



Aggregated Content Approach to Course Development

We live in a rapidly changing world where information and knowledge are being created and shared at an ever-increasing rate. Futurist Ray Kurzweil has actually predicted that, in the near future, the quantity of available knowledge will double every 12 hours (Wolf, 2008)! One of the reasons for this phenomenal rate of growth is the corresponding and pervasive development of digital technologies (e.g., digital learning tools, search engines, open source documents, apps, MOOCs). It is this factor that will greatly impact the way higher education defines and manages the parameters of knowledge.

The manner in which individual instructors define knowledge is central to the process of effective course design (e.g., the types and quantity of information that are selectively included or excluded from the content, the sources of information that are modeled and students are exposed to, methodologies used for determining the veracity of information). Where in the past, faculty may have focused their course design efforts on a textbook, a set of PowerPoint slides, and a collection of articles from the professional literature, they must now broaden their perspectives and consider the expansive and seemingly boundless world of the Internet, where vast storehouses of knowledge and information are quite literally at their students' fingertips.

Given a set of learning outcomes for a designated course, instructors often first turn their attention to the selection of a textbook. This decision is generally based upon a number of key factors, including readability, scope, chapter organization, and supplementary resources (Durwin & Sherman, 2008). The expectation in this process is that a chosen textbook provides adequate coverage for the identified topics, concepts, skills, and knowledge faculty wish their students to master.

Textbook publishers have recently become very inventive in designing a variety of digital tools (e.g., test question banks, videos, interactive digital tools, PowerPoint slides, web-based resources) that can be used to supplement the basic textbook. A well-written textbook provides a basic framework for conversations and exploration on the topic of choice. That said, it is highly unlikely a single textbook, in the 21st century, even with all of the bundled bells and whistles, can singlehandedly capture an entire topic with all of the best available information. Textbooks, even at the time of publication, have been in development for two years or more and, therefore, may already have diminishing currency. Given the inherent limitations of a textbook, another factor to consider in the selection process is how the text can be used as a starting point for the creation of a collection of resources to assist students in their learning.

“How absurd that our students tuck their cell phones, BlackBerrys, iPads, and iPods into their backpacks when they enter a classroom and pull out a tattered textbook.”

— Eli L. Broad,
American philanthropist and entrepreneur

An Aggregated Approach

Aggregation involves the bringing together of a diverse collection of content and resources in such a way that they create a unified whole. Although the textbook will probably continue to be a central feature in course design, faculty should also give thought to aggregating that book with other digital assets that will supplement and enrich the basic content. For example, instructors might consider the following tools to assist in the aggregation process:

- **Textbook evaluation**—The degree to which the chosen textbook provides desired levels of emphasis for the course topics and content articulated in the learning outcomes needs to be assessed. This initial examination provides guidance in identifying topics and content that may need additional coverage or that might be better examined by using alternative resources.
- **Video supplements**—There are a variety of free online searchable databases that provide rich, vibrant resources that can be used inside (i.e., as part of presentations) or outside (i.e., as assigned content students can watch on their own) the classroom. Examples include
 - TED (<http://www.ted.com/>),
 - YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/>),
 - Educator.com (<http://www.educator.com/>), and
 - Khan Academy (<https://www.khanacademy.org/>).
- **Electronic database articles**—University libraries are rapidly transitioning to an emphasis on digital resources that supplement traditional, hard-copy documentation. Part of this transition is the availability of searchable online databases that provide access to digital versions of current academic publications. Links to selected articles can be easily assembled into a collection of assigned readings for students. This process assures that students are being exposed to the best and most current thinking in the discipline.
- **Open educational resources (OER)**—Defined as “high-quality, openly licensed, online educational materials that offer an extraordinary opportunity for people everywhere to share, use, and reuse knowledge” (The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, n.d., para. 1), these resources include documents, videos, simulations, activities and labs, case studies, lecture notes, and assessment strategies. Most of the web-based repositories provide searchable databases that add efficiency to the process of locating resources. Examples include
 - Open Educational Resources (<https://www.oercommons.org/>),
 - Merlot II (<http://www.merlot.org/merlot/index.htm>), and
 - The Open University on iTunesU (<http://www.open.edu/itunes/>).

By thoughtfully assembling a variety of instructional resources, instructors can deepen their students’ engagement with chosen content and widen the breadth of learning experiences students encounter in their courses. **Consider the advantages in learning that can be realized through intentional aggregation!**

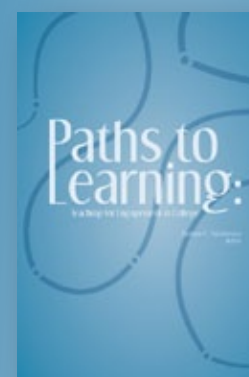
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Paths to Learning:

Teaching for Engagement in College

Barbara F. Tobolowsky
Editor



Chapter 1: Paths to Learning: An Introduction
Barbara F. Tobolowsky

Chapter 2: Research on Successful Learning Practices
Jillian Kinzie

Chapter 3: Historical Overview of Learning Theories.
James E. Groccia, Stacey C. Nickson, Chenzi Wang, and Heather Hardin

Chapter 4: Critical Pedagogy and the Struggle for Social Change
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Chapter 5: Embracing Contemplative Pedagogy in a Culturally Diverse Classroom
Laura I. Rendón and Vijay Kanagala

Chapter 6: Strengths-Oriented Teaching: Pathways to Engaged Learning
Laurie A. Schreiner

Chapter 7: Interactive Group Learning
James E. Groccia, Emad A. Ismail, and S. Raj Chaudhury

Chapter 8: Engaging Students in Online Environments
Amy Collier

Chapter 9: Assessment of Classroom Learning
Wendy G. Troxel

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What's Happening at The National Resource Center

Conferences and Continuing Education

Conferences and Institutes

34th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience

February 7-10, 2015
Dallas, Texas

The Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience provides a forum for higher education professionals to share experiences, concerns, and accomplishments related to supporting student learning, development, and success in the first college year. The early registration deadline is **January 14, 2015**. Visit www.sc.edu/fye/annual for more information.

Save the Dates

Institute of Sophomore Student Success

April 17-19, 2015
University of South Carolina

Institute on Developing and Sustaining First-Year Seminars

July 24-26, 2015
Atlanta, Georgia

22nd National Conference on Students in Transition

October 17-19, 2015
Baltimore, Maryland

Institute on First-Year Success in the Community College

November 6-8, 2015
Columbia, South Carolina

Online Courses

The National Resource Center offers online courses on topics of interest in higher education. The courses provide participants the same content and opportunities for interaction with peers and the instructor as traditional (i.e., classroom-based) learning environments while taking advantage of pedagogy and teaching techniques that are not possible or common in those settings. The courses use tools such as e-mail, threaded discussions or forums, listservs, and blogs. Enrollment is limited to 40 participants. Participants will earn 1.5 continuing education units for each course. Spring topics include assessing the first college year (intermediate level) and student athletes in transition. Visit <http://www.sc.edu/fye/events> for more information.

Publications of Interest

Paths to Learning: Teaching for Engagement in College

Barbara F. Tobolowsky, Editor

Higher education institutions are more diverse than ever before, as are the students they serve. Because of this great diversity, there is no silver bullet—one approach—that will work for teaching all students in all circumstances. This book offers a succinct description of

RESOURCES ON ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING



A Faculty and Staff Guide to Creating Learning Outcomes

Jimmie Gahagan, John Dingfelder,
and Katharine Pei

*Produced in association with the
Office of Student Engagement,
University of South Carolina*

ISBN 978-1-889271-67-5
(2010). 30 pg. **\$3.00**



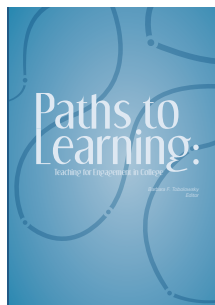
The First-Year Seminar: Designing, Implementing, and Assessing Courses to Support Student Learning and Success

Volume V: Assessing the First-Year
Seminar

Daniel B. Friedman

ISBN 978-1-889271-81-3.
(2012). 112 pages. **\$25**

WWW.NRCPUBS.COM



several pedagogical paths available to faculty that can actively engage all students. In addition to providing the most recent information on learning and assessment, individual chapters tackle different approaches, including critical pedagogy, contemplative pedagogy, strengths-based teaching, and cooperative/collaborative learning. Balancing theory and practice, *Paths to Learning* is a valuable overview of engaging pedagogies for educators seeking to sharpen their teaching skills and help students become more confident and successful learners. ISBN/ISSN 978-1-889271-92-7. 177 pages. **\$30**. To learn more or place an order, visit our

online store at <http://www.nrcpubs.com>.



Academic Advising in the First Year of College: A Guide for Families
Virginia N. Gordon, Julie Levinson, and Tim Kirkner

A joint publication with NACADA, The Global Community for Academic Advising

As the focus on college completion and gainful employment intensifies, the stakes for students entering higher education and the institutions that serve them have never been higher. Yet, new students and their families may have little understanding of the value of an educational plan

for helping them stay on track and achieve their goals. They may have even less knowledge about how to create one. This brief guide focuses on the role of academic advisors in helping students chart a course for success and suggests how parents and family members can be partners in the journey. A glossary of key terms and list of frequently asked questions help demystify the college experience and highlight the many purposes of the academic advising relationship. *Academic Advising in the First Year of College* is a particularly useful resource for the families of first-generation college students and ideal for distribution at recruitment events, orientation, or parent and family programs. ISBN 978-1-889271-94-1. 30 pages. \$3 (1-99 copies); \$2 (bulk, minimum 100 copies). To learn more about this guide or other guides for the families of new students, visit our online store at <http://www.nrcpubs.com>.

National Resource Center Exhibits and Presentations

Like many of you, the staff of the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition is actively involved in the conference circuit. We are pleased to share the following upcoming opportunities to hear about the results of research studies conducted by the Center, learn about best practices, and meet National Resource Center staff members.

National Research and Trends on Curricular and Cocurricular Structures Supporting the Success of Second-Year College Students.

Concurrent session by Jennifer R. Keup, National Resource Center Director, at the 2015 Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Annual Conference, 4:30-5:00 pm; Thursday, January 22, 2015 ; The Marriott Marquis, Washington, DC.

Leveraging First- and Second-Year Transition Programs to Improve Transfer.

Concurrent session by Dallin George Young, National Resource Center Assistant Director for Research, Grants, and Assessment, at the 13th Annual Conference of the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students, February 4-6, 2015; Grand Hyatt Buckhead, Atlanta, GA.



Institute on SOPHOMORE STUDENT SUCCESS

April 17-19, 2015

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

The second college year is a key transition point in student success as students concentrate on their life purpose, their major area of focus, and their progress toward degree completion.

The challenges facing sophomores are unique and important. Institutions must better understand the second college year, and design intentional approaches to help sophomores succeed. The Institute on Sophomore Student Success will examine trends and practices connected to building a comprehensive framework to ensure the success of sophomore students.



www.sc.edu/fye/

An Evidence-Based Discussion of Integrating First-Year and Second-Year Transition Programs. Concurrent session by Dallin George Young, National Resource Center Assistant Director for Research, Grants, and Assessment, and Jennifer R. Keup, Director, at the 2015 ACPA Annual Convention, March 5-8, 2015; Tampa, FL.

Telling the “Story” of Common Reading Programs Using National Data. Concurrent session by Jennifer R. Keup, National Resource Center Director, and Dallin George Young, Assistant Director for Research, Grants, and Assessment, at the 2015 ACPA Annual Convention, March 5-8, 2015; Tampa, FL.

Research

Research Grant Competition

The National Resource Center and ACPA College Student Educators International’s Commission on Admission, Orientation and First Year Experience (AOFYE) invite applicants for their 2014 Research Grant Competition. The joint \$500 grant will be awarded to the application that promotes original, descriptive, or evaluative research; philosophical studies; or institutional assessment or evaluation on issues surrounding admissions, orientation, and/or the first-year experience. Information and selection criteria may be found at <http://www.acpa.nche.edu/aofye-research-grant-guidelines>. Deadline for application is December 1, 2014.

Awards

Inaugural Institutional Excellence in Students in Transition Award

The National Resource Center has launched a new award recognizing Institutional Excellence for Students in Transition. The award will be presented annually to institutions that have designed and implemented outstanding collaborative initiatives enhancing significant transitions during the undergraduate experience. Award recipients will have demonstrated the effectiveness of the initiative in supporting student success, learning, and development at a variety of transition points beyond the first college year and in responding to unique institutional needs. We are proud to announce this year’s award recipients:

Arizona State University

The Guided Pathways to Success (GPS) program targets Arizona community college students who aspire to transfer to and complete a bachelor’s degree at Arizona State University (ASU). ASU has signed agreements with every public community college in the State of Arizona to “create a culture of transfer.” Over the course of five years, the institution has implemented significant process improvements, developed innovative tools, and improved communication to students, parents, advisors, faculty, and others who support students wishing to transfer.

Governors State University

The Dual Degree Program (DDP) supports the college completion agenda through partnerships between Governors State University and 17 Chicago-land community colleges. In collaboration with community college partners, the institution provides full-time community college students with an excellent pathway to earn quality and affordable

E-Source Submission Guidelines

For complete guidelines and issue dates, see tech.sa.sc.edu/fye/esource/web/submission.php.

Audience: *E-Source* readers include academic and student affairs administrators and faculty from a variety of fields interested in student transitions. All types of institutions are represented in the readership.

Style: Articles, tables, figures, and references should adhere to APA (American Psychological Association) style.

E-Source does not publish endorsements of products for sale.

Format: Submissions should be sent via e-mail as a Microsoft Word attachment.

Length: Original feature-length articles should be 750-1,200 words. Annotations of new resources should be no more than 500 words. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for length. Photographs are welcome.

Please address all questions and submissions to:

Periodicals Editor

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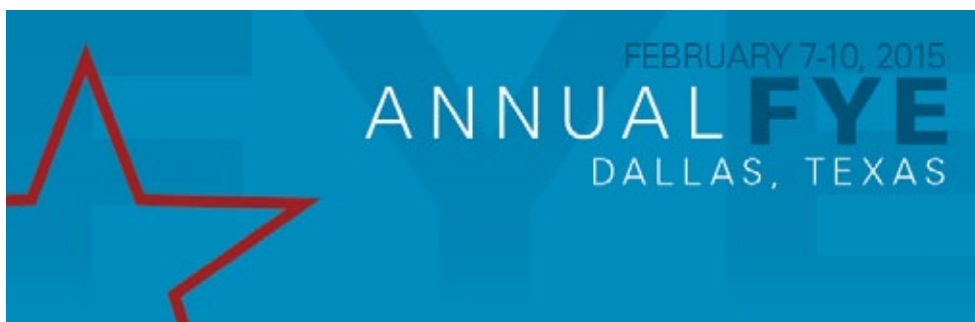


Looking for new teaching strategies or fresh ideas for first-year seminars? *E-Source*, the National Resource Center’s online newsletter for college transitions, offers a wealth of information. *E-Source* also is accepting submissions for the spring 2015 issue. To view the archives, review submission guidelines, and receive content alerts for new issues, please go to www.sc.edu/fye/esource

bachelor's degrees. The DDP philosophy supports completion through the provision of proactive advising, peer mentors, policies that promote completion, and financial incentives.

University of North Carolina, Wilmington

The University College (UC) Students in Transition (SiT) Program provides academic advising, courses, and programs that support students at various points of transition into majors (e.g., incoming transfer students who have not yet met certain prerequisites and current students changing majors) as well as transfer and military students as they transition into the institution. The SiT Program provides structured, proactive, and dedicated support to transfer students during their transition to the University, as well as into their majors.



RESOURCES ON THE SENIOR YEAR

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE AND STUDENTS IN TRANSITION
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<p>Writing in the Senior Capstone: Theory & Practice Lea Masiello and Tracy L. Skipper ISBN: 978-1-889271-87-3. 156 pages. \$30.00</p>	<p>The Senior Year: Culminating Experiences and Transitions Mary Stuart Hunter, Jennifer R. Keup, Jillian Kinzie, and Heather Maietta, Editors ISBN 978-1-889271-85-9. 230 pages. \$35.00</p>	<p>2011 National Survey of Senior Capstone Experiences: Institutional-Level Data on the Culminating Experience Ryan D. Padgett & Cindy A. Kilgo ISBN 978-1-889271-86-6. 98 pages. \$20.00</p>
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The Toolbox

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The Toolbox is an online professional development newsletter offering innovative, learner-centered strategies for empowering college students to achieve greater success. The newsletter is published six times a year by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina.

The online subscription is free. To register for newsletter alerts and access back issues, please visit www.sc.edu/fye/toolbox.

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