



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

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# First Year Success Series: What It Tells Us About Transitional Needs

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# Presentation Overview

- Brief history and background of the FYSS
- Attendance summaries
- Reflection paper data
- Peer leader feedback
- First-year student survey responses
- Conclusions and recommendations for practice
- Q&A and discussion



# What is the Success Series?

- Series of 400+ programs offered throughout fall semester presented by partner offices across campus (limited offerings in the spring).
- Span 5 theme areas important to first year student success.
- Offered in collaboration with survey course.
- FYE coordinates registration, reflection papers, attendance.



# Retention Research

- Student Experience during the first year and particularly the first six weeks is critical for persistence to graduation (Gardner, 1986, Levitz and Noel, 1989).
- Retention improves when institutions encourage students to become involved and provide opportunities for increased involvement in the college experience (Astin, 1996).
- Effective retention programs share three principles: principle of community, commitment to students, and commitment to education (Tinto, 1990).



# First Year Success

Upcraft and Gardner (1989) in *The Freshman Year Experience* share items that contribute to first year success:

- Developing Academic and Intellectual Competence
- Establishing and Maintaining Interpersonal Relationships
- Developing Identity
- Deciding on a Career and Lifestyle
- Maintaining Personal Health and Wellness
- Developing an Integrated Philosophy of Life



# Role of Reflection

- Experiential learning involves engaging students in activities and asking them to reflect on their experiences (Dewey, 1938/1997).
- Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning (1984).
- Students are able to make meaning of their experiences so that their perspectives on the topic or issue can be transformed (Marineau & Fiddler, 2002; Mezirow, 1991; Washbourn, 1996).



# Theme Areas

Five theme areas to address transition needs

- Academic Engagement and Career Exploration
- Diversity and Global Awareness
- Finances
- Health and Wellness
- Leadership and Civic Engagement

Two additional theme areas for FYE programming

- Peer Leader sessions
- Buckeye Book Community



# THEMES

Sessions in cart: 0

[View cart](#)

[Welcome](#) > Themes

Sessions are grouped by theme to help you choose among topics of interest or from themes that address challenges you might face as a first year student. **The number in parenthesis reflects the available sessions within that theme.** Click the down arrow to the right of each theme for a description of the sessions in that category.

Click the **View Sessions** tab to see available sessions for each theme.

Looking for a specific session? Click on **Search for a specific session** at the bottom of the page.

**Note:** You must click the **View Cart** button and select **Finish Registration** to be enrolled in the sessions in your cart. If you do not check out, sessions will be removed from your cart after 20 minutes of inactivity.

[View Sessions](#) Academic Engagement & Career Exploration (8) ↓

[View Sessions](#) Diversity & Global Awareness (6) ↓

[View Sessions](#) Finances (2) ↓

[View Sessions](#) Health & Wellness (9) ↓

[View Sessions](#) Leadership & Civic Engagement (0) ↓





# First Year Experience



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## Reflections

Submit

Your reflection paper is available for the session listed below!

You must answer all questions listed. Unless specifically stated by your survey instructor, there is a 200 character minimum but no maximum word limit for your Reflection Paper. Click 'submit' once you are satisfied with the content of your reflection paper. If submitted successfully, a confirmation page will appear and you will receive an email confirming your Reflection Paper submission.

Please note: There is no spell check nor can you save your Reflection Paper and return at a later date to submit

Wednesday  
Jan 22, 2014  
6:00 PM

**A+ Research: Where Do You Start?**  
Duration:  
Location: 150A Thompson Library  
Speaker: Speaker: Ilhan Dahir

The presenter shared this information in a format that was easy to understand.

Strongly agree

Somewhat agree

No feeling either way

Somewhat disagree

Strongly disagree



# Attendance Data

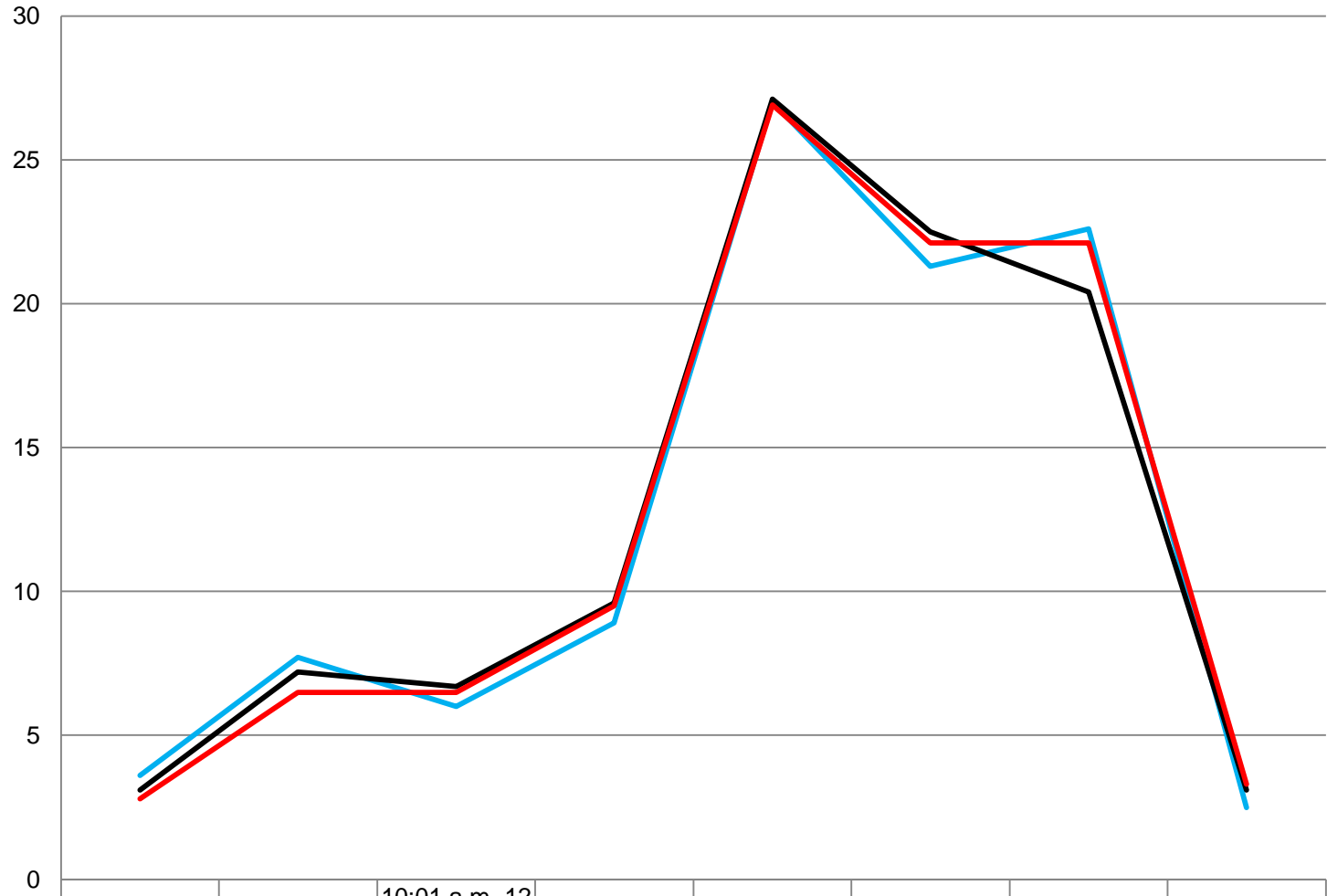
	2012	2013
Number of Sessions	389	584
Non-peer Sessions	389	452
Seats Offered	28,518	35,304
Registrations	20,891	23,432
Reflection Papers	15,844	17,684



Session Themes	Session Count	% Total Sessions	Registration	% Total Registrations
Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	89	15.20%	5,151	21.90%
Diversity & Global Awareness	44	7.50%	3,533	15%
Finances	53	9%	3,093	13.10%
Health & Wellness	184	31.50%	944	4%
Leadership & Civic Engagement	31	5.30%	798	3.40%
Peer Leader	134	22.90%	5,435	23.10%
Buckeye Book Community	49	8.30%	4,511	19.20%
All Sessions	584	100%	23,465	100%



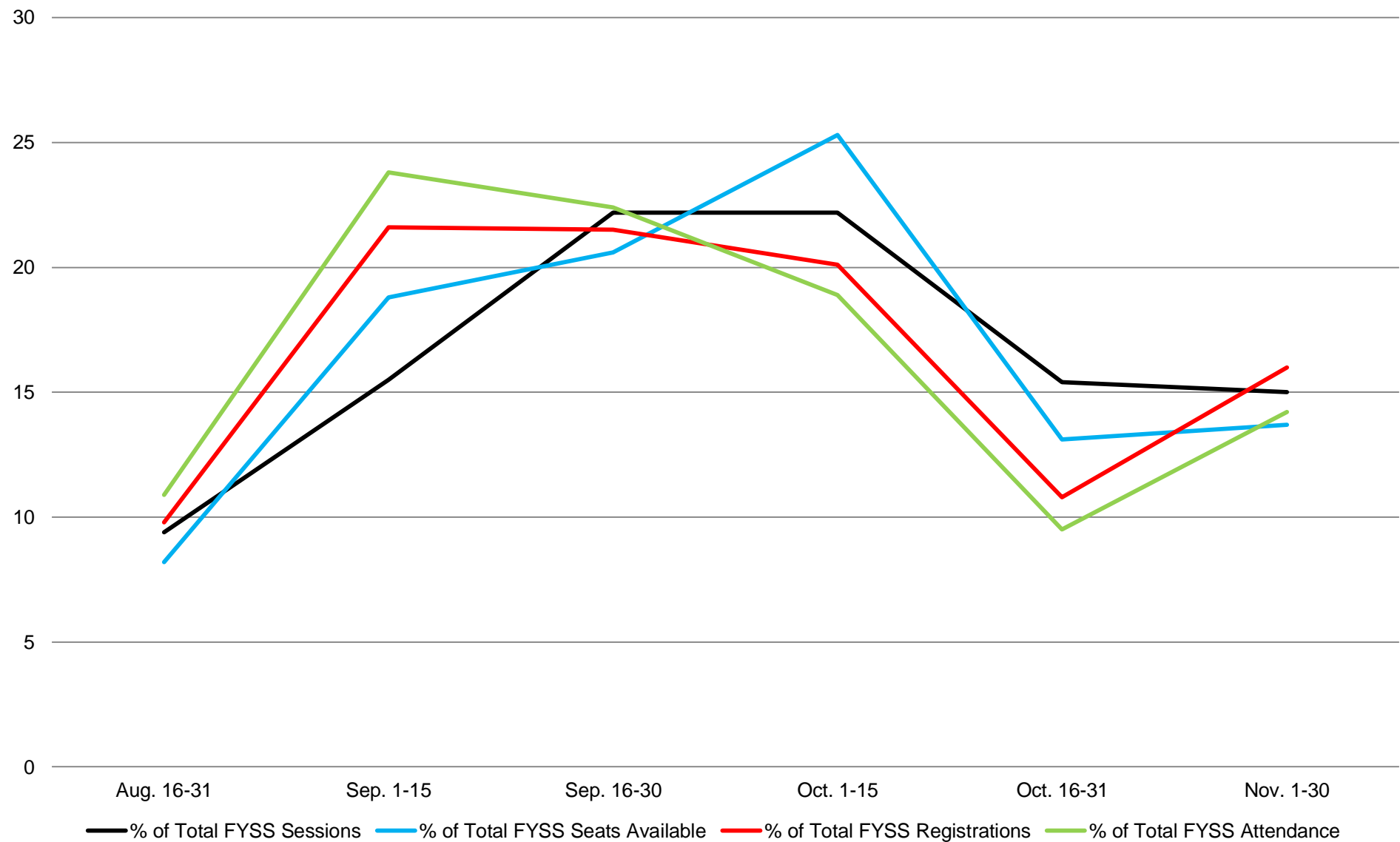
### Seats, Registrations, & Attendance Total % by Time



— % of Total FYSS Seats Available	3.6	7.7	6	8.9	27	21.3	22.6	2.5
— % of Total FYSS Registrations	3.1	7.2	6.7	9.6	27.1	22.5	20.4	3.1
— % of Total FYSS Attendance	2.8	6.5	6.5	9.5	26.9	22.1	22.1	3.3



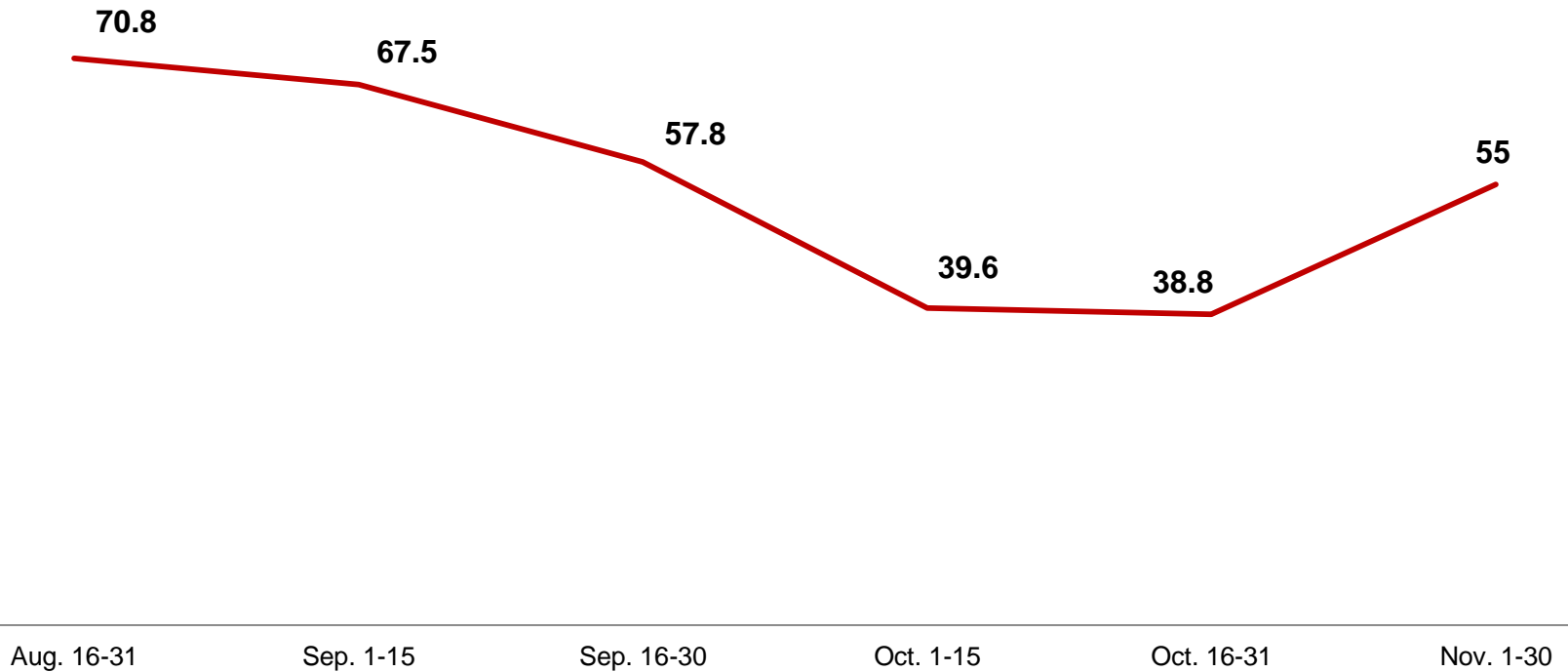
### Sessions, Seats, Registrations, & Attendance Total % by Date





### % of Seats Filled by Date

— % of Seats Filled





# Peer Leader Session

- Introduce students to FYSS, explain its purpose, and make it cool.
- Allow students to make a connection with upper-class students and fellow first-year students.
- Educate students about theme areas and types of sessions offered to assist students in identifying sessions that may be most appropriate for them.
- Begin to introduce students to campus resources.



# Peer Leader Data

- Peer Sessions offered for the first time in AU13
- 109 Peer Leaders
  - 45 2<sup>nd</sup>-year students
  - 40 3<sup>rd</sup>-year students
  - 22 4<sup>th</sup>-year students
  - 2 5<sup>th</sup>-year students
- Facilitated 134 sessions in pairs
- 4,764 first-year students attended a peer session
- Peer Leader Sessions were offered 8/16 – 9/15





# PL Session Agenda

- Introductions, Welcome Video from Bernie Savarese, Purpose of the FYSS
- Icebreaker
- Personal Assessment of Theme “Personality”
- Breakdown of FYSS Themes
- Session Matching Activity
- Overview of Campus Resources
- Review of FYSS Session Registration Process
- Q&A



# PL Session Ratings

Scores based on a 1-5 scale (1=Strongly Agree)	The presenter shared this information in a format that was easy to understand.	The information in this session is helpful in my first year at Ohio State.	As a result of attending this session, I can identify a resource on campus related to the topic/information covered.
<b>All Sessions</b>	1.24	1.53	1.56
<b>Peer Leader Sessions</b>	1.24	1.48	1.43



# PL Reflection Feedback

“By getting an explanation of all the different sessions, I was able to decide what my next steps were in the first year success series. I also was able to figure out which sessions will best benefit me and teach me the information I need to know.”

“In the session I learned how diverse of a community Ohio State is.”

“The activity we did showed me that I should attend a finance session. After looking through the options I think I’ll attend moving OFF-CAMPUS: leasing, landlords, and lots more.”

“I learned very little actually as I already was on campus for 4 weeks, had classes, and went to my job. Everything that I heard was repeated many times before. I could see why this would be important.”

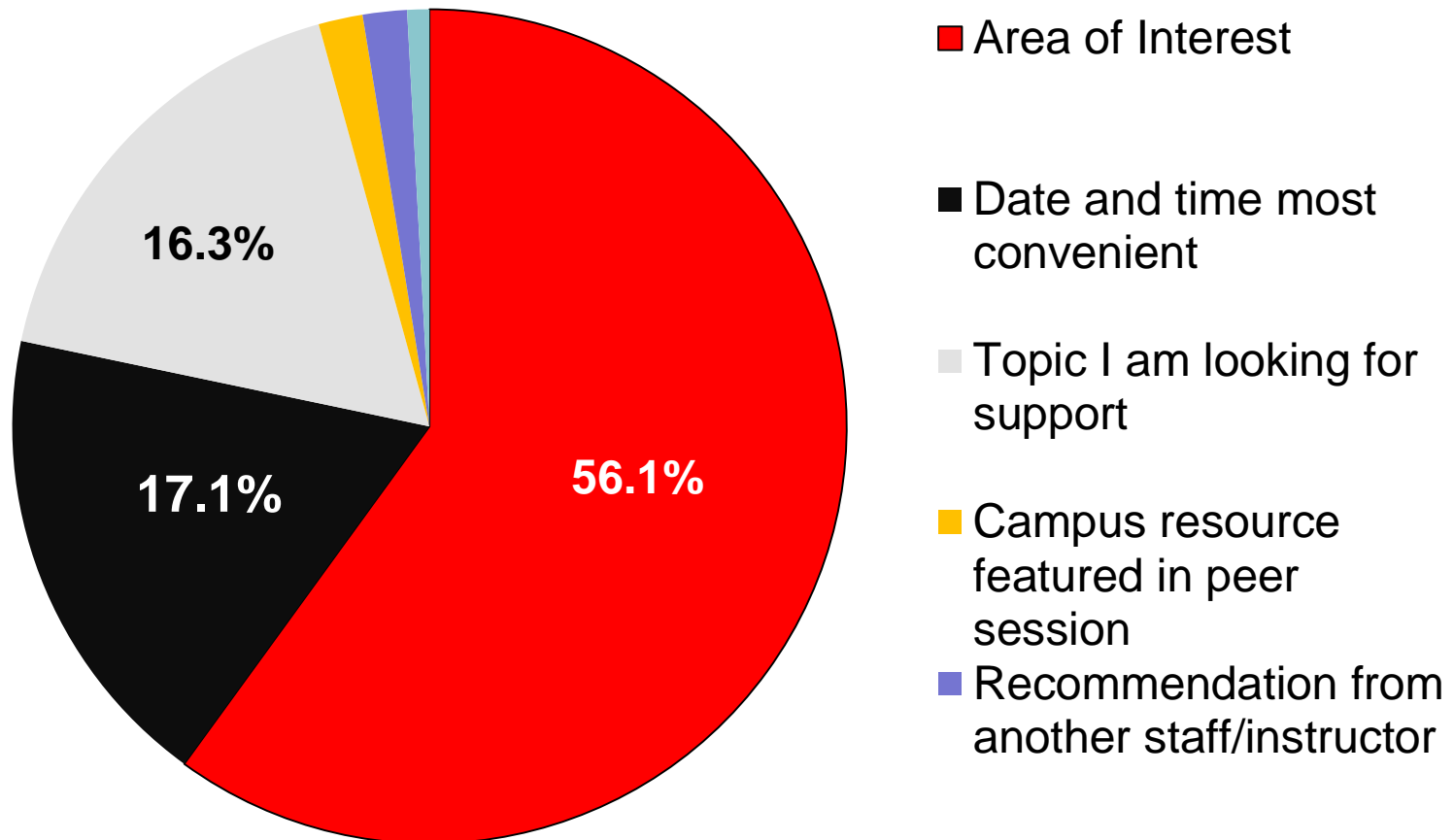


# First Year Student Survey

- Administered in autumn 2013
- Survey sent to a stratified random sample (by college) of first semester freshmen.
- 12.7% response rate (n=122).
- Haven't analyzed the results by major, gender, or other characteristics but wanted to share initial results.

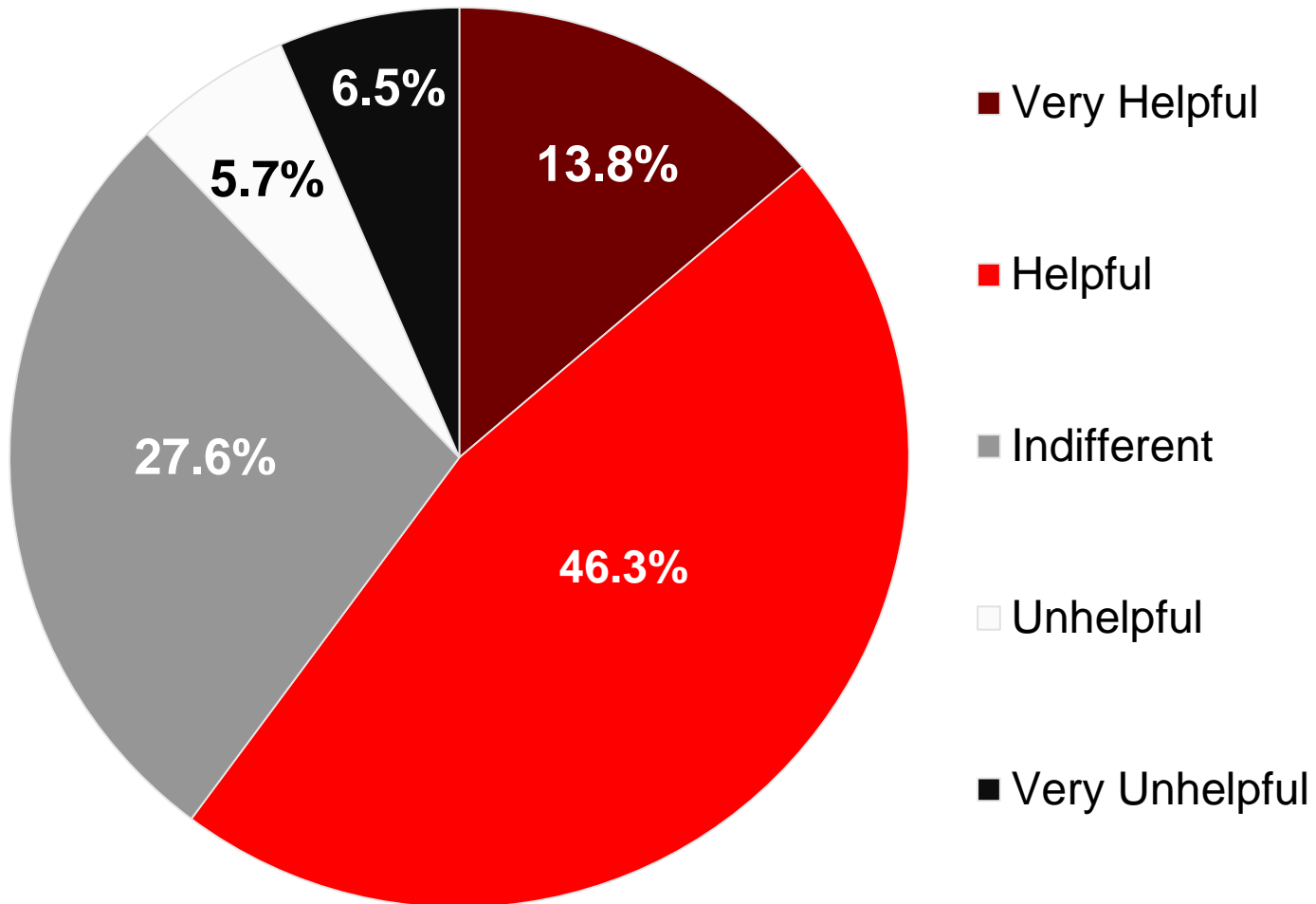


# Why Do Students Select Sessions?





# How helpful was the FYSS?





## Likert Question Data

Q1: The presenter shared this information in a format that was easy to understand.

Q2: The information in this session is helpful in my first year at Ohio State.

Q3: As a result of attending this session, I can identify a resource on campus related to the topic/information covered.



**Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement by theme**

<i>Theme</i>	The presenter shared this information in a format that was easy to understand.	The information in this session is helpful in my first year at Ohio State.	As a result of attending this session, I can identify a resource on campus related to the topic/information covered.
<b>All Sessions</b>	<b>97.2%</b>	<b>88.9%</b>	<b>86.2%</b>
Academic & Career Exploration	97.4%	92.5%	93.1%
Diversity & Global Awareness	94.1%	79.7%	78.1%
Finances	97.8%	93.3%	96.7%
Health & Wellness	96.8%	92.7%	93.7%
Leadership & Civic Engagement	96.3%	90.3%	85.9%
Buckeye Book Community	96.5%	72.3%	51.5%
Peer Leader Sessions	97.8%	92.9%	94.2%





Best evaluated sessions for Q1: The presenter shared this information in a format that was easy to understand.

Session	Theme	Average Ranking
Film and Discussion of "Divided We Fall: Americans in the Aftermath"	Buckeye Book Community	1.03
Understanding Body Image	Health & Wellness	1.04
Math@OSU: The Inside Scoop	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.06
No Buckeye Should be Blue	Health & Wellness	1.06
Blurred Lines	Health & Wellness	1.09
A+ Research: From Average to A+	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.09
Are You Man Enough? A Dialogue on Manhood in College.	Diversity & Global Awareness	1.09
Preparing Papers and Speeches	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.1
Latex and Safer Sex	Health & Wellness	1.1
Evaluating Your Time Management Portfolio	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.1



Best evaluated sessions for Q2: The information in this session is helpful in my first year at Ohio State.

Session	Theme	Average Ranking
Is Your Major The One?	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.1
How to Avoid Freshman 15	Health & Wellness	1.17
Evaluating Your Time Management Portfolio	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.18
Use Your Brain: "Memory Tools" for Effective Studying and "Confident Test Taking"	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.18
Preparing Papers and Speeches	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.2
Active Note Taking Strategies	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.23
Strength Training Equipment Orientation	Health & Wellness	1.25
Hookups and Hangovers	Health & Wellness	1.26
Where is Woody? Find Woody Hayes in Thompson Library	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.27
A+ Research: Where Do You Start?	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.28



Best evaluated sessions for Q3: As a result of attending this session, I can identify a resource on campus related to the topic/information covered.

Session	Theme	Average Ranking
STIs 101	Health & Wellness	1.07
Latex and Safer Sex	Health & Wellness	1.12
Moving OFF-CAMPUS: Leasing, Landlords & Lots More!	Finances	1.13
Math@OSU: The Inside Scoop	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.13
Body Image: Feeling Comfortable in Your 'Genes'	Health & Wellness	1.14
Where is Woody? Find Woody Hayes in Thompson Library	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.15
A+ Research: Where Do You Start?	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.15
Bounce Back: From Surviving to Thriving	Buckeye Book Community	1.15
How to Avoid Freshman 15	Health & Wellness	1.16
Blurred Lines	Health & Wellness	1.16

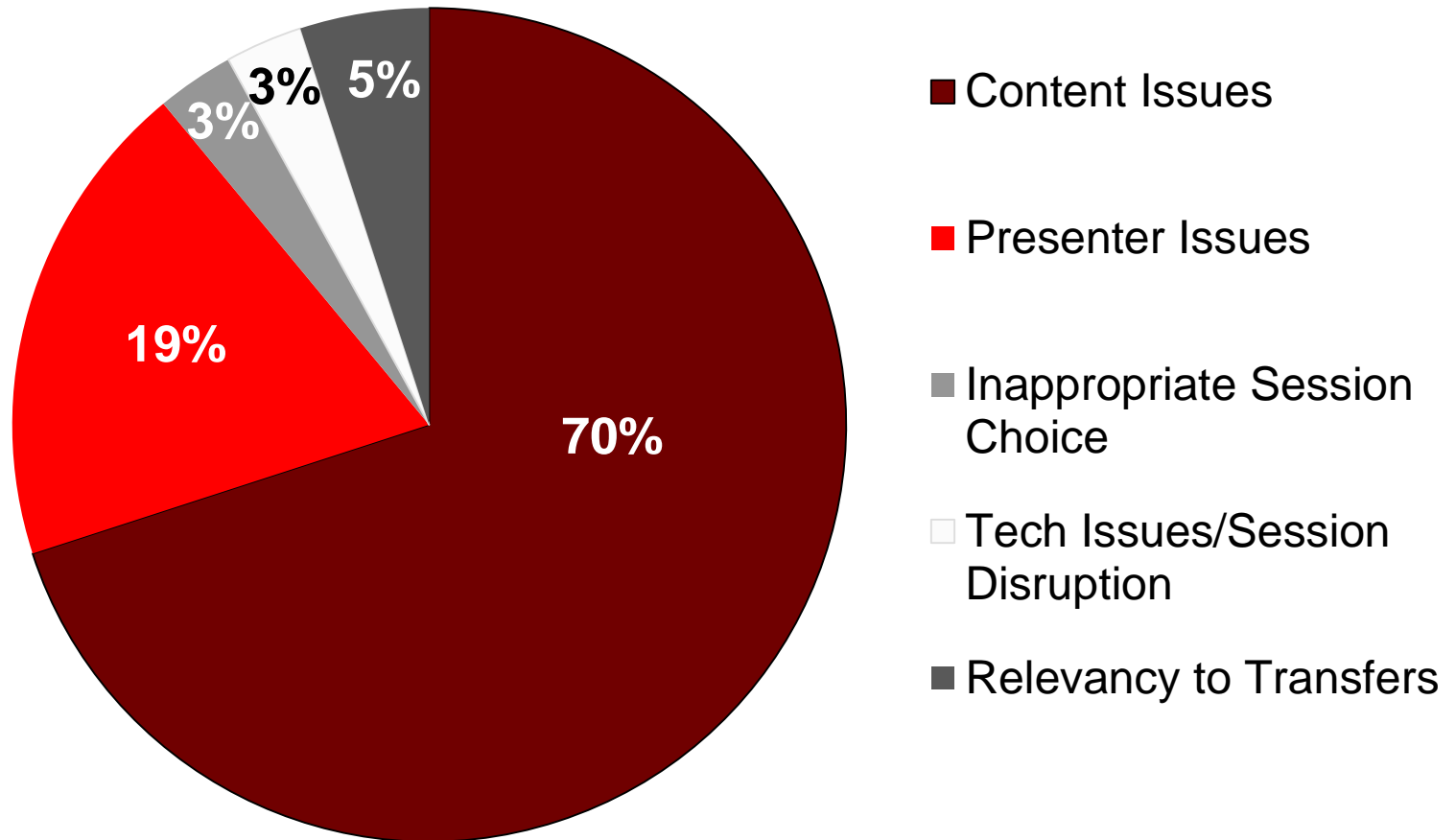


## Best evaluated sessions for all 3 Likert questions.

Session	Theme	Average Ranking
Is Your Major The One?	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.14
How to Avoid Freshman 15	Health & Wellness	1.15
Use Your Brain: "Memory Tools" for Effective Studying and "Confident Test Taking"	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.15
Preparing Papers and Speeches	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.16
STIs 101	Health & Wellness	1.17
A+ Research: Where Do You Start?	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.18
Math@OSU: The Inside Scoop	Academic Engagement & Career Exploration	1.19
Blurred Lines	Health & Wellness	1.19
Latex and Safer Sex	Health & Wellness	1.19
Moving OFF-CAMPUS: Leasing, Landlords & Lots More!	Finances	1.19



# Negative Reflections





# Negative Reflections

## Example Comments from Content Issues:

- “This session was very disappointing in that the information shared was knowledge I already knew.”
- “While I found the session informational and important, I found it slightly irrelevant to being a first year at Ohio State.”

## Example Comments from Presenter Issues:

- “This session, though good in concept, was not well executed.
- “While I semi-understood what the presenter was trying to talk about during the event, the overall quality of the entire setup was poor.”



# Conclusions and Application

## 1. Need for Learning Outcomes

- FYE and presenters should develop learning outcomes for the overall FYSS and each session.
- This practice allows us to articulate *why* sessions are important to students and what we want them to take away from the session. It will help students draw connections between the content and their first year.
- Having data on whether we achieved our outcomes will better inform which sessions to offer more often, less often, add or remove.
- Currently, we don't have the manpower to do a good qualitative analysis to our open ended question, "what did you learn". In the future, we can ask, "did you learn xyz".



# Conclusions and Application

## 2. Continue Peer Leader Sessions

- The pilot year of peer leaders was a success. Students were selecting sessions based on fit and need instead of convenience.
- Want to offer peer leader sessions during the first two weeks of fall semester only, while students are still learning basic info about the university.
- Encourage survey instructors to require peer leader sessions in addition to their set number of sessions. We recommend a requirement of the peer leader session and 2-3 additional sessions.





# Conclusions and Application

## 3. Share Best Practices and Data

- Organizing our FYSS data for this presentation was extremely helpful in FYE, and we want to share more broadly.
- Currently, all presenters can see data from their own sessions, but do not have access to aggregate. We need to share reports so presenters can compare to theme area and overall numbers.
- Collect more information about successful sessions. Find out why and incorporate into best practices and training for future presenters.
- Use data to inform basic decision making for when sessions are offered (time of day and week during the semester).



# Conclusions and Application

## 4. The FYSS Addresses Student Transition Needs

- The majority of students identify that the FYSS was helpful to their transition, was relevant to their first year, and connected them to campus resources.
- We recognize limitations to our data—students are required to attend, the reflection papers are filled out for a grade.
- We don't measure satisfaction, but learning. Students are learning new information and skill sets that will help them be successful in college.



# How the FYSS helped transition

“It showed me where to look for help and really helped me in learning techniques to reduce my stress and better manage my time here.”

“The sessions I went to were particularly helpful because I went to an FYSS on Housing for next year, and an FYSS on Safety. They provided me with extremely helpful information for the remainder of this year, as well as the next years to come.”

“They really helped me learn about all of the resources Ohio State has to offer.”

“The session about funding study abroad was VERY helpful as I plan to apply for scholarships for upcoming study abroad programs. I enjoyed by BBC session because it gave me the opportunity to interact with other honors and just generally dedicated students, and the others helped me become aware of opportunities available to me.”

“It has made me more confident to explore the areas of study that I am passionate about, and to take my time discovering my passions.”



## Questions?

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