

INTRODUCTION

This annotated bibliography is about research, and we define the term *research* broadly to include both quantitative and qualitative studies as well as summative and reflective essays on practice. As such, this annotated bibliography is also about practice. Ideally, it is about research and practice at the same time; for we, the editors of this publication, believe that when functioning optimally, research informs practice and practice informs research. To take things a step further, we do not believe in a bifurcation of research and practice. Rather, we believe in their flexible hybridity, that the liminal space where research and practice intersect is the place where innovation and improvement occur. This monograph exists to inform and inspire first-year experience practitioners and scholars who operate in that liminal space.

Our primary goal for this publication is to communicate information to our readers about the sources that we feel are the major contributions to the body of scholarship on the first-year experience published since 2000—the year in which the last edition of this monograph was produced. But we also have higher-order applications in mind. We ask our readers to take into account that our definition of the term communicate does not imply passive listening, or reading, on their part. Rather, it calls for action.

Drawing on the philosophy of John Dewey as shared in his seminal work on aesthetics, *Art as Experience*, we feel that “communication is the process of creating participation” (1934, p. 248)—active participation. Consequently, we hope that this monograph will provide information that can be synthesized and applied to enhance the first-year experience, thereby continuing the important work that has been a major focus of higher education particularly during the last three to four decades. In essence, our broad purpose for writing this work is to help its readers apply the lessons of the past to the present, so that they can positively shape the future.

This work is structured around a five-part framework. Each of the five parts is further divided into subsections to allow closer and, thus, richer examination. We hope that configuring the current edition of the monograph in this way will provide the reader with a logical structure for accessing and applying its content. And we hope that you will be able to use the information as we present it to facilitate change in practices and approaches for scholarly research and assessment associated with the first year of college.

Part I of this monograph, titled “The First-Year Student,” includes annotations that provide insight into the behavior, characteristics, and many ways of categorizing our newest students. The section is composed of two subsections: (a) one focused on the needs of and developmental issues faced by first-year students and (b) the other addressing the rich diversity (i.e., race, gender, sexual orientation, disability status) associated with today’s first-year students and what this diversity means to student learning and success.

Part II includes annotations for sources that describe methods institutions use to create successful transition experiences for their first-year students. The first subsection highlights sources that deal with precollege programs and experiences, including articles addressing recruitment and admission of first-year students. These sources are included in keeping with the belief that the manner in which an institution recruits its students can directly impact later success. The annotations found in the second subsection focus on orientation programming for both students and parents.

Part III, titled “Promoting First-Year Student Success,” examines curricular and cocurricular and support-related components of the college experience intended to enhance student learning and

success during the first year of college. It does so through five subsections, each of which examines a different approach to achieving first-year student success. These subsections include (a) Curricular Interventions Comprising the First-Year Experience, (b) Support Services and Programs, (c) Involvement in Campus Life and Living Environments, (d) Technology, and (e) Agents of Socialization and Support in the First Year.

Part IV covers college access and includes a collection of sources on the first-year experience at two-year colleges. It also references research associated with the first year at various types of four-year colleges and universities, including tribal colleges, research universities, and historically Black colleges and universities.

Part V focuses on content that explicitly addresses transformation of the first-year experience and related student and institutional transformations. Here, we include five subsections, each looking at a different aspect of institutional and/or student transformations that occur as a result of attention paid to the first-year experience. These subsections include (a) Critical Student Competencies and Attitudes in the First Year of College, (b) Promising Institutional Practices in the First-Year Experience, (c) Retention and Success of First-Year Students, (d) Reports with Implications for the First-Year Experience, and (e) Assessment and Evaluation.

We begin each part of this monograph with an introductory overview. These overviews, respectively and collectively, provide answers to four key questions: (a) How does the material in this section update material found in the previous edition of the publication? (b) When compared to the last edition of this publication, what subsections and/or headings have we altered or amalgamated for reasons of presentation and/or interpretation? (c) What topical headings or subsections have we added? (d) What is missing—either by design or because major research has not been conducted in this area since 2000? One additional note—on occasion, we repeat some of the annotations. This is done because a few of the sources we reviewed and included in this publication fit into more than one category. Thus, the complete annotation of some sources will appear in more than one section.

Few if any publications come to fruition without the support and contributions of an intricate web of persons—a web that extends well beyond those individuals listed on the cover. This monograph is no exception. Because of this, we, the editors, wish to acknowledge and thank our extensive network of supporters.

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While we share with and owe our successes to the aforementioned persons, we take full responsibility for any errors of interpretation or sins of omission.

