eSOURCE FOR COLLEGE TRANSITIONS

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E-SOURCE 5.1

Financial Literacy Initiatives on Today's Campuses: Strategies for Student Success

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As higher education professionals, our careers are devoted to ensuring the academic success of today's college students. Whether faculty members, financial aid administrators, enrollment managers, or student affairs personnel, we play an important role in developing students. Unfortunately, the students we serve may not be receiving critical knowledge in one area vital to their future success, and that area is financial literacy. Recently, the Government Accountability Office reported to Congress on the importance of focusing on financial literacy for all citizens. In addition, the Financial Literacy and Education Summit, held by the Federal Reserve Bank, stressed that the lack of basic financial knowledge in the United States is an alarming trend that could lead to a financial crisis if not addressed (National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators [NASFAA], 2007).

Because of the rising cost of higher education, increasing levels of student loan debt, and the current credit card culture, gaining financial literacy and skills in money management is vital for college students. Current research shows that many students do not choose effective financial strategies when dealing with the complexity of financing their college education (King, 2005). Other research indicates that students who accumulate high levels of debt in college have increased stress levels and lower academic achievement, which could eventually lead to withdrawal from college (Ring, 1997; Susswein, 1995). On the other hand, students with a greater understanding of personal finance and debt management are often able to reduce personal stress and decrease debt levels prior to graduation (Walker, 1996).

Several colleges and universities have implemented successful financial literacy initiatives, which can serve as models for other institutions of higher education wishing to provide knowledge of such practical skills to their students. The financial aid office at Brigham Young University (**http://saas.byu.edu/depts/finAid/**) has implemented the Financial Path to Graduation, which engages students in financial literacy beginning in their first year and offers two for-credit courses on family and personal finances. Students in all majors are encouraged to enroll in one or both courses, which focus on important details of investing, weighing insurance options, buying a home, and other important topics throughout the semester. The financial aid office's web site also houses a series of personalized articles and tips written by individual staff members, in addition to a comprehensive 12-month budget planner available to all students. BYU has reported a 30% decrease in student loan

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CREATING A FINANCIAL PATH TO GRADUATION CONSISTS OF SEVEN STEPS:

STEP 1: CHART YOUR ACADEMIC PLAN

What will my major be? How many credits will I need to graduate? Will I go straight through school, or will I take time off for study abroad, volunteer and humanitarian service, etc.?

STEP 2: ESTIMATE EDUCATIONAL COSTS

How much will tuition be for a year? Book costs? Insurance? How much will it cost me to commute—or will I be living on campus? Are there costs I can eliminate?

STEP 3: ESTIMATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Will I be working? Do I have scholarships? How much can my family help me?

STEP 4: IDENTIFY AND ANALYZE UNMET NEED

What is the difference between my educational costs and my financial resources?

STEP 5: ESTABLISH YOUR MAXIMUM DEBT LIMIT

How much can I borrow and not jeopardize my future with excessive debt?

STEP 6: IDENTIFY THE COSTS OF BORROWING

How much interest will I pay? How much must I earn to pay back my student loans without jeopardizing my future?

STEP 7: MAKE A COMMITMENT AND MONITOR YOUR PROGRESS

Am I meeting my academic goals? If not, how will this affect me financially?

• *Adapted from Bringham Young University web site:* **saas.byu.edu/depts/finaid/documents/fp2g.pdf**

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borrowing since the implementation of their program (T. Martin, personal communication, 2007).

Another exemplary program is offered at James Madison University (**http://www.jmu.edu/finaid/finliteracy.shtml**). According to Brad Barnett, associate director of financial aid, the University's outreach program has received consistent positive feedback since its inception (B. Barnett, personal communication, 2007). Interactive, hands-on presentations allow students to use their own ideas and experiences to create a personalized budget, which differentiates between necessities and extras. The financial literacy classes are limited to 25 students and are broken into small groups. Each group develops a list of their top financial concerns during or after college, which have included paying tuition and fees, room and board, student loans, insurance, credit cards, saving money, buying a house, going to graduate school, and starting a family. The groups then list their income and expenses and review these lists in the larger group setting as the framework for creating a budget. JMU is in the process of creating a semester-long, for-credit course on personal student finance as a result of these popular presentations (B. Barnett, personal communication, 2007).

Perhaps the most successful of such initiatives to date is The Peer Financial Counseling Program at the University of Georgia (**www.uga.edu/osfa/pfc/**). The program, funded by a sustaining grant through the Georgia Student Finance Commission and coordinated as a joint effort between the financial aid office and the Department of Housing and Consumer Economics, presents information on credit and debt, college budgeting, student loans, and savings and investments to thousands of students annually. The Peer Financial Counseling Program is classified as a student organization; presentations are made primarily by student volunteers who want to help their fellow classmates better understand the importance of personal finance. One paid student coordinator, who is housed in the financial aid office and has the support of a full-time staff member, administers the program. In addition to making presentations in person, the university also hosts an extensive library of financial literacy topics on an interactive web site as self-paced modules for students to complete. The 2006 program assessment showed that more than 85% of students who attended one or more of

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Sophomore Scholars Summit Generates Big Ideas

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Student affairs professionals and faculty from 12 universities gathered in June 2006 at Colgate University in Hamilton, NY for the first ever Sophomore Scholars Summit. For three days, we focused on issues and ideas particular to sophomore students through discussions, brainstorming sessions, and opportunities to share best practices. Among the discussions were issues related to sophomore development, challenges, and next steps. Although participants, who came from a diverse set of institutions, deal with different types of students and institutional cultures, we held the common belief that the sophomore year is a vitally important time in the life of a college student.

A monograph, *Shedding Light on Sophomores: An Exploration of the Second College Year*, published last month by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, was one significant outcome of the summit. The monograph—edited by Barbara Tobolowsky, associate director at the Center, and Bradley Cox, former research coordinator at the Center and a current PhD student in the Higher Education program at The Pennsylvania State University—includes chapters written by participants of the summit who shared campus-based and national research to describe the second college year and the initiatives designed to support it.

Another outcome of the summit was a list of questions that future research needs to address. These include:

- What are the campus environments that either inhibit or enhance the sophomore year?
- How do policies impact students in the sophomore year, especially major course sequencing, academic advising models, financial aid models, and general education requirements?
- What are student issues and concerns in different settings (i.e., nontraditional students, commuting students, rural vs. urban)?
- How do faculty perceive sophomores and their issues?
- Is there a disconnect between what faculty/staff believe is happening on campuses and what students believe is happening?
- What are the policies that have an impact? How do we assess sophomore programs?
- How do we create structures that allow and encourage students to move ahead?
- How do first-year experience programs prepare students for their sophomore year?

Equally important are a list of big ideas generated by summit participants. Exploring these ideas further will undoubtedly lead to the creation and refinement of sophomore programs on a number of campuses. These ideas include:

- How do we define sophomore success while recognizing that success will mean different things at different institutions?
- How do we encourage students to feel open to new approaches? How do we educate for the value of flexibility? How do we communicate the idea of college majors as less of a commitment than development of an expertise?
- How do we encourage intellectual risk taking, particularly with the challenges that come with a very programmed millennial generation?
- How do race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status connect with purpose? How do international students process this idea since they feel pressured to select majors that will allow them to stay in the country? How do we take cultural differences into account when designing a program? What role does tradition play in the process?
- How do we express tolerance of ambiguity and uncertainty in the classroom, within both the content and the pedagogy?

In addition to setting the agenda for future research and conversations on the sophomore year, summit participants identified a number of challenges in expanding the focus on sophomore issues. These included getting buy in from faculty, addressing issues of academic and social adjustment, and identifying courses that already exist and adapting them to challenge students in different ways.

Finally, summit participants recognized the need to get information out to other institutions about this summit and the wealth of information we shared

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the presentations planned to change their spending behaviors. The University of Georgia served as a pilot school for The Peer Financial Counseling Program, and as a result of their success, the program is now administered by several other colleges and universities in the state of Georgia (M. Branch-Friar, personal communication, 2007).

Staff members in the financial aid office, who see the financial worries and confusion of students and their families on a daily basis, initiated all the financial literacy programs highlighted in this article. Such initiatives, however, do not have to begin with the financial aid office. When housed outside financial aid, campuses may want to consider a partnership, as the office of financial aid can be a great source of statistical and observational information pertinent to the students. With a little planning and cooperation among university offices, financial literacy can be introduced on campus as an integral cog in the wheel of student success. The importance of such initiatives cannot be understated. Students deserve the chance to start their adult lives with sound personal financial strategies in place.

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with each other. To that end, many of us have presented our work at conferences and participated in webinars since the summit. The new monograph from the National Resource Center is a major step in communicating these important ideas to educators who are committed to helping our sophomores succeed.

For more information on sophomores, visit the National Resource Center's sophomore resources web site: **http://www.sc.edu/fye/resources/soph/index.html.**

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Individual Academic Management (IAM) Workshop Aims to Retain Students

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First-year initiatives to promote student success and persistence are a high priority at The University of Akron. While these initiatives have been quite successful for many first-year students, some students fall short of maintaining the minimum academic requirements. The University of Akron's Individual Academic Management (IAM) workshop is designed to address their needs. The workshop, which is required of all University College students who have been dismissed and wish to be readmitted, and all transfer students admitted on probation, is modeled after past research (Bean, 1990; Bean & Eaton, 2000; Pascarella, & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1971;) that suggests that institutions can improve retention and graduation rates by focusing on the following factors: (a) financial aid, (b) advising, (c) student-to-institution fit, and (d) first-year programs.

Because first-year grade point average is an important indicator of retention (Lotkowski, Robbins, & Noeth, 2004), the purpose of the workshop is to discuss positive strategies to improve a student's academic performance and to empower the student to become successful. The workshop provides both academic and financial information. The assistant dean of University College discusses student expectations for the upcoming probationary term and introduces a contract to uphold the conditions for the term. The first segment of the workshop is designed to either introduce or reintroduce techniques and strategies to help enhance student academic performance. For example, time management is stressed with a discussion and activity involving the "60-Hour Principle"—two hours of study time outside of class for every hour in class. Students list their work hours and the amount of hours they "should study." The combined total should be no more than 60 hours for a balanced schedule. We discuss possible solutions for those who have more than 60 hours in their calculated answer. A possible remedy would be to eliminate one or two favorite weekly television programs.

The assistant dean introduces the IAM Workshop Handbook, a comprehensive directory of departments available on campus to assist students with academic and personal development issues. The writing and study skills labs are highlighted. The writing lab provides one-on-one assistance with suggestions for rewriting papers or beginning a writing project. The study skills lab assists students with memory and test-taking techniques. The counseling center is also mentioned to remind students to communicate with a professional if there is a personal problem that could ultimately affect their academics. This particular segment encourages students to become self-advocates for their own academic success. These corollaries help to transition the workshop to the next half which deals with student financial aid.

An assistant director or coordinator from the student financial aid office discusses how poor academic performance directly affects financial aid eligibility. The financial aid application and financial appeal processes are described. Students receive a chart that explains credit hours and GPA requirements. The presenters work through simple calculations to show students how to keep track of their semester and cumulative credit hours. The goal of this presentation is to help students understand that they must become good financial managers of their aid by staying on track to graduation without incurring unnecessary debt due to poor academic performance.

Finally, students meet individually with an academic advisor to discuss suggestions and recommendations for the upcoming semester. In this meeting, there is discussion about the (a) number of credit hours the student wishes to maintain for the upcoming term, (b) courses that could be repeated, and (c) if the intended major has changed. Advisors make recommendations about repeating courses, course load, and course sequencing. At the conclusion of the session with the advisor, the student signs a contract in which they agree to (a) attain "C" or better grades in all courses attempted during the readmitted term; (b) see an academic advisor three times during the semester; (c) see instructors for academic "progress reports," which must be completed during the 4th, 8th, and 12th weeks of the semester; and (d) limit their schedule to a maximum of three to

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four courses or 13 credits during the readmitted term.

The Office of Student Financial Aid developed an assessment to examine the content delivery and the clarity of information presented to students. Preliminary data collected in a survey during the spring 2006 semester suggested that students left the IAM workshop with incomplete information. The survey was administered again in eight workshops during the summer session to determine if changes should be made to future workshop presentations for clarity.

Students were asked to answer eight questions. Six questions were Likert-type questions and two were open-ended, which allowed students the opportunity to write about the strengths of the presentations and provide comments and suggestions. Out of 238 students—56% of them first-year students—177 returned completed surveys. The comments from the open-ended questions, while overwhelmingly positive, shed the most light on the problem areas of the workshop presentation. Some survey results indicated that the financial information lacked clarity, confirming what was found in the initial surveys conducted the spring before.

Question 8 on the survey asked students to share their comments or suggestions. These were some of the responses:

- "The presenter should provide the PowerPoint handouts for students."
- "Speaker dispelled myths about departments on campus that help students—that they focus on a student's positive traits as strengths."
- "The workshop was a waste of time—the information could be summed up in a packet of information instead of having to attend."

After the results of the summer survey were compiled, the assistant dean of University College met with financial aid officers to discuss the content and presentation delivery for the IAM workshop. The discussions prompted the following changes for the fall 2006 semester:

- The PowerPoint presentation was modified to clarify points of confusion and to be more positive and motivational.
- The supervisor for the financial aid officers observed some presentations.
- Financial aid officers observed each other's presentations.
- Academic advisors and student assistants continued to evaluate the academic presentation.
- A web-based version of the workshop was developed for students who have participated in the workshop two or more times, for military students who are out of town, and for students with special circumstances (e.g., medical).

The IAM Workshop assessment will be disseminated and evaluated for another term. The results will be compared to the previous data for new insights. Additional changes may also be made based on future observations.

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Retiring U101 Director Offers Parting Advice on First-Year Seminars

Dan Berman, director of University 101 at the University of South Carolina, leads a discussion during his course on The Teacher as Manager, designed for peer leaders.

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When Dan Berman began his career in first-year seminars 35 years ago, the courses were known as college survival classes, sending the message that instructors wanted students to graduate but weren't as concerned about the quality of their education. Today, these seminars are recipes for overall student success, says Berman, who will retire next year as director of University 101 at the University of South Carolina (USC)—an internationally renowned program that has been ranked No. 1 in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report.*

"The old attitude was sink or swim," Berman says. "Today, our philosophy is swim, swim like an Olympic swimmer. Partly, the purpose of [the first-year seminar] is giving kids the resources to be outstanding and successful."

With experience both teaching and directing first-year seminars, Berman has much advice to offer on the subjects of recruiting and retaining faculty, effectively using peer leaders, growing and sustaining a quality program, and evaluating trends.

This fall, more than 3,000 first-year students enrolled in 163 sections of University 101 at USC. With a program this size, one would think that finding and keeping quality instructors for these classes is a monumental task. Like at many universities with first-year seminars, instructors come from among faculty and staff who teach in addition to their other full-time duties. The program doesn't have its own full-time faculty. Yet, the course often has a waiting list to teach. Berman says the keys to attracting and keeping instructors are establishing the relevance of the program, showing how teaching the first-year seminar is an opportunity for professional growth, and providing instructors with a framework for teaching the course while leaving enough space for creativity. Each year, Berman invites all faculty and staff to the program's three-day instructor training workshop, selling the first-year seminar as a class where instructors can be creative and make a lasting impact on students. Prospective instructors learn how to teach the seminar's uniform content, but they also talk about employing effective teaching strategies. "We provide them with a foundation for teaching the course … but not a syllabus that's written in stone," Berman says. "They know that they are required to do something different to make the class their own. That combination is what makes the course so enjoyable for instructors."

Like at a growing number of institutions, USC seminar instructors are paired with peer leaders, student volunteers who must enroll in a three-credit course called The Teacher as Manager in which they learn about lesson planning and innovating teaching techniques. Peer leaders, Berman says, are an integral key to the success of first-year seminars. Peer leaders are not only mentors and role models to students, but seminar instructors should see them as equal teaching partners, "not as someone who is subservient to the instructor or someone who is just fulfilling an empty task," Berman says. "I want instructors to

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U101 Cont. from p. 7

not be thinking of the peer leader as another student in class but as someone who is going to enhance the instruction as a full teaching partner." As often as possible, peer leaders should be allowed to lead class discussions even if the instructor knows the subject better, Berman says. "I'll be there to support my peer leader, to add a tidbit to the discussion if something critical hasn't been mentioned, but [the discussion] is always going to be much more effective if it's led by the peer leader," Berman believes. "Students will always listen to another student more readily than they will an instructor."

The addition of peer leaders shows how first-year seminars can evolve and grow as students' needs change, Berman says. But the key to sustaining a quality program is ensuring that the seminar is viewed as an academically valid way to improve student performance and retention, Berman says. Faculty must buy into the program. Without faculty and administrative support, the program will always lack respect, Berman says. "It will always be perceived as weak or tangential, instead of as essential." If the first-year seminar is to have staying power, faculty leaders need to see proof of its academic value, proof that the course will help students develop essential academic skills such as expository writing, critical thinking, analysis, and argument. "That means that students are doing more than discussing things, that's it's not just a roundtable, a glorified bull session, but it's a course in which students are asked to do a great deal of oral presentations, writing, reflection, and critical thinking," Berman says. The first-year seminar must also be seen as successful at the institutional level. Berman also recommends that universities rely on national research to help validate the use of the first-year seminar, support its growth, and guide its improvement.

The best models, Berman says, are seminars that are both academic and affective, encouraging students to self-reflect and focus on how they fit into the campus community. The first-year seminar "is about succeeding academically and succeeding in life," Berman says. "The course should stimulate thought and challenge [students'] minds, not stuff their heads full of facts that they may forget after they take the exam. The purpose is to enable students to perform well in a variety of challenges that will be ahead of them."

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The Center, a nonprofit organization, will use proceeds from the newsletter to defray publication costs, support research, and disseminate information.

Listening for Silences: Creating Stances of Openness

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Faculty, staff, and students marched silently across the campus of San Jose State University (CA) "to address their growing concerns regarding minority retention practices at the university" (Yuen, 2004). Their silent protest is one of many examples of how silence has been used to call attention to racism, sexism, and unfair campus policies. Often student protestors argue that silence is the only discourse with which to express their protest. As one international peace group says, "We refuse to add to the cacophony of empty statements that are spoken with the best intentions, yet may be erased or go unheard under a passing ambulance or the wound of a bomb exploding nearby" (Women in Black, 2002).

As faculty members who attempt to be conscious of oppression on our campuses and who work to help students examine the discourse of the powerful—often manifested in their own discourse—we have a responsibility to listen for such silence. Further, these resistant silences can also be considered as discourse in classrooms. But how do we attend to and help our students hear the silent discourses in our classrooms? When and if I talk about silences in a composition classroom, the first reaction my students have is, "Wow, that's cool." They rarely ask, "How does this really relate to us on our campus?"

Rhetorical listening is a teaching method that I have used to help students begin to hear silence. Krista Ratcliffe (2005) writes that rhetorical listening "signifies a stance of openness that a person may choose to assume in relation to any person, text, or culture" (p. 1). This listening strategy seemed particularly relevant in helping my students consider the silences of an upcoming campus issue.

At Abilene Christian University (ACU), one of the biggest cross-cultural gulfs is the heterosexual-homosexual divide. In spring 2006, this reality prompted the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) group Soulforce to target the ACU campus as one of 14 stops on their equity ride. Soulforce is a group that argues for "freedom for LGBT people from religious and political oppression through the practice of relentless non-violent resistance" (Soulforce, 2006). As my class discussed Soulforce's web site and explanation of the group's equity ride, I drew on the key concept of rhetorical listening that presumes "an ethical responsibility to argue for what we deem fair and just while questioning that which we deem fair and just" (Ratcliffe, 2005, p. 25). We strove not to "master" the silences and come up with quick solutions but to instead (a) acknowledge the existence of other discourse, (b) create genuine conversation, (c) avoid glossing over differences, (d) promote a broader cultural literacy, and (e) consciously integrate the information into our world views and decision making.

First, students were asked to write about the policies on the ACU campus and articulate their own stances. Then they attempted to articulate the other side—to hear the silences—by examining the Soulforce web site and reading articles that presented multiple stances on Christianity and homosexuality. As we anticipated Soulforce's visit to campus, students looked at their own writings about multiple sides of the issue and tried to find places where their language would be offensive or hurtful to someone who disagreed. They listened to their own writing for places where their language would fall short if they were trying to get someone to hear their position. I then encouraged them to attend the campus forums that the university had organized in order to invite dialogue with Soulforce. Finally, we considered possibilities for revised policies and how they would or would not fit with our campus culture and campus beliefs. My goal was never to convince students to adopt a certain position or to change theirs but to understand that people who disagree with them need to be heard.

In the end, my students were able to look at silences and discourses they considered foreign and "wrong" in a much more inclusive manner. They were able to begin the move from a dualistic worldview to acceptance of others' views without feeling threatened by them. Some openly acknowledged the limited nature and simplicity of their own views. My students also began to wonder aloud what other silences they had failed to hear—silences of gender, of other religious viewpoints, of race. This framework allowed my students to stand up for what they believe is right while simultaneously questioning what they

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believe to be right. The consequences beyond the individual classroom are difficult to evaluate. Ultimately, rhetorical listening allowed my students to hear some very real and timely silences and, hopefully, broadened their own cultural literacies.

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

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Student Success Center
University of Central Florida
Orlando, FL

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Too many students think of a career as the end product of a college education. To the contrary, college is the beginning of a career, and specific career planning activities and services should complement a student's four or more years of academic work. Students who don't participate in career preparation activities often find that, by their senior year, they are not able to compete for jobs as effectively as students who did participate in these activities. The University of Central Florida (UCF) in Orlando has outlined a basic curriculum of activities and services designed to help students focus on career planning at various stages in their college experience.

Each activity or service has some degree of flexibility in terms of when it is completed, and some may even span the entire college career. Our goal is to help students identify those activities and services beneficial in career preparation and the most optimal times for engaging in them. The curriculum spaces out activities using timelines in a regular sequence to avoid overloading students with too many activities in one academic year. Several campus offices are involved, including the Office of First-Year Advising and Exploration, the Career Services and Experiential Learning office, the Office of Student Involvement, and the Office of International Studies.

Career planning in UCF's curriculum actually begins before students start their first year of college. At orientation, which is organized by the Office of First-Year Advising and Exploration (FYAE), students are offered academic exploration services to help them assess their interests and match them to the college's majors. Students meet with academic advisors to explore interests, abilities, and aspirations and to review relevant majors available at UCF. Some career assessment testing may also be administered through both FYAE and, more commonly, through the Career Services and Experiential Learning office. Students are introduced to (a) the steps for gathering information about themselves and about different majors, (b) the process for choosing a major, and (c) tips for following the required course format for earning a degree in that major.

In those first and second years, while students are meeting their general education requirements, they work on identifying a college major and planning the schedule for completing that major. The Career Services and Experiential Learning (CSEL) office assists students in this process. CSEL enhances career planning through experiential learning opportunities in cooperative education, internships, and service-learning. Students at this stage can also participate in a CSEL program called Golden

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COLLEGE MAJOR IDENTIFICATION AND SCHEDULE PLANNING

Activities for first-year students & sophomores	Service Units
Assessment to select a major best suited to each student's individual interests, personality, aptitudes, and/or values	First-Year Advising & Exploration (FYAE) Career Services & Experiential Learning (CSEL)
Academic advising or career counseling to help select the most suitable UCF major based on assessment results	FYAE CSEL
Gather information about careers related to majors of interest	CSEL FYAE for handouts, "What Has Been Done with UCF Majors in ……...?" (CSEL) for the Major's Fair, job shadowing, internships, and part-time Jobs
Schedule planning	FYAE or major department's advising services
College Success class (SLS 1501)	Orientation Services (OS)
Career Planning class (MHS 2330)	CSEL teaches the class
Acquire college-level study skills	Student Academic Resource Center (SARC)
Change a major	FYAE or Registrar's Office
Take introductory classes for the majors being considered	FYAE academic advisor, talk with faculty or department academic advisors in the major department
Involvement in student clubs and organizations	Office of Student Involvement (OIS)

Activities for juniors and seniors	Service Units
Academic advising & schedule planning	Major department's advising service
Continued involvement in student clubs and organizations	Office of Student Involvement (OIS)
Cooperative education and internship experiences. Part-time work experiences, service-learning, job shadowing	CSEL CSEL
Career information, career planning class, career counseling	CSEL
Study abroad	Office of International Studies (OIS)
Jobs for students	CSEL Financial Aid (for work-study jobs) Employment Fair (CSEL)

Activities for seniors	Service Units
Finding a job upon graduation	Placement Services (CSEL)
Resume writing & interview skills	Resume writing and how to interview workshops (CSEL)
Job descriptions and company information	Career Fairs and company information resources (CSEL)
Interview with employers coming to recruit on the UCF campus	Employer on-campus interviews (CSEL)
Career change information	CSEL
Graduate, law, and medical school preparation workshops and fairs	CSEL

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Opportunities: A Major Today, A Career Tomorrow that offers seminars and workshops in major exploration, career exploration, externships, goal setting, and self-discovery, among others. Those completing the program will earn a certificate of completion and a portfolio to use later for gaining employment or admission to graduate, law, or professional school. At this stage, students also take a three-credit career planning class through the Career Services and Experiential Learning office. In this course, students explore majors and careers and learn how to develop an effective job search with a focus on resume writing and interviewing skills.

In their third and fourth years of college, UCF, students are encouraged to stay involved in student clubs and organizations. The Office of Student Involvement provides programming to ensure opportunities for networking and leadership development. Additionally, at this stage in their college experience, students participate in cooperative education, an academic program that allows them to apply classroom theory in practical work settings and gain personal, academic, and work skills over multiple semesters. Students also gain work experience through part-time work, service-learning, and job shadowing. The Career Services and Experiential Learning office provides career information and career planning and organizes an employment fair. Also, at this stage, the Office of International Studies encourages students to study abroad.

Finally, the year before graduation, UCF students work very closely with

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What's Happening at the National Resource Center

Conferences

27th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience
February 15 – 19, 2008
San Francisco, California

Early registration deadline is January 14, 2008.

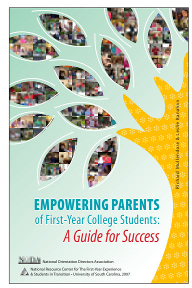
For more information on this and other National Resource Center events, please visit our web site **www.sc.edu/fye/events/**

New Publications

New Monograph Sheds Light on the Experiences of College Sophomores

Educators have long been concerned with retaining students and helping them succeed, but their focus has been primarily on first-year students. Recently, this focus has widened to include a frequently invisible population—second-year students. *Shedding Light on Sophomores: An Exploration of the Second College Year* turns our attention to this often-forgotten student population. Published by the National Resource Center, this new monograph draws on campus-based and national research to describe the second college year and the initiatives designed to support it. Campus case studies offer a more detailed look at programs designed to help sophomores succeed, and a concluding chapter offers recommendations for the development of a range of initiatives in the second college year.

Empowering Parents of First-Year College Students



Empowering Parents of First-Year College Students: A Guide for Success follows in the footsteps of *Helping Your First-Year College Student Succeed* and *A Guide for Families of Commuter Students* in helping parents understand the nature of the college transition and in offering tips to make that transition a successful one for not only the first-year college student but for their families as well. An ideal resource for orientation programs, parents' weekends, and other parent programs, *Empowering Parents of First-Year College Students* is also available in Spanish. This new guide is produced in association with the National Orientation Directors Association.

To learn more about these and other publications available from the National Resource Center, please visit **www.sc.edu/fye/publications**

Research

National Resource Center Announces 2007-2008 Fidler Grant Recipient

Eunyoung Kim, PhD candidate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, is the recipient of the 2007-2008 Paul P. Fidler Research Grant. The grant, designed to encourage and enable scholarly research on issues related to college student transitions, includes a financial stipend and travel to two national conferences.

Kim's winning proposal titled "Acculturation Experiences and College Transitions of Minority Immigrant Students" investigates how immigrant students negotiate a sense of membership in the college context, an important ingredient for a successful transition to college, through an examination of their web of social ties and relationships. Using in-depth interviews with 30 ethnic minority immigrant students at a large public institution, this research provides a better understanding of challenges immigrant students face during their first- to second-year college transition, presents alternative ways of conceptualizing their collegiate experiences, and offers insights into the ways in which higher education communities can better serve the needs of these students.

In its third year, the Paul P. Fidler Research Grant has become a well-respected and highly competitive

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the Career Services and Experiential Learning office, participating in resume writing and interview workshops, employer on-campus interviews, and graduate, law, and medical school preparation workshops and fairs.

Each institution should structure the curriculum to fit the institution's unique services and activities, and institutions should make sure that students have a curriculum guide to help them with planning. At UCF, it is our hope that as information on the career-planning curriculum is made available to more and more students, they will have a sense of which steps to take in career planning and when they may be most beneficial. Parts of the curriculum may also be used in career classes, presented in workshops, and used as a guide for follow-up appointments with advisors.

In addition to anecdotal information from surveys and self-reported evaluations of the activities from students and staff, UCF is in the process of contacting individuals on campus to help us assess the effectiveness of this model.

Contact

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grant program. The Center received 91 proposals from researchers and practitioners throughout the United States and in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Poland. Among the outstanding research projects selected as finalists were:

- Heath Boice-Pardee and Nicole Boulais of Rochester Institute of Technology, for their study entitled "Revealing the Sophomore Transition: A Mixed-Method Analysis of Student Development."
- Brian Bourke of the University of Alabama, for his study entitled "African American Students in Predominantly White Universities: Persistence Beyond the First Year."
- Pamela Steinke, Chun-Ju Wan, and Michelle Crossley at North Carolina State University for their study entitled "How Personality and Social Factors Impact Undergraduate Success in the First Two Years."
- Peter Swerdzewski and Sara Finney of James Madison University, for their study entitled "A Longitudinal Analysis of Student Worry During the First Two Years of College."
- Paul Turman of South Dakota Board of Regents for his study entitled "Engaging Adult Learners: A Longitudinal and Spatial Analysis of Non-Traditional Student Transition."

New Staff

Angela Griffin is the new coordinator of research, grants, and assessment. A former postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Psychology at the University of Texas at Austin, Griffin is responsible for all the Center's research efforts. She earned her PhD and MA from The University of Texas at Austin and her BA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She assumes the editorship of the FYA-List, an electronic magazine/mailing list dedicated to assessment of the first college year.

Trish Willingham is the new editor. A former journalist and adjunct instructor, she is responsible for overseeing the development of *E-Source* and provides copyediting and proofing support for the Center's publications, including monographs and educational materials. She earned her MA from Syracuse University and her BA from Columbia College of South Carolina.

