Celebrating the END of 1st Year:
Roundtable discussion
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Agenda

- **Introduction (Topic, Facilitator)**
- **Participants & Goals** (Vast majority of participants don’t currently do something like this and would like to consider it)
- **Guided Discussion**
  - Why/why not have a Celebration at the END of 1st year?
  - What is done? What models are out there?
  - When can it be done?
  - Who is it for? Who participates? Student voice?
  - Assessment?
  - Lessons, ideas to share?
- **Concluding remarks**
Orientation, FYE Seminars etc:
Beginning well and getting connected
How do students celebrate the end of their first year?

For common answers, simply search www.youtube.com using a phrase like, “celebrating the end of freshman year”
Why mark the END of First Year?

- Attrition between 1st and 2nd year (~30%)
- Retention initiative?
- Ritual as an aid to the continuing transition process
- Students are celebrating already (usually with alcohol)
- Potential to create a powerful, positive alternative
- Opportunity to show that students matter
- Opportunity to celebrate our values
- Opportunity to add further community-building
- Does it make equal sense at more/less selective institutions?
- Other ideas?
- Why NOT do it? Is it worth investment?
Notes on support and mattering
(Rayle & Chung, 2008)

- The concept of ‘mattering’
- College friends’ social support → feeling they matter
- Feeling they matter to the college → Reduced academic stress levels
What/How to Celebrate the END of 1st year?

- Model 1: No intentional Celebration
- Model 2: A Recognition Event each May (KPU Model): “The Celebration of Excellence”
  - Academic Achievement Awards (the top student in each program area)
  - Student Leadership Awards (we want to celebrate both academic and service/leadership values)
  - (Previously: Faculty Teaching Excellence Awards…Concerns from Dean(s) led to curtailing this. Recommendation to ensure appropriate selectivity)
  - (Nothing linked to “all students” or “celebrating survival”)
- Other ideas & models? (Informal party/food for students)
Some ritual-making principles (Young, 1999)

- Making connections
- Clarifying values
- Symbols of significance

- How can we connect?
- What values do we celebrate?
- Ideas for symbolism?
When?

Is there a best time to celebrate?

- Before classes officially end? (the most students around?)
- Between classes & exams?
- During exams?
- At the end of exams?
- A few weeks into Summer Semester? (If you need final grades from Spring for awards)
- Connected to Convocation?
- Connected to next Fall Orientation?
- Connecting to the transition into 2nd Year development
- Other?
Who is involved or targeted?

- Top academic performers?
- Parents/family?
- Academic survivors? (large-scale?)
- Student leaders?
- Faculty?
- Deans

Other Ideas:
- 1st Year Advocacy Award(s)
- First Year “Summit” – showcasing best work of the students
- Connect the event to student leadership opportunities for 2nd year
Involving students and existing groups: "Design and Participation: Ideas?"
Could the design include further connectivity?
Integrating 1st Year students with…

Upper year students?
Peer mentors?
Student leaders?
Faculty?
One “model” student speaker?
Other?
Appropriate Assessment?

- Can we assess this? (Do we assess Convocation?)
- What would appropriate measures & methods include?
- Participation numbers?
- Feedback comments from participants?
- Retention data? *Beware of this method as a sole administrative evaluation measure, depending on your context!*
- Other ideas? (Suggestion: As usual, plan your assessment measures/methods based on your goals ahead of time)
Other Lessons you can share?
Trials, successes, failures...
Onward: Concluding remarks
Thank you for your participation!
Resources


