

A First Year Experience Course White Paper

In Fall 2013, the Council of Provosts charged an Ad Hoc Work Group representing UC San Diego's colleges to examine the theoretical and practical elements of a First Year Experience (FYE) class – with an expectation that a pragmatic proposal would be produced. This white paper is the product of that work. The proposal that follows offers the scope, timing, logistics, outcomes, and prospective syllabus of a FYE course which grants academic credit. The FYE proposal draws on faculty, staff, and student perspectives and gives significant consideration to how this course could expedite student progress toward time-to-degree. The proposal also explains the rationale and need for implementing such a comprehensive FYE course to support students' transition to a large and elite research institution.

Our FYE course proposal responds to an urgent need in undergraduate education on campus and would align UCSD with a well-established growing tradition in higher education. University educators have tracked first-year students' adjustment problems for many generations. In 1888 Boston College launched the first Freshman Orientation class and two decades later Reed College pioneered a FYE course for credit. In the following decades, most universities favored the non-credit bearing new student orientation approach. In recent years, some universities have shifted toward the FYE model. In fact, the 2005 National Survey of Student Engagement, which included responses from more than 80,000 first-year students, showed that those who had completed a FYE course (like the one we are proposing) were more positively challenged academically, more likely to engage in collaborative learning activities, interacted more frequently and confidently with faculty, and perceived the campus environment as being more supportive.

Our Ad Hoc Work Group firmly endorses the efficacy of this proposed course, based on our review of the research on FYE courses. The group hopes that the course will be piloted in at least one of the colleges next academic year and expects to revise the class further with input from faculty, staff, and students. This initial proposal for a FYE course is designed specifically for students entering in their freshmen year, and not for transfer students. We intentionally differentiated freshmen and transfer student FYE courses because of the respective distinctions between these two student populations. Transfer students enter UCSD as upper-division students who have fulfilled most general education requirements and already have college experience. On the other hand, freshmen have little or no college experience, and may not be prepared for the leap from high school to the larger and more competitive, research university setting. Given this dramatic significance between the two populations, we are developing a transfer-specific FYE course which, while distinct, will have parallel and some overlapping material with the FYE course for freshmen.

Our FYE course will address issues critical to student success including: mental health awareness and well-being, academic integrity and how to appropriately research and cite sources, getting connected and navigating the large university environment, and choosing

a major. Every one of the aforementioned topics is critical to student success and to moving students efficiently forward toward time-to-degree.

Many freshmen embark on their university experience with frustration and confusion, despite participation in new student orientation coupled with welcoming events (such as mixers, unOlympics, convocation and college staff support throughout the academic year. Students often feel both internal and external pressure about their academic performance and their choice of major. They spend much of their first months on campus adjusting to a new and unfamiliar environment. This adjustment period is often exacerbated by their participation in large enrollment introductory or survey courses. Our students also routinely fail to establish meaningful connections with faculty or grasp the mission of the university. Despite high achievement in high school, our students regularly demonstrate that they are not fully ready for university-level course work and expectations. Many students are already anxious about finding a career after graduation, even as they embark on their first year at the university. UCSD can attempt to alleviate many of these issues through a FYE course.

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FYE Goals

The proposed FYE course expects to achieve three goals:

- 1) Help students understand academic and curricular expectations
- 2) Assist students in engaging and mapping co-curricular opportunities
- 3) Strengthen students' organizational, interpersonal, and wellness skills

To achieve these aims, our FYE course proposal responds to UCSD's increasingly diverse population. UCSD has:

- increased its enrollment of first year international students by over 800% since 2002
- increased its transfer population by 50% over the past decade
- welcomed rising numbers of first-generation college students (up 17% for freshmen and 94% for transfers since 2002)
- an almost 40% increase in students enrolling in the basic writing program (ELWR) since 2007
- led the nation in Pell recipients, which reflects our students' socio-economic diversity; 44% of UCSD undergraduates were Pell Grant eligible in 2012

This FYE course provides strategies for academic success and engagement. In addition, the course prepares students to work successfully in a complex campus infrastructure with over 23,000 undergraduates and addresses issues of student well-being. The FYE course

also responds to trends in technological and digital “flooding” that national research shows is distracting and debilitating in the learning environment. The FYE course strives to close the gaps between students and our faculty/staff and between students themselves to increase social connectivity and reduce isolationism. An important rationale fueling this course is a response to the negative impressions often felt by new students, as articulated in our campus’ USES reports over several years and the 2009 UGASS report.¹ These reports highlighted the strengths of supportive academic programs.

A FYE course is an ideal preamble to prepare students for university expectations as well as for their majors and general education. Since most UCSD students are STEM majors (and our pedagogical STEM strength raises our international ranking and brings in substantial funding), these students will broaden their dimensionality and their intellectual experience by augmenting STEM education with a heightened awareness of and appreciation for UCSD’s liberal arts general education. The FYE course could help students better comprehend the notion of a well-rounded education with its balance and complementation.

In the last three years, UCSD has witnessed a growing interest among faculty, staff, alumni and administrators to build such a course. The historic occasion of drafting this FYE course has vital synchronicity with Chancellor Khosla’s Strategic Planning efforts, with our campus’ Education Initiative and with the high-impact practices established by Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). The Chancellor has made emphatically clear our need to make UCSD a student centered institution and an FYE course is an essential building block to achieving that goal. By doing this, our university will join a well-established nation-wide movement in higher education by offering such a FYE course. Coincidentally, the next national conference (the 33rd Annual Conference) on the FYE will be held in San Diego this winter term (February 15 - 18, 2014).

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Models for a FYE course

Our Ad Hoc Work Group reviewed a plausible variety of models for a FYE course. On one end of the spectrum was the model of an extended summer/fall Frosh orientation which could be projected into winter and spring quarters. Our Work Group is keenly aware that

¹ UCSD’s Undergraduate Student Experiences and Satisfaction Surveys (USES) is available at: <http://studentresearch.ucsd.edu/surveys/uses.html>; Report of the Senate-Administration Task Force on Coordination of Undergraduate Academic Support Services (UGASS) is available at: http://academicaffairs.ucsd.edu/files/ug-ed/uaac/UGASS_report.pdf

new students often do not retain the tonnage of information presented to them prior to the start of the academic year. Thus, UCSD could expand orientation from one or two days to a full week and potentially build comparable weeks for winter and/or spring quarters. Nonetheless, our Work Group acknowledged that the wealth of material that a FYE program must cover to properly address the issues raised would speed through like a bullet train and undermine its effectiveness. In addition, this front-loaded approach would lack integration with the quarter itself. Further complicating this idea of a hyper-packed orientation week would be the housing logistics and, potentially, the additional costs to students and families in order to arrive earlier than customary.

Our work group also considered a variation of the Frosh 87 model, a 1-unit seminar with 20 students that would cover the entire fall quarter. Whether based in the colleges or the academic departments, this FYE seminar would be taught by academic senate faculty (and perhaps, though more expensive, Unit 18 instructors). At first glance, the idea of mobilizing faculty to assist students with their transition to college is enticing. Yet, deeper consideration of this model reveals the near futility of recruiting 180 suitable UCSD senate faculty to teach this course each academic year to 3,600+ first year college students (not to mention the need to assist 2,700 incoming transfer students). In our current model, this would cost \$180,000 annually for faculty at the current Frosh seminar rate of \$1,000 per course. Even if UCSD increased the stipend of the Frosh 87s, we are deeply skeptical that enough faculty could be recruited, especially because the faculty who are already teaching these seminars do so because they value the experience of teaching such courses about topics that interest them. The expectation that 80 or so faculty members who currently teach Frosh 87 seminars will drop their chosen subjects and/or pick up the FYE course will likely be unfulfilled. For the aforementioned reasons, this model does not seem viable or sustainable.

Our Work Group also examined the option of utilizing the infrastructure of our six college writing programs to deliver FYE content. After all, the colleges already have in place faculty lecturers, TAs, with sections and rooms for each academic quarter. This option would require significant modification to the existing college/core programs, which threatens the integrity of their pedagogical design. Furthermore, to reduce lecture and section content in order to accommodate the new FYE material would undermine the strength of our general education programs by diluting the established writing programs' syllabi.

Our Work Group also considered possibilities of online education venues, including webinars and a variation of these ideas with small "flipped" seminars or mid-size lectures. We felt strongly that community building should be an essential part of the FYE and shifting to an online format would mar the immediacy and personal interface with and between students on campus. Moving in this direction would be in contrast to the notion of human engagement.

After considering all of the aforementioned models, our Work Group centered on a full-term (10-week) model, currently in practice at other large research institutions of

higher learning, which entails lectures by ladder rank faculty with discussion sections led by graduate teaching assistants or senior undergraduates. This model was most appealing because of the:

- breadth, depth, and duration of the content (see appendix 1 for course plan)
- empowerment of students serving as TAs (with section size between 15-30)
- likelihood of recruiting 20 faculty members to teach the FYE course to 3600 students (180 students per lecture track), drawing on campus expertise

We are confident that this large-lecture model combined with smaller discussion sections would be the most efficient and desirable use of campus resources, both staffing and financial, given the scale of our first-year student population. The FYE TAs, whether graduate or undergraduate, would require a mandatory pedagogy training program prior to leading the section as well as on-going guidance and supervision. This training program could be designed and offered by the emerging Center for Teaching and Learning and/or draw on the existing College and departmental TA training programs. If the FYE course relies on graduate student TAs, it will need requisite funding and add to the current TA shortage for college programs. If the FYE course drew upon upper-class undergraduate students as TAs, these TAs should obtain course credit. Furthermore, seeing undergraduate TAs lead sections would be empowering to the FYE students, while the undergraduate TAs would be demonstrating meaningful engagement with the campus which is one of the most significant goals of the FYE course.

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Credit bearing units for FYE course

Our Work Group deliberated on the number of credits that the FYE course should merit. We ruled out a 4-credit course option because of concerns about first year course load and time-to-degree complications. We determined that the FYE course should be 2 credits, rather than 1, based on one hour of lecture and one hour of discussion weekly (20 hours total class contact). Further, we propose a Pass/Fail grading model which reflects grading for freshmen and senior seminars at our institution.

Our Work Group drafted a course plan designed to facilitate student adjustment to the pedagogical and social environment with an eye on time-to-degree concerns by addressing topics which, if not managed well by students, may slow matriculation and graduation. Such topics include maximizing study habits, academic integrity, choosing or changing a major, health and wellness, and experiential learning. The proposed course would also draw on the expertise of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs professionals to amplify some of the topics. A collateral benefit of an FYE course would be that UCSD faculty could become better attuned to freshmen challenges as a result of teaching in this program and sharing their perceptions with faculty colleagues in their respective departments.

Before detailing the actual FYE course, we wish to iterate that our students would do well by sharpening their understanding of the interplay between academic integrity and digital literacy, grasping the connection between personal well-being and academic success, strengthening values of diversity and inclusivity on and off campus, and deepening their respective research activities through experiential learning, cultivating professional engagement with faculty, and taking part in international education before graduating.

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First Year Experience Course Outline

The weekly topics for the 10-week FYE course are proposed as follows (see the explanation of the proposed course plan can be found at the end of this document):

1. *Introduction: Opportunities, Challenges, and Expectations of Academic Culture*
2. *Making the Most of the Classroom*
3. *Academic Integrity and Digital Literacy*
4. *Personal Well-being and Academic Success*
5. *Art of Public Speaking: Presenting an Oral Argument*
6. *Diversity and Inclusivity*
7. *Campus and Community Involvement*
8. *Experiential Learning and Engagement with Faculty*
9. *Passion: Choosing/Confirming a Major*
10. *First Quarter Reflections and Planning for the Future*

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The steps to implement the freshmen FYE course are as follows:

1. Submit the FYE course white paper to the Council of Provosts (COP), Deans of Student Affairs, Deans of Academic Advising, Engaged Learning Committee chaired by Amy Binder, Associate Vice Chancellor Barbara Sawrey, and Interim Vice Chancellor Alan Houston for comment and review;
2. Submit the white paper to other strategic offices such as EVC, Senate Leadership, Colleges' Writing Center, Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services (OASIS),

Committee for Preparatory Education (COPE), and the Basic Writing Program (ELWR) and for comment and review;

3. Revise the white paper based on information gathered from 1-2;
4. Seek university approval, funding, and faculty/staff support for an AY2014-15 start;
5. Complete the transfer student FYE course white paper in winter quarter 2014.

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Conclusion

Beyond the use of CAPE evaluations for faculty and similar evaluations for TAs who lead discussion sections, we envision other assessment tools designed in collaboration with the Center for Teaching Development which champions on-going efforts to assess and improve pedagogical effectiveness at UC San Diego. We foresee follow-up contact in winter and/or spring quarter of freshmen year with focus groups and web-based surveys to gather additional data. We propose surveying Academic Advisors, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Student Affairs/Residence Life staff, and the Academic Integrity Office during winter and spring quarters to gather their perspectives on the impact of the FYE course. A longer-range metric might be time to degree and retention data. Concurrent with launching the FYE course, our work group proposes a number of web-based supplements.²

In closing, this FYE course is an exciting, long overdue innovation at UC San Diego which would strengthen undergraduate enrichment and improve our university education. In its half-century of existence, our institution has experienced tremendous expansion and we must mitigate students' struggle with charting a course for success in their first year. The proposed first quarter course can be the cornerstone of an intentional program to make higher education more meaningful and purposeful for all students. The FYE class content facilitates student adjustment and concentrates on a variety of areas to improve time-to-degree. This FYE plan also fits well within the Chancellor's unfolding Strategic

² Concurrent with launching the FYE course, our work group suggests a number of web-based supplements.

We propose that UC San Diego develops a complementary FYE website that could link freshmen with, among other things, fellow students, including transfers (e.g. <http://www.studentexperience.ucla.edu/>). Likewise, a further step would be to modify our New Student Guides for greater application and richer context, moving from our existing format https://students.ucsd.edu/academics/_organizations/new-student-guide/ to a more dynamic format such as <http://www.studentexperience.ucla.edu/first>. Enhancing our campus' peer support capacity outside the classroom could be a potent strategy which we hope to incorporate into the FYE course design. We will also incorporate and encourage students to use the new Undergraduate Research Portal <http://urp.ucsd.edu> during relevant weeks in our FYE course.

Plan, helping undergraduates flourish, and marking UCSD as a student-centered, top tier public institution.

Ad Hoc Work Group – January 12, 2014

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A Prospective Syllabus Structure:

The syllabus is designed to cover topics at strategic points throughout the quarter, with developmental readiness and practical implications also taken into consideration. Content that will be critical to academic success from the outset (such as academic integrity) will be presented at the beginning of the course, while topics that require students to have had a bit more university experience are addressed later (such as research and service options).

Week One - Introduction: Opportunities, Challenges, and Expectations of Academic Culture

Rationale: Many students do not understand the nature of the research university or the way it affects their college experience. In addition, first-year college students face transition issues such as living in a new and diverse environment apart from family, making independent choices that affect their physical and emotional health, and establishing connections with faculty, staff, and other students. This session provides an introduction and recommendations for how to succeed at a research university (Andreatta, 2012).

Content: Provide an overview of the FYE course and explain how students will benefit from active participation. Introduce the role of general education, including humanities, writing, and critical thinking, as a balance to their chosen majors.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of this class students will:

- understand the qualities that are unique to research universities
- increase awareness of UCSD's undergraduate college system
- learn how they can best utilize university staff and resources to be academically and personally successful
- be able to effectively navigate through the UC San Diego academic environment

Resources:

Andreatta, B. (2012). *Navigating the research university: A guide for first-year students*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

Week Two - Making the Most of the Classroom

Rationale: The gap between high school and university is substantial in terms of academic culture and demand. UC San Diego freshmen must make their way in a much larger and more complex environment, while learning in large lecture classes, TA-led discussion sections, labs, office hours, and the variety of faculty and graduate student approaches to each. Rather than simply throwing students into the “deep end” to determine whether they can swim, this session offers an introduction for understanding and succeeding in the university classroom.

Content: This session provides research-based strategies for learning in order to prepare students for successful engagement with university-level course work. The content provides an introduction to the variety of class formats at UC San Diego as well as the diversity of teaching styles, while emphasizing students’ active role and responsibility in the learning process. From understanding the syllabus (and the course goals) and maximizing the value of lecture to embracing effective study habits and empowering students to become active rather than passive learners, this session aims to provide a pathway toward informed engagement with UC San Diego courses, faculty, and teaching assistants.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of this class students will:

- be able to identify effective strategies for learning in the classroom and for studying as well as recognize, in order to minimize, ineffective strategies

Resources:

Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., & Cocking, R. R. (Eds.). (2000). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school*.

Kolb, D. A. (1985). *Learning style inventory*.

Kuhn, D., & Dean, D. Jr. (2004). “Metacognition: A bridge between cognitive psychology and educational practice.” *Theory and Practice*

Baron, J. B., & Sternberg, R. J. (Eds.). (1987). *Teaching thinking skills: Theory and practice*.

Roediger, H., III, & Butler, A. (2010). The critical role of retrieval practice in long-term retention. *Trends in Cognitive Science*.

Zull, J. E. (2002). *The art of changing the brain: Enriching the practice of teaching by exploring the biology of learning*.

Week Three - Academic Integrity and Digital Literacy

Rationale: Many students are not aware of why academic integrity matters for their individual and collective education at UC San Diego. Rather than channel institutional resources and attention toward rehabilitative measures after students have failed to live up to expectations, the goal of this session is to explain why the standard exists in the first place and to show how this academic integrity standard relates to the mission of an institution of higher learning, while underscoring each student's role and responsibility in the process. This session will also address the topic of digital literacy which is defined as "the ability to find, evaluate, utilize, share, and create content using information technologies and the Internet." University work such as writing papers, creating multimedia presentations, and posting information online require varying degrees of digital literacy. Therefore, it is crucial that students understand the rules of appropriate conduct with regard to research, plagiarism, copyright, and privacy in a digital context.³

Content: In partnership with the Academic Integrity Office and Library and through a variety of pedagogical practices, this session will cover academic integrity in course context by addressing such areas as research and writing assignments, exams, and group projects. Additional topics will include how to identify valid online sources and properly cite them; communicating with faculty and university staff (such as with email etiquette); using mobile media devices in the classroom; maximizing the use of virtual advising tools and other online educational resources; understanding privacy issues and settings; and creating a professional image online.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of this session, students will:

- better understand what constitutes academic integrity and violations of academic integrity
- understand the rules of appropriate conduct with regard to research, plagiarism, copyright, and privacy in a digital context
- be aware of all the resources offered through the Library and how to use those resources to successfully complete research and writing assignments

³ The Digital Literacy Project produced by Cornell Information Technologies provides comprehensive information about the key aspects of digital literacy: a guide to conducting online research, academic integrity as it relates to college students' use of digital technologies, and privacy and the internet.

Resources:

Cornell Information Technologies. (2009). *Cornell University Digital Literacy Resource*. Retrieved November 21, 2013, from <http://digitalliteracy.cornell.edu/>

Writing Program Administrators, “Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism, the WPA Statement on Best Practices.”

https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:3oSxBLRvG78J:www.wadsworth.com/english_d/special_features/plagiarism/WPAplagiarism.pdf+wpa+best+practices&hl=en&gl=us&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESgada7GOZkdp0heMYBqABCq4z04p6ZeSlbV7LaSqiQNCt5iKxgOf11CCrXZnhsFHvhBGB4yAI03Sq3g6zHe2dAQJ4HPWFqKF6EafaVHHA1VxUsHvkrLz0-7ms84eDdx4kEQb6S&sig=AHIEtbQj6bsPCMWj2L2GBf296bnMzYOnaA

UCSD Office of Academic Integrity:

<https://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/index.html>

Purdue On-Line Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/1/>

International Center for Academic Integrity:

<http://www.academicintegrity.org/icai/home.php>

Week Four - Personal Well-being and Academic Success

Rationale: A student’s first year at college represents one of the most pivotal developmental periods in a young adult’s life. Competing time demands, managing a wide range of emotions, developing a sense of autonomy and competence are some of the developmental tasks students are working through at this stage in their life (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Students who struggle academically often cite non-academic precipitants to their academic difficulties. Many college students experience mental health issues including depression and anxiety (in fact, UC San Diego’s Office of Students with Disabilities more often provides accommodations for students with psychological issues than any other form of disability) and substance abuse during their academic career. Since these issues can negatively impact students’ ability to perform academically including them as a topic is essential.

Content: With the aid of self-reflection, discussion, and participation, this foundational session will focus on learning appropriate coping skills, the identification of campus resources, and the strengthening of positive interpersonal relationship skills. Students will be exposed to successful time management strategies, and learn healthy behaviors and attitudes connected to the use of alcohol, appropriate sexual conduct, eating, exercise, sleep, and financial responsibility.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of this session, students will:

- be aware of common personal difficulties that college students experience, including the signs and symptoms of depression, anxiety, and substance abuse
- learn the various UCSD resources available if they are struggling with emotional, social, and/or mental health issues
- develop strategies for reducing stress and managing test anxiety

Resources:

Kuh, G. D. (2008). *High impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter.*

Kadison, R., & Digeronimo T. (2004). *College of the overwhelmed: The campus mental health crisis and what to do about it.*

Evans, N., Forney, D., & Guido-DiBrito, F. (1998). *Student development in college: Theory, research & practice.*

The JED Foundation. (2006). *Framework for developing institutional protocols for the acutely distressed or suicidal college student.*

Week Five - Art of Public Speaking: Presenting an Oral Argument

Rationale: Public speaking is a fundamental skill, necessary in every profession and walk of life, yet often left under-addressed in academic setting⁴ This topic equips students with the basic skills necessary to publicly present ideas in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes. It is a skills-based approach that supplements any course of study for students.

Content: This lesson plan would help undergraduates prepare for oral presentations, oral exams, speeches, debates, recitations, or any other public speaking assignment in the classroom or for extra-curricular activities. The lecture and discussion section would cover essential points of application and provide coaching and feedback on areas of public speaking including constructing and organizing persuasive arguments, engaging with an audience or seminar participants, and using the voice and body effectively.

The proposal for this week's focus on public speaking, oral presentations and seminar exchange would emphasize working through the unique traits of oral versus written communication in order to help students gear their thinking for maximum effectiveness and engagement both with listening and responding to oral thought. The topic focus would

⁴ Harvard University offers as part of their Writing Center a course called Expos 40 which is an elective within the Writing Program, and focuses on developing and strengthening the skills necessary for successful public speaking. Students in Expos 40 learn strategies for impromptu speaking, preparing and delivering presentations, formulating and organizing persuasive arguments, cultivating critical thinking, engaging with an audience, using the voice and body, and building confidence in oral expression.

also highlight how to listen for the keys of an argument and how drafting clear and concise arguments translates directly to other academic assignments. It would be beneficial to study the principles of argumentation and arrangement; and critically examine students' speeches and the speeches of others. By becoming better students of public speaking, each student joins a long tradition geared to the art of academic conversation.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of this topic students will:

- rethink how they speak in classrooms and other public venues by understanding and applying new skills and insights about public speaking
- understand and demonstrate heightened awareness of listening skills and oral arguments
- identify ways to present more confidently and clearly

Resources:

Lucas, S. E. (2011). *The art of public speaking*.

Week Six - Diversity and Inclusivity

Rationale: Given the ever-increasing reality of globalization and increasing diversity within our society, the university is uniquely positioned to help students better understand and relate to these phenomena as well as to work towards developing cultural competencies that enable our diverse students to work together toward towards shared goals.

Content: This session advances an understanding and appreciation for diversity and inclusion as essential elements of a public university. Drawing on both local and international concerns and social justice issues, students will engage in collaborative efforts to address community problems through collective action.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of this course section students will:

- examine how their background and experiences impact their values and assumptions
- understand and demonstrate increased respect for the beliefs and values of other cultures
- identify principles for working effectively and respectfully with others, including incorporating diverse points of view

Resources:

Alvarez, L., Alvarez, R., Cutler, E., et al. (2010). *Another university is possible*.

Kuh, G. D., & Whitt, E. J. (1988). *The invisible tapestry: Culture in American colleges and universities*.

Harper, S. R., & Hurtado, S. (2007). Nine themes in campus racial climates and implications for institutional transformation. In S. R. Harper, & L. D. Patton (Eds.), *Responding to the realities of race on campus. New Directions for Student Services* (No. 120, pp. 7-24). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Zuniga, X., Williams, E., & Berger, J. (2005). Action-oriented democratic outcomes: The impact of student involvement with campus diversity. *Journal of College Student Development*, 660-678.

Week Seven - Experiential Learning and Engagement with Faculty

Rationale: One goal of university education is engagement. We empower students with academic content and skills which they, in turn, apply in their professional and personal lives. Experiential learning offers students the opportunity for application, reflection, and enhanced understanding.

Content: This session furnishes students with the evidence for the academic and personal value of experiential learning through which students strengthen and expand existing knowledge, develop new skills, and apply themselves beyond the classroom. The session will present students with the variety of opportunities at UC San Diego to connect class content with first-hand experience through study abroad, service work, wilderness programs, leadership opportunities, laboratory work, internships, and more. Primary parts for students include service, mentoring, and reflection. Students serve with community partners in pre-established roles and projects directly aligned with the course learning objectives. In addition to serving, students complete academic assignments. Learning about AIP, The Experiential Learning Portal, Career Services Center, UCSD's Extension offering of LAUNCH and CREATE, etc., will enhance students thinking about off campus projects. This comprehension occurs in a variety of ways: class discussions and debates, written assignments, discussion board posts with peer responses, and individual or group presentations. Examples of current UCSD service projects: tutor and serve as teaching assistants in affiliate charter schools, assist migration projects, Jacobs School of Engineering's Summer Team Internships, and the newly formed Center for Global Justice.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of this session, students will:

- be able to identify UC San Diego resources and opportunities for experiential learning

Resources:

Butin, D. (2010). *Service-learning in theory and practice: The future of community engagement in Higher Education*.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*.

Eyler, J. (1999). *Where's the learning in service learning*.

Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*.

Moon, J. (2004). *A handbook of reflective and experiential learning: Theory and practice*.

Roberts, J. (2011). *Beyond learning by doing: Theoretical currents in experiential Education*.

Week Eight - Campus Involvement and Civic Engagement

Rationale: College students spend more time outside of the classroom than in it and gain valuable experience from involvement in extracurricular activities such as internships, organizational involvement, employment, and volunteer service. Research shows how student engagement with their campus community positively correlates to higher rates of persistence and retention so supporting students in this area can potentially help advance them in time-to-degree. Such engagement also challenges students to manage their time and stress and to work effectively within a team. It is incumbent upon the university to help students acquire the appropriate skills and knowledge to engage in an increasingly complex and global society with sensitivity, responsibility, and competence.

Content: During this session students will explore the concepts of social responsibility, civic engagement, leadership and service learning through readings, participation in an out of class experience, and reflective writing assignments. Students will be directed to establish and develop their own e-portfolio mapping their co-curricular university experience and intended outcomes.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of this course section students will:

- identify co-curricular experiences that promote personal, social, and professional development
- demonstrate leadership as an experience and corresponding leadership theories
- identify principles of responsible citizenship within and beyond the campus community
- develop an individualized e-portfolio mapping their co-curricular university experience

Week Nine - Passion: Choosing/Confirming a Major

Rationale: Many UCSD students feel family or societal pressure to choose a major that will result in a successful (aka lucrative and prestigious) career without considering their own interests, abilities, and values when selecting their major. If they are undecided or begin to struggle in their intended major, some students become discouraged and even depressed. Dispelling myths around majors and careers may help students consider the full range of options and make more informed choices which would also help them make better time-to-degree progress.⁵

Content: Students will be asked to consider how they decided on their current major; the Top Ten Career Myths will be introduced; Four Year Plans, the UCSD Catalog, and various additional major and career exploration tools (<http://career.ucsd.edu/undergraduates/explore-careers/choose-a-major.html>) will be highlighted.

Learning Outcomes:

- As a result of this course students will
 - articulate their own major decision making process and determine whether they need to engage in further major/career exploration
 - identify major exploration tools and resources they can use to solidify their major/career decisions.

Resources:

University of California, Berkeley Career Center:
<https://career.berkeley.edu/article/070119a-sbd.stm>

NACADA Career and Major Exploration Resource Links:
<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Career-and-major-exploration-resource-links.aspx>

UC San Diego Career Services Center: <http://career.ucsd.edu/>

Week Ten - First Quarter Reflections and Planning for the Future

⁵ “Some people may have a major or career in mind when they enter college and a few may actually stick with these original goals. However, the majority of entering college students change their minds about majors and careers several times before graduation. In fact, the average student who enters college with a declared major changes it three to five times. On the other hand, the average student who enters college with an undeclared major changes only one to two times” (Top Ten Career Myths - University of California, Berkeley Career Center).

Rationale: UCSD freshmen, routinely at the top of their high school classes, have entered their first year experiencing intense competition among their peers and challenges to personal confidence. The tools and topics from the first nine weeks of this course must coalesce so that students can proceed better prepared for the balance of the academic year. The focus of this week will be to initiate forethought and planning to help students achieve this goal.

Content: A review of each week's content will allow the instructor to either reemphasize key ideas and/or underscore the ideas with a synthesis of analogous notions drawn from other weeks. By the very nature of a review week, students might help determine what points need greater clarification.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of this “final chapter” week, students will:

- anticipate practical plans to study with greater focus, using methods and tools to manage time, stress, and academic work
- reflect on troubleshooting points previously highlighted this quarter, particularly when problems occur that were not previously foreseen

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Bibliographic Reference Material

UCSD's Your First College Year Surveys (YFCY):
<http://studentresearch.ucsd.edu/surveys/yfcy.html>

A task force report from University of Albany (2009):
http://www.albany.edu/ir/FYE_TF_Final_Report.pdf

Jessica Bigger, University of Memphis. Advising First-Year Students:
<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Advising-first-year-students.aspx>

Joe Cuseo, Marymount College. The Empirical Case for the First-Year Seminar:
<http://webs.wichita.edu/depttools/depttoolsmemberfiles/OFDSS/101%20FYS%20Research/FYS-empirical-evidence-10.pdf>

Michael P. Ryan's and Patricia A. Glenn's article identifies the two main tropes used for first year seminars (academic socialization vs. learning strategies):
http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?nfpb=true&&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=EJ690847&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=EJ690847

The First Year Experience and Academic Literacy:

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/30037915>

The 2003 National Survey of First-Year Seminars (a survey of 600 different programs):

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED503171&_ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED503171

An overview of learning communities and first year programs put out by South Carolina's Center on First-year experiences, which is where extensive first year experience work is being done:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED433743&_ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED433743

John Gardner and Lee Upcraft book on the Freshman Year Experience (Gardner heads up the University of South Carolina's Center):

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED310664&_ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED310664

University of South Carolina's web site on FYE:

<http://www.sc.edu/fye/>

Helpful research on what other schools are doing and how they are evaluating their programs:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED433742&_ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED433742

Recent article in the Chronicle that is realistic about what is good and bad about a first year experience. This article also covers the academic seminar model vs the tools/strategies model:

http://chronicle.com/article/The-Many-Faces-of-the-Freshman/140543/?cid=at&utm_source=at&utm_medium=en

“Methods of Inquiry” by Morris Finder:

<http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Journals/EE/1964/EE1964Methods.pdf>

“Measuring the Impact of a University First-Year Experience Program on Student GPA and Retention” by Eric Jamelske:

http://download.springer.com/static/pdf/415/art%253A10.1007%252Fs10734-008-9161-1.pdf?auth66=1389752248_c74e27c39886b9d3615bf38566d1f390&ext=.pdf

“The Freshman Year Experience: Student Retention and Student Success” by Meg Wright Sidle and Janet McReynolds:

<http://cmapspublic3.ihmc.us/rid=1L78SPK80-C8ND90-Z1L/Sidle%20and%20McReynolds.pdf>

“Assessing the Effectiveness of a College Freshman Seminar Using Propensity Score Adjustments” by M. H. Clark and Nicole L. Cundiff:

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11162-010-9208-x#page-1>

Lists of institutions hosting first-year seminars:

http://tech.sa.sc.edu/fye/resources/fyr/syllabi_list.php