



## Pecha Kucha: Every Second Counts!

The ability to plan and deliver a concise and attention-getting presentation to an audience on a topic about which you are passionate and well informed is an important, yet challenging, skill set. Commenting on this difficulty, Johnson (2012) noted:

How many times have you witnessed a presentation in which the speaker lulled the audience to sleep with slide after slide of nothing but boring bullet points, or slides so crammed with information you go away suffering from eyestrain and fatigue? What is most ironic is that most people can spot a boring presentation from a mile off, but then turn around and do some of the very things in their own presentations that people find so irritating. (p. 8)

Most faculty (and students) can relate to this experience as both a speaker and audience member. Helping students avoid this situation and become proficient at making effective, engaging presentations is a valuable contribution to their future in virtually any academic discipline or profession. One strategy for enhancing students' skills is the presentation style of Pecha Kucha (pronounced "peh-cha-k'cha"). This unique approach to sharing information, originally created in Japan, consists of a format that allows for only 20 PowerPoint slides and exactly 20 seconds of narration per slide, resulting in a presentation that lasts precisely 6 minutes 40 seconds—leaving little time for boredom!

In a typical PowerPoint scenario, presenters may be limited by the time available for speaking, but often have no restrictions on the number of slides they employ or the quantity of information contained on each of those slides (e.g., excessive number of bullet points). The constraints imposed by the Pecha Kucha format require speakers to continually focus on selecting the most salient points they wish to communicate and the best way of expressing that information.

The planning and rehearsal required to prepare and deliver an effective Pecha Kucha presentation can help students develop discipline in selecting, refining, and delivering their message in a concise and engaging manner. Naish (2010) highlighted several elements to consider when creating an effective Pecha Kucha:

- **Storytelling:** One of the best ways to capture and maintain the attention of an audience and make a message memorable is to wrap it in a story. When all is said and done, stories are what people remember. Students can be reminded to take advantage of this technique to better connect with their audiences.
- **Ice-Breaking:** Great presentations begin by capturing the attention of the audience. Finding bold ways to engage listeners from the start requires the speaker to physically demonstrate his or her energy and passion for the topic at hand. Because of the short and tight format of Pecha Kucha, speakers must move quickly and intentionally to make connections with the audience and clarify the exact nature of the topic that will be discussed.



“Half the world  
is composed  
of people who  
have something  
to say and can't,  
and the other  
half who have  
nothing to say  
and keep on  
saying it.”

— Robert Frost,  
Poet

- **Content Development:** What are the salient points that absolutely must be shared with the audience? What should remain in the presentation and what can be omitted? By asking and answering these questions, Pecha Kucha forces speakers to make difficult, but necessary, decisions as they craft their message into 6 minutes and 40 seconds.

## Make Pecha Kucha a Part of the Class

Below are some steps to consider for integrating a Pecha Kucha assignment into the syllabus.

- Introduce students to the topic by showing them video clips of successful Pecha Kucha presentations. YouTube has several effective tutorials:
  - “How Pecha Kucha Changed My Life” by Eddie Selover at TEDxOrlando, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qM4TXMBGLdY>
  - “Creating a Pecha Kucha Presentation Using PowerPoint” by the College of Charleston, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9zxNTpNMLo>
- Familiarize students with Pecha Kucha Night. This is a common event around the globe where people share any number of interesting (and perhaps less than interesting) topics. A quick Internet or YouTube search can produce excellent examples of well constructed and effective Pecha Kucha, such as
  - “When No Means Maybe and Maybe Means Yes” by Carey Loch, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVYLS0cdeGo>
- For the brave of heart, take the risk of developing and delivering your own Pecha Kucha for your students. The classroom should be a learning experience for everyone present, and this act of courage will not only intimately introduce you to the challenges of Pecha Kucha, but it can be a great inspiration for your students.
- Create and share a rubric that identifies exactly what is expected of students and how their work will be evaluated.
- Make this a special event by providing refreshments, giving awards for exemplary presentations, or making videos of the performances.
- After a topic has been presented in class, have students create a Pecha Kucha to demonstrate what they have learned and re-enforce key concepts. Actively involving students in the learning and teaching process can deepen their engagement with a body of content. As Benjamin Franklin noted, “Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn” (Goodreads, 2015).

A Pecha Kucha assignment can be an effective way of helping students synthesize course content knowledge. By remaining alert to the requirements of 20 slides and 20 seconds, students learn to be concise and well organized in selecting the most salient information and creating presentations. An added bonus is that a Pecha Kucha is great fun!

### REFERENCES

- Goodreads. (2015). *Quotes about learning: Benjamin Franklin*. Retrieved February 5, 2015 from <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/learning>
- Johnson, M. L. (2012). Engaging students through Pecha-Kucha presentations. *Techniques: Connecting Education and Career*, 87(6), 8-9.
- Naish, R. (2010). Building on Pecha Kucha. *e-learning Age*. Retrieved from [http://www.qconcepts.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/05-Naish-feb10\\_LR.pdf](http://www.qconcepts.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/05-Naish-feb10_LR.pdf)



## Online Courses

**April 6 – May 8, 2015**

### Made to Measure: Intermediate Principles of Assessment

Facilitated by: Dallin George Young  
Assistant Director for Research, Grants,  
and Assessment, National Resource  
Center for The First-Year Experience  
and Students in Transition at the  
University of South Carolina

**May 4 – 29, 2015**

### Transitions of the Collegiate Athlete

Facilitated by: Taléa Drummer  
Assistant Athletic Director at Kent State  
University

Register today at:

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FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE® AND STUDENTS IN TRANSITION  
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# What's Happening at The National Resource Center

## Conferences and Continuing Education

### Conferences and Institutes

#### Institute of Sophomore Student Success

April 17-19, 2015

University of South Carolina

Sophomore students have typically been the overlooked “middle-children” in higher education. With increasing awareness of second-year struggles, what resources and support can be provided to stabilize the sophomore year? The Institute on Sophomore Student Success will allow attendees the opportunity to examine trends and practices connected to building a comprehensive and intentional approach to ensure the success of second-year students. Individual sessions are designed to build on one another so that participants leave with a personalized action plan for use on their home campuses. Institute faculty will employ group work, problem solving, case studies, discussion, and other active strategies to engage participants in learning.

#### Save the Dates

#### 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

#### 35th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience

February 20-23, 2016

Orlando, Florida

### 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/oc> for more information.

## 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](http://WWW.NRCPUBS.COM)

## Online Course Offerings

### Made to Measure: Intermediate Principles of Assessment

April 6-May 8, 2015

Facilitated by Dallin George Young, Assistant Director for Research, Grants, and Assessment, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, University of South Carolina

### Transitions of the Collegiate Athlete

May 4-29, 2015

Facilitated by Taléa R. Drummer, Assistant Athletic Director, Kent State University

## Publications

The National Resource Center is seeking an editor for *E-Source for College Transitions*, an online newsletter providing practical strategies for supporting student learning and success throughout college. The editor will have primary responsibility for the development of *E-Source* content, including soliciting, reviewing, and selecting manuscripts for publication. The editor will be appointed for a three-year term and will receive travel support to two national conferences annually. For more information, contact Tracy L. Skipper, Assistant Director for Publications, at (803) 777-6226 or via e-mail at [tlskippe@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:tlskippe@mailbox.sc.edu).

## 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.

### Common Reading Programs: High-Impact Practice and Faculty Development

**Opportunity.** Panel session by Jennifer R. Keup, National Resource Center Director, and Jane E. Hindman, Maria Mercedes Franco, and Susan G. Madera at the 2015 AAC&U Diversity, Learning, and Student Success Spring Network for Academic Renewal Meeting, 2:00-3:00 pm, Friday, March, 27, 2015; San Diego, CA.

**Structuring the Prep Year of College for Student Success.** Keynote address by Jennifer R. Keup, National Resource Center Director, at The First National Conference for the Preparatory Year in Saudi Universities, April 22-23, 2014; University of Dammam; Dammam, Saudi Arabia.

**Eight Hours Toward Excellence: Best Practice for First-Year Seminars.** Workshop by Jennifer R. Keup, National Resource Center Director, at The First National Conference for the Preparatory Year in Saudi Universities, April 22-23, 2015; University of Dammam; Dammam, Saudi Arabia.

**The Translation of Research to Practice for FYE.** Keynote address by Jennifer R. Keup, National Resource Center Director, at the South African National First-Year Experience and Students in Transition Conference; May 19-21, 2015; Gauteng Region, South Africa.

### E-Source Submission Guidelines

For complete guidelines and issue dates, see [tech.sa.sc.edu/fye/esource/web/submission.php](http://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 fall 2015 issue. To view the archives, review submission guidelines, and receive content alerts for new issues, please go to

[www.sc.edu/fye/esource](http://www.sc.edu/fye/esource)



**Measuring the (High) Impact of Peer Leadership: Results from the South African Survey of Peer Leaders.** Plenary address by Dallin George Young, National Resource Center Assistant Director for Research, Grants, and Assessment, at the South African National First-Year Experience and Students in Transition Conference; May 19-21, 2015; Gauteng Region, South Africa.

**Creating Common Intellectual Experiences: Connecting Students to Campus and Learning.** A joint preconference workshop by Mary Stuart Hunter, National Resource Center Executive Director, and Catherine Andersen, University of Baltimore, at the European First-Year Experience Conference; June 15, 2015; Bergen, Norway.

## Research

We are pleased to announce the recipients of the ACPA Commission on Admissions, Orientation, and First-Year Experience (AOFYE)/National Resource Center grant. Sergio Perez and Megan LaFontaine from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and Victoria Svoboda from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse were awarded a \$500 grant to carry out a research project titled, "Affirming Familial Support Systems for Multicultural Students." The project will examine the impact of a calling campaign to the families of first-year students of color. It affirms the importance of parental involvement in student success and suggests such involvement is essential for students of color. Perez, LaFontaine, and Svoboda were recognized during the AOFYE open meeting at the ACPA Annual Convention in Tampa, Florida.

## Awards

### *34th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience Updates*

**Jordan Smith Undergraduate Student Fellowships** (See photo to the right)

Each year, the National Resource Center awards up to five fellowships to undergraduate students, supporting their participation in the Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience. The purpose of the Fellowship Program is to advance the leadership skills and knowledge base of undergraduate students so that they may use what they learn at the conference to enhance and encourage first-year student development on their respective campuses.

**2015 Outstanding First-Year Student Advocates** (See photo to the right)

The National Resource Center and Cengage Learning announced the 10 educators who were selected as the 2015 Outstanding First-Year Student Advocates at the 34th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience in Dallas, Texas. These educators share a common goal of improving the educational experience for entering college students. They have been awarded this distinction for their exceptional work on behalf of first-year students and for the impact their efforts have on the students and culture of their institutions.

## Award Recipients

### Jordan Smith Undergraduate Student Fellowship



Left to right: Dustin Roberts (Graduate Assistant), National Resource Center; Christopher Trautman, Fairleigh Dickinson University; Kendall Valente, Framingham State; Annie Ziga, Northern Illinois University; Emily Woodward, University of South Florida; Donovan Riley, University of California, Merced; Jennifer Keup (Director), National Resource Center

### 2014 Outstanding First-Year Student Advocates



Left to right: Frank Collins, University of New Brunswick; Gregory Budzban, Southern Illinois University Carbondale; Maria Villasenor, California State University, Monterey Bay; Jill Simons, Arkansas State University; Richard Gebauer, Cabrini College; Michele Campagna, Montclair State University; Christy Henry, Wesleyan College; Shannon McCasland, Aims Community College; Vincent J. Kloskowski, III, Saint Joseph's College; Not pictured: Ann Seavey, Gordon College

**Excellence in Teaching First-Year Seminars Award**



This award, sponsored by the McGraw-Hill Education and the National Resource Center, recognizes an instructor who has achieved great success in teaching first-year seminars and inspires student learning, development, and success. This year, the award was presented to Stephanie Foote, Director, Master of Science in First-Year Studies Program, at Kennesaw State University. Foote is a dedicated instructor who draws on her own research and the latest advances in the emergent discipline of First-Year Studies to provide students with the tools necessary for success in the educational environment. She engages students through collaboration and active interdisciplinary inquiry and discourse—a technique that is mirrored in the approach she takes in her research and practice. The resulting pedagogies of this focus have been integrated into the classes she teaches, and many have been adopted by other first-year seminar instructors within the department and at other institutions. Foote has embraced the online course model, as demonstrated by her willingness to adapt and revise to meet the needs of online learners as well as use social media in her classes. Through relentless dedication to research and a solid foundation in active and engaging teaching and learning, Foote has proved to be an educator of excellence.



**22<sup>ND</sup> NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON STUDENTS IN TRANSITION**

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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](http://www.sc.edu/fye/toolbox).

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