Building a Bridge Between First and Second Year: A Collaborative Approach to Student Development
Introductions
Agenda for Today

• Share research and theory that shapes first and second year programs
• Differentiate programs, interventions, and support that should be targeted at first year students, second year students, or both
• Think about your own department and how to work differently with first and second-year students
• Review structure of FYE and STEP at Ohio State and where your office can support existing efforts
Learning Outcomes

• Participants will reflect on and articulate what services, resources, and programming currently exist in their department for first and/or second year students.

• Participants will articulate the key salient needs and developmental milestones that often distinguish the second year experience from the first.

• Participants will be able to utilize at least one strategy for curriculum differentiation that will contribute to a more seamless experiences for students between their first and second year.
Foundational Research that Informs FYE and STEP
Developmental Readiness and Sequencing

• Developmental Readiness: “The ability and motivation to attend to, make meaning of, and appropriate new knowledge into one’s long term memory structures” (Hannah & Lester, 2009).

• Sequencing: The order and structure in which people learn new skill sets (Hannah & Avolio, 2010).

• Scaffolding: Support given during the learning process which is tailored to the needs of an individual student (Sawyer, 2006).
Developmental Readiness and Sequencing

• Not one size fits all learning
• Time on task does not always equate to learning
• Some topics might be too complex, or too simplistic
• Students tune out

Hannah & Avolio, 2010
First Year Literature

• The student experience during the first six weeks and first year is critical for persistence to graduation (Levitz and Noel, 1989)

• Effective retention programs share three principles: principle of community, commitment to students, and commitment to education (Tinto, 1990)

• First year students will navigate their transition differently based on a number of factors including situation, self, support, and strategies (Schlosberg et al., 1995).
First Year Literature

Upcraft, Gardner, & Barefoot (2004) and Collier (forthcoming) say first year transition issues include:

- Academic preparation and competence
- Establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, sense of belonging
- Finding campus resources
- Physical and emotional well being
- Gaining multicultural awareness, exploring identity
- Understanding culture of higher education
- Managing independence/time management
Second Year Literature

National data – Needs of Second Year Students

- Retention
- Career Exploration
- Career Preparation
- Academic Assistance
- Selection of Major
Second Year Literature

Hunter et al. (2010) say second year transition issues include:

- **Academic**: exploring/re-exploring majors and minors, connecting with faculty, exploring academic and study abroad, seeing connections between courses
- **Extracurricular**: trying new groups, stepping into leadership roles
- **Community**: making “real” friends, finding a community
- **Career**: explore career based on skills, interest, major
Diversity of the Sophomore Experience

May be deeply committed to major
May have yet to explore or consider how major is connected to future
May be following others, withdrawing, or living out stereotypes
May be making friends for life
May be unsophisticated in selection of friends/relationships

Schaller, 2010
Challenges Sophomores Face or WE face

• A Year for Internal Change
• Critical moment to begin making active decisions regarding future self
• Requires reflection
• Requires expansion of the “world” in which they work
• Resistance to “First Year” treatment, direction
• Will want to direct their own experience
The Pressure Cooker: The Sophomore Year

Key Questions:

Do students stay with the pressure long enough to resolve key issues?
Do students have the experiences needed to make insightful decisions?
Do students have a complex enough understanding of the world to make insightful choices?
Stages of the Sophomore Year (Schaller, 2005)

Stages have *tone* and *content*
Students may experience multiple stages at one time
Major content areas: Relationships, Self, Academics

- **Random Exploration:** exuberance, lack reflection
- **Focused Exploration:** frustration, reflection begins
- **Tentative Choices:** relief, some lingering anxiety – action begins
- **Commitment:** confidence
**Intellectual Development in Sophomore Year**
*(Baxter Magolda, 1992)*

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<tr>
<th>Absolute Knowers</th>
<th>Transitional Knowers</th>
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<td>Receiving Pattern</td>
<td>Mastering Pattern</td>
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<td>• Student looks to authority figure to guide learning and to gain information</td>
<td>• Student seeks to show authority figure their interest and mastery of material</td>
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<td>• Peers help to make atmosphere relaxed and to ask questions of authority figure</td>
<td>• Peers debate and test each other for knowledge acquisition</td>
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Overview of FYE

- Office and ethos
- Peer Leaders who guide new students through outreach and relationship building
- Programmatic support that include orientation, summer bridge programs, welcome week, common reading, and university 101 course.
- Retention and success focus on targeted student populations that include students of color, commuters, out of state students, first generation students, low income students, international students, and transfer students.
Overview of STEP

- Weekly interaction with faculty outside the classroom
- Engagement with co-curricular programs across campus
- Completion of financial literacy online module and in-person coaching session with trained peer facilitator
- Exploration of six categories of transformational experiences including study abroad, internships, community service, undergraduate research, leadership, and creative and artistic endeavors
- Creation of written proposal for how they will utilize up to $2,000 in STEP fellowship to support their experience
The “T” in STEP Transformational Learning

“Learning that is understood as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experience in order to guide future action.”

(Mezirow 1996)
First and Second Year Learning: Horizontal and Vertical Alignment
First and Second Year Learning

- While we know sophomores have unique needs, colleges front load and end load support. See more FYE and Senior YE programs.
- Call to integrate strategies for learning and assessment across the first two years of college.
- Horizontal Alignment: LO → Curriculum → Assessment
- Vertical Alignment:

(Young and Keup, 2015)
Vertical Alignment in First and Second Year

First Year Objectives

Second Year Objectives
Vertical Alignment in First and Second Year

First Year Objectives
- Learning to study
- College academic expectations
- Making new friends
- Learning about majors
- Exploring independence
- Testing boundaries

Second Year Objectives
- Exploring new academic interests
- Reevaluating friends
- Narrowing major choice
- Exploring independence in congruence with identity

Personal awareness
- Health and wellness
- Time management
- Multicultural awareness
Vertical Alignment in First and Second Year

First Year Objectives
- Finding resources
- Developing a template
- Figuring out where to start
- Developing a question

Second Year Objectives
- Selecting the right resources
- Critical and evaluative analysis
Vertical Alignment in FYE and STEP
Vertical Alignment FYSS and PDCs

- **First Year Success Series (FYSS)**
  - Over 500 autumn semester workshops focused on student transition content. Student required to attend through survey.
  - Theme areas include academic and career exploration; diversity and global awareness; finances; health and wellness; and leadership and civic engagement.

- **Professional Development Co-Curriculars (PDC)**
  - Required two part financial literacy program. Additional xx session requirement.
  - Themes include community engagement/global citizenship; career preparation; information literacy/academic success; wellness; leadership development; discovery themes.
  - Skills include communication, critical thinking, self-awareness, ethical decision making, interpersonal engagement, and global citizenship.
FYSS and PDCs: What’s the Same and What’s Different?

SAME

- Students come with varied levels of abilities, experiences and skills
- Students need to hear directly from presenters about what they will earn and why it’s important to their future success
- Both should be engaging and interactive
FYSS and PDCs: What’s the Same and What’s Different?

SAME

• Both require presenters to engage students who may be there to simply fulfill a requirement

• Some content may be overlapping (i.e. resume development or developing strategies for stress management)

• Outcome is not completing an assignment or checking the box—it is learning
Areas of Difference

FYSS                      STEP

Students all new to campus  Students have lived experiences

Ends with structured reflection  Can begin with structured reflection

Resources for college transition  Resources for college and beyond

Connecting to community  Connecting to self

Transformational learning
First and Second Year Learning
Next Steps
Continued FYE and STEP Collaboration

- Collaborate to train campus partners
- Regular meetings and communication
- Common assessment measures
References


Thanks for coming

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