community College to the Four Year Institution

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Summary: Many transfer students from feeder community colleges were having difficulty with their transition to the university and in some cases, dropping out after one semester. Efforts by the university to engage students into a voluntary, transfer-transition elective course during the first semester were not successful since many of the students had a new student transition course at the community college. Community college and the university staff, together sharing concerns over the transition of the transfer students, created a two-part transfer transition series. Part I, taught together by university advisors and community college counselors at the community college, focused on the application process, transcript audits, policy and financial differences between institutions, academic program requirements and career goals. Part II, taught at the university by its staff, addresses common issues for transfer students, academic skill support for specific courses and majors, academic policies and procedures, career preparation for internships, campus resources, and personal interest groups. While both courses are encouraged, they may be taken individually.

The results of the endeavor has increased communication between institutions; provided more informed students on expectations, resources, and policies; better prepared students to make the academic transition between programs; and reduced the attrition of transfer students after their first semester at the university.

Additional Presenter 1:
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Appreciation of the Student Perspective And How It Can Inform Best Practice In Orientation Planning

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Summary: It is well known that arrival at a university can be a testing time for new students, as they adjust to their new role and surroundings. This is why the orientation program for new entrants is so important. Orientation addresses the next stage in the student lifecycle and helps forge the link between arrival and on-going, successful study. In order to provide the best orientation possible it is important to understand this transition from the student's perspective.

An online evaluation of the orientation process took place 2 weeks into first term and took the form of a survey questionnaire containing both quantitative and qualitative information. The questionnaire gathered the following information: demographic details; information provision (clarity, tone, timing, usefulness, and timing); experience of the 2002 orientation program of events (quality of organization, quality of speaker(s)/service, comfort of venue, timing of session); and qualitative statements on best and worst experiences of becoming a student.

Descriptive statistics were performed on quantitative data and qualitative data sets were imported into nvivo1 (Qualitative data analysis package) from the questionnaires for analysis.

The aims of the project included gathering new entrants' opinions of their first experiences of dealing with the university and becoming a student, and to gather feedback from first-year students on their experiences of the orientation program one thousand thirty-three students responded, representing a response rate of 17%.

Results showed that students appreciated the efforts made by the orientation program but commented that would like more targeting, clarity, and accessible information. Students said that some of the worst experiences of beginning university were feeling lost and lonely and equally some of the best experiences were meeting new people and the social life.

Conducting an orientation evaluation allows access to valuable management information which allows us to make informed decisions based on the students' perspective and hence offering best orientation possible.

Additional Presenter 1:
Rebecca Lever
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E-mail:

Millennial Students and Motivation: A Tested Approach to This New Wave of Learners

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Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
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Summary: Not provided.

Assessment and Accountability: The Bronx Community College Model

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Summary: A Power Point presentation will be used to describe BCC's goal setting process and the development of the Integrated Planning Model (IPM). The presenter will show how the campus climate was slowly impacted so that faculty and staff now more generally accept assessment and accountability. Problems will be highlighted. The framework for program assessment and the setting of performance indicators will be outlined.

The Director of the Coordinated Freshman Program will describe the various interventions and will show how assessment is built in as part of on-going program activities. CUNY's placement and exit examination system will be presented as one indicator of student success.

A second series of funded interventions, Academic Support Services, and the integration of assessment process will be described.

Detailed data on student satisfaction, retention, faculty input, pass rates will be shown. Results of quantitative and qualitative research will be presented. The "next steps" will be outlined.

The presenter will ask participants to consider the "downside" of assessment and accountability. Where is the "human side?"

Time for questions and discussion will be available.

Additional Presenter 1:
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Academic Advising in the First Year: Faculty, Deans & Courses

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Summary: Wesleyan University is a private, highly selective liberal arts college with 700 first-year students. This presentation, by the Associate Provost, the Dean for First-Year Students, and a faculty member will describe the multi-faceted program we have designed to serve the academic advising needs of first-year students.

One of the biggest challenges to a successful academic advising program is matching the, very disparate expectations of students with those of faculty advisors and administrators. We will begin with some illustrations of this disparity, in the actual voices of these students, faculty, and administrators.

We will then describe the faculty advising system, from both the administrative and the faculty perspectives. We will discuss the role of faculty advisors in the first-year and the process by which each student is personally assigned to a faculty advisor based on the student's choice of first-year courses and preliminary academic interests. The First-Year Initiative Seminar Program forms a crucial link between the advisor, the student, and the curriculum. We will demonstrate the electronic tools we have developed to enhance the advising experience between faculty and students, including our Electronic Portfolio system.

The First-Year Dean will then discuss the role of the Office of the Dean in first-year advising, highlighting the balance between faculty advising and other first-year programs to enhance advising in this critical year. Programs include new student orientation, First-Year Matters, interactions with the First-Year Dean, and a series of written communications to students.

Finally, we will focus on efforts to assess the advising system. Due to its subjective nature, advising presents special assessment challenges. Wesleyan has a high first-year retention rate, so simple retention measures are insufficient to assess the success of advising. Therefore, we use a variety of quantitative and qualitative measures to assess the advising system, and continually adjust the program accordingly.

Additional Presenter 1:
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Additional Presenter 2:
Brian Fay
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Building Camaraderie & Academic Excellence Through Our Freshman Seminar

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Summary: UIC's plan to build camaraderie is integral to departmental changes giving students smaller, more interpersonal class sizes. Brierton explains UIC's action plan: "After we examined EBI student satisfaction data on camaraderie, we totally re-engineered Business Administration 100, our freshman orientation course, to build a stronger sense of community. "

-Smaller sections were offered.

-Academic Advisors are the instructors, so each student is essentially meeting with their advisor once a week during their first semester on campus.

-The Dean welcomes new students during the first week of classes.

-Students meet with their academic advisor twice during this first semester. They also meet with their career advisor, complete a career assessment tool, write a research paper and give a presentation about the career they're thinking about.

-Students meet with all their professors about midway through the semester, who then sign off and tell them how they're doing in the class.

-Assistant Dean goes to each class right after midterms for a reflection exercise about midterms.

-We have created 14 different opportunities for students to interact with faculty and staff during the first 16 weeks. "Building a sense of community and belonging is crucial for retention and graduation rates."

The retention and academic performance figures have increased tremendously since the implementation of these initiatives. Also very encouraging is the fact that 92 percent of the incoming freshmen said that this introductory class provided a smooth transition to the university and the College of Business Administration.

Other initiatives to build academic excellence and camaraderie include:

Dean's Advisory Council

Town Hall Meetings

Open House

And classes structured to encourage closer interactions ...

It all spells "SUCCESS"

at the College of Business Administration at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The FYE Course: A Cornerstone for Assessment Efforts

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Summary: Frostburg State is a comprehensive university enrolling over 5,400 students a year. It enrolls over 1,000 first-year students and has had a required FYE course since 1987. Both full-time faculty and student affairs staff teach the sections.

In fall 2002, the student affairs division designated the FYE course as the cornerstone for its assessment efforts. This designation has led to both greater attention and additional resources invested in the course. The session will describe how increased emphasis on the assessment of the student learning outcomes of the course has provided focus for both students and instructors. Although the course now has a common final exam, instructors still have the opportunity to vary the emphasis that is given to some of the modules of the course.

The FYE course has also incorporated an on-line alcohol education course into its curriculum. Ninety-one (91) percent of first-year students passed this course during the fall semester. While this remains the

most significant use of on-line resources, the session will also describe how various instructors have utilized other on-line resources.

Since its inception, the course has required first-year students to attend co-curricular events on the campus. In fall 2002, the University was much more intentional in identifying these programs and the learning that students should achieve by participating in the programs. The session will discuss how papers in which students reflect on what they learned from such programs can provide a qualitative dimension to assessment.

Identifying special sections of the FYE course for learning communities, for students in certain majors, and for special populations (Honors students, developmental students) has led to increased collaboration between student affairs and academic affairs. The session will describe how such collaboration has strengthened the course and has increased the institutionalization of the course.

Re-Designing Undergraduate Education to Include the Adult Student

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Summary: More students over the age of 25 are attending college than at any other time, with the numbers increasing each year (Bendixen-Noe, 1998). The changing campus culture at today's colleges and universities are igniting a quest for more innovative and flexible delivery modes. Students must feel a sense of belonging and affiliation within the campus culture to remain at their chosen institution (Tinto, 1998). Environmental-shaping properties are integrated into multiple delivery modes to promote student success. When students are able to buy into the campus culture, they become more engaged in the academic process and are influenced by positive factors that boost retention.

Successful programming mandates development and re-positioning of new and existing programs broad enough to positively impact the overall perception of the environment. Changes are initiated at the college level as opposed to the individual level. College counselors, administrative staff and faculty create an integrated, reciprocal system, thereby challenging, creative and comprehensive interventions designed for the adult learner. Practical, everyday services run parallel to academic pedagogy as measured by student satisfaction indicators. Fundamental to this satisfaction are: Financial Aid, Academic Advising, Counseling, Day Care or referrals, Tutorial Service, Developmental and Communication Classes, Learning Disability Services, Adult Re-entry Centers and Departmental Front-end Efforts. Interventions in these areas make it increasingly possible for the adult learner to succeed.

This session will discuss successful outreach framework models that will offer institutions alternatives in customizing efforts to their particular campus. Creativity, Connectivity and Catalysis are key imperatives at the core of educational philosophy. These areas specifically enable the development of success strategies for the first-year student. Retention results on first-year students, both traditional and nontraditional, will give session attendees a peripheral to set cornerstones at individual campuses.

Additional Presenter 1:
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Hybrid Instruction - Blending Classroom and Face-to-Face Instruction with IT

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Summary: College freshmen, even good students, often lack strategies for learning college-level material. Lack of time and resources may pose difficulties for FYE professionals in integrating academic success strategies. I will demonstrate how classroom instruction or face-to-face academic support can be blended with asynchronous, self-paced interactive learning strategies modules on CD-ROM to improve learning, increase access and reduce costs.

A new generation of CD-ROM, using both video and text, teaches eight learning strategies, developed by a developmental educator and an in-house digital video specialist. I will demonstrate how this new technology enhances learning over the use of video alone. Learning styles are accommodated as students simultaneously view a video lecture and a text summary. Memory is strengthened through a printable review sheet. Incorporating interactive on-line lessons enhances comprehension and transfer.

By substituting modules for some classroom instruction, the educator can focus on group and application activities. In a resource room, the educator can direct the student to the areas critical to his/her development. Hybrid classes, or blended instruction, maximize the advantages of on-line and classroom learning and are cost and time efficient after the initial investment.

The Pew Grant Program on Course Design finds that results for hybrid courses are better than those for traditional face-to-face or totally online courses. Using the LASSI, we found that educational outcomes for students in our one-credit hybrid class are similar to, or better than, those for students in the traditional three-credit class.

Handouts will include: syllabi demonstrating how IT is blended with classroom instruction for a general learning strategies class and for a class for probationary students; an inventory to distinguish content best suited to E-learning or classroom learning and information on hybrid or blended instruction.

Creating Effective College Study Habits With The AcademiKit Study Organizer

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Summary: This presentation will stress that to be successful, students need to become independent and efficient learners by using study strategies that promote organization and consistency. They need to implement three important study steps: construction, concentration, and closure.

Successful students construct a framework that guides their studying, concentrate on each element of the study process, and create closure by evaluating their progress. The presenters will show how the AcademiKit Study Organizer addresses these three steps. First, it helps students construct a framework for effective studying by providing the essential organizational tools and techniques. Second, it helps students concentrate on the study process as they consistently use these techniques in all of their college classes. Finally, all of the materials in the AcademiKit include features that aid students in assessing their own progress and bringing closure to the study process. With each of these steps, participants will learn how to use the AcademiKit and its supplementary educational materials to enhance their students' college success.

Additional Presenter 1:

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Discussion Experiences for Defining and Measuring the Freshmen Experience

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Summary: Approximately two years ago, I was approached by the General Education Director of the University who was in charge of the revamped Freshman Learning Community program. Our program was designed around a three-course package with a 25-member cohort that consisted of incoming freshmen. The cohort program is a one-semester program. It has as its basic goals: + a look at the philosophy and history of higher education and its relationship to personal development and the significance of the teaching and learning process, - active learning experience toward the improvement of academic skills, the formation and development of the student's responsibility for their education, and enhancing information and computer literacy, and - demonstration of knowledge acquisition, organization, and assimilation, primarily as they relate to the skills and materials covered in the seminar and the focused accompanying courses in the package. As characterized by Jacobson and Licklider collaborative learning and learning communities with active learning components help students adjust to their new environment, and hopefully, have an enhanced learning experience and retention rate.

This is a preliminary expedition into a very much ongoing paper. It, as the title suggests, based on a single observation, from which the author is just recovering. When I received notice of a conference that was focused on the freshmen experience, I felt it was very important for me to participate and discuss my experience with others whose experiences are more substantial than my own, with the ultimate purpose that I may shape and reshape my experiences for the future. The goal of this preliminary work is to develop a sense of where the current program is relative to the mainstream freshmen experience, to disclose some of the results for which there is evidence, and to, primarily suggest expansion and recalibration of the Business 21 Seminar for Freshmen as originally presented. Beyond that is the goal to share this experience and to draw upon the experiences of others in similar or more advanced stages of such program development.

In April 2000, the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (NRC) undertook the fifth in its series of national surveys of first-year seminar institutions, respondents reported most frequently that the three primary course objectives, in their opinion, for course design were: (1.) Develop essential academic skills, (2.) Ease the transition and adjustment of students to the college environment, and (3.) Provide an orientation to campus resources and facilities. The respondents were asked, also, to identify what they thought were the five most important topics to be covered in the courses: (1.) Academic skills (2.) Time management, (3.) Personal development/self-awareness, (4.) Transition to college, and (5.) Career exploration.

As one might expect, the results that can be gleaned from a sample of one are not overwhelming. They are anecdotal with some minimal quantitative flavors and mostly useful for expansion of the study and for program development and recalibration.

Generally the program is consistent with the NRC norms and there is some evidence of the success of the program. There is room for improvement, and the issues that must be dealt with can be better resolved with measurement across time and with input from others as regards to their personal experiences and research.

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Spirituality And Higher Education: Sustaining Authenticity, Wholeness, And Self-renewal

Summary: None.

Additional Presenter 1:

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A Student Perspective on the First-Year Experience

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Summary: Penn State Erie's data on first-year retention show that failure to engage in college life, especially among commuters who remain in a family environment, is a major predictor of retention failure during the first year. Our project explored the first-hand experiences of fourteen first-year students in a videographic format. We focused on issues surrounding the high school to college transition as these relate to academic progress, social maturity, part-time employment, extracurricular activity involvement and residence and residence hall life. The film is a vehicle for communicating the student perspective during first-year orientation and seminar programs not only at PSU but in other settings as well. Peer reports of the first-year experience should have a powerful impact and improve the ability to communicate transitional issues concerning college life to incoming students.

Six males and eight females were selected from enrollees in the first-year seminars at PSU-Erie. The students include individuals of various racial and ethnic backgrounds, commuters and on-campus residents and those decided and undecided about a major field. Each student was filmed originally in an on-camera interview after six weeks at PSU-Erie. Students were queried about their early college life experiences, their expectations regarding its first year, academic, social and activity concerns and plans. Additional filming took place the week before the fall semester 2002 final exams, the week before the 2003 spring semester break, and the week before the spring 2003 final exams. Several on- and off-campus settings and filming formats were used to provide a portrait of each student as a unique individual. Six hours will be edited into a 20-30 minute final version with completion by May, 2003. PSU-Erie's communications program has state-of-the-art digital filming and editing equipment and a faculty member with over twenty years experience in television and video production. The film is of the highest professional quality.

In One Door and Out the Other: Confronting Student Dropout Around the Globe

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Summary: None.

