# Final Report of UNIV 1000 Committee

April 2012

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Across the country, public universities face the challenge of providing students with a high quality education while state allocations continue to shrink. In addition, universities are increasingly asked to provide evidence of performance (output) to justify academic expenditures. The UNC system and East Carolina University are no different. There is evidence that well-designed programming for first-year students, including first-year seminars, can have substantial positive influence on several key performance indicators, including retention, persistence, and graduation rates.

Because of this renewed focus on performance measures and the impact of first-year initiatives on both freshman-to-sophomore retention rates and student success, Provost Marilyn Sheerer assembled a committee of student affairs staff, academic advising staff, and faculty (the UNIV 1000 committee) to study first-year seminars. The committee was asked to identify the various models for first-year seminar courses; review the successes, failures, and issues with the current ECU first-year seminar course (COAD 1000); choose among existing models or develop a new seminar model to meet the needs of ECU students; specify objectives and learning outcomes for the optimal ECU first-year seminar; consider whether or not the content of the recommended first-year seminar requires more than one course; describe the resources needed to deliver the recommended first-year seminar; and provide other relevant information about implementing a required first-year seminar at ECU.

This report details the committee’s work and recommendations. The committee concludes that first-year seminars can be an effective way to introduce students to college life and can have a positive effect on standard performance measures. When done well and formulated as an integrated part of the first-year experience, first-year seminars can also result in significant positive improvements in students’ academic abilities and preparation for the rest of college. It is clear that the expertise of many groups (including faculty members, student affairs educators, advising center and tutoring center staff, and others) is critical to successfully educating the whole student. The committee was unanimous that it is crucial to have a coherent, integrated, and unified approach to the first-year experience that involves the collaboration of all the relevant parties.

The available data made it extremely difficult to draw reliable conclusions about the effectiveness of ECU’s current first-year seminar (COAD 1000). This is because (1) in most of the data sets, the sample size is small relative to the total number of first semester freshman, (2) the sampling strategy (questions asked) does not allow for analysis of causation, and (3) standard forms of assessment have not been performed on this course.

The committee did not reach an agreement as to a specific model for the first-year seminar that would be best for East Carolina University and our students. Some committee members proposed to replace the existing optional seminar (which follows the extended-orientation model) with a required faculty-taught hybrid course that provides coverage of the study skills and acclimation to campus issues that are the primary focus of the extended-orientation model in the context of an academic discipline-based or interdisciplinary focus that is also intended to promote academic engagement. Other committee members wanted to continue use of the
existing extended-orientation model with the option for students to take the faculty-taught hybrid
course.

The committee’s recommendations offer a path forward for utilizing the first-year seminar to
improve key performance metrics while also emphasizing academic engagement, introducing
students to the life of the mind, and promoting student success through enhancing the students’
engagement in campus life. The committee recommends that ECU take the following next steps
toward an integrated first-year program:

1. **Pilot several academic/hybrid seminars, along with the currently offered COAD 1000
course (with minor modifications as highlighted in this report), during the fall 2012
semester.** Under any future scenario, it will be necessary to continue teaching multiple
types of seminars as we transition into the final first-year seminar model or models.

2. **Ensure that all first-year seminars have the following underlying objectives:**
   - to help students become oriented to the intellectual life,
   - to assist students with life skills,
   - to engage students in university and academic life, and
   - to provide opportunities for active academic engagement from the first course at
     the university.

3. **Immediately begin a robust, longitudinal study of the effectiveness of first-year
seminars at ECU.** All sections of both the pilot academic/hybrid seminar and COAD
1000 should be assessed in a manner similar to other courses on campus, and a
controlled longitudinal study of the seminar program (based on well-defined
outcomes/objectives) should be undertaken. Participation in the Pirate CREWS project
would facilitate development of high quality assessment and evaluation instruments and
appropriate use of the resulting data.

4. **Begin in the fall 2012 semester, the process of review of the models proposed herein
and of the curriculum implications of requiring a first-year seminar of all incoming
students.** The UNIV 1000 committee offers this report as a starting point for that
review and welcomes the opportunity to continue to participate in the important campus-
wide discussion and decision-making. Because these are curricular proposals, this
process must proceed through the existing curriculum review and implementation
procedures as overseen by the Faculty Senate. A challenging first-year seminar that
achieves the objectives outlined above would benefit all students; however, many degree
programs leave students with no free electives that would allow for the additional
requirement of a multi-credit first-year course. Creative solutions to this problem could
involve a reassessment of program requirements, the use of existing course designations,
and other issues that are within the purview of the faculty.

5. **Before mandating that all students take a first-year seminar, a campus-wide decision
must be made whether to offer a single or multiple seminar models.**
I. Background and Overview

A first-year student on a college or university campus is in many ways a stranger in a strange land. Even the most well-prepared student is likely to encounter academic conduct, customs, and conventions that are startlingly unfamiliar and challenging. To be sure, conditions of novelty, discontinuity, and discrepancy can and do have the positive effect of activating in students the effortful thinking that is a hallmark of higher learning (Gurin, Dey, Gurin, and Hurtado, 2004). Cluelessness and confusion are always good starting points for learning; if the methods and manners of academics and the academic setting are mysterious to students, the hope is that these students will begin to question and explore their way out of their mystification. But, such conditions can also overwhelm students beyond any productive threshold of cognitive dissonance.

We in higher education tend to forget how opaque the culture of academe can seem to those encountering it for the first time. There is a long tradition of depicting the academic society and its members in terms of territories, tribes, and clubs where the exclusion of outsiders – whether intentional or unintentional – is often highlighted as one of the central features of these arrangements (Becher, 1989; Meier, 1995). Newcomers to this society often confront academic culture shock at every turn: in the unfamiliar disciplinary schemes, in the often abstract and inaccessible ways scholars communicate, and in the sometimes bizarre rituals and traditions of the university. Students may be forgiven for thinking that they have been admitted to a club whose rules are shrouded in secrecy. Meanwhile, demystifying club rules – letting newcomers in on “how things are done around here” – is one of the avowed functions of the first-year seminar.

In a word, the first-year seminar is designed to contribute to student success by facilitating the adjustment to college. Importantly, with appropriate structuring, the first-year seminar can also serve to prepare students for the academic life by helping them adjust to the types of critical thinking, independent learning, and individual and collective work that will be expected of them throughout their college careers. This systematic focus on student success can be understood as a counterpoise to the “sink or swim” mentality that has pervaded higher education philosophy and practice for many years. As John Gardner puts it, postsecondary institutions often seem to “operate under the assumption that students know how to do it – or if they don’t they’ll flunk out and it’s their problem.”

Increasingly, though, it’s not just the students’ problem, it’s our problem. College completion has become one of the watchwords of our times, with public officials and academic leaders touting it as indispensable to economic competitiveness and social progress. A national college completion agenda is being propelled (and, in many cases, funded) by influential stakeholders, including Lumina Foundation for Education, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The College Board, the Obama administration, and state governors. Lumina’s “Big Goal” for college attainment is the most visible of these efforts; Lumina is pushing for 60% of Americans to possess a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential by 2025. (In 2010, 38.3% of working-age Americans held a two-year or four-year degree.) For its part, the Obama administration would like to see an additional 5 million Americans with some level of postsecondary education by 2020. Thirty-six states have their own college completion goals that are codified in laws,
executive orders, or strategic plans. Whatever their (mostly minor) differences, these various initiatives all partake of a common narrative that places higher education at the core of individual mobility, national economic security, and civic renewal.

Today, roughly half of all students who enroll in postsecondary education depart before earning a degree (Strayhorn, 2009). The national retention rate for first-time college freshmen returning for their second year of four-year public higher education is 76.9%; in North Carolina, the rate is 82.5% (National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009). Partly in the interest of boosting these rates, campuses are routinely turning to summer bridge programs, pre-college “pipeline development” initiatives, academic study skills courses, and first-year seminars. First-year seminars are widely acknowledged by educators to be a high-impact educational practice (see, for example, Kuh, 2008). According to a 2010 national survey administered by ACT, What Works in Student Retention?, the freshman seminar was the curricular practice identified by public four-year college and university respondents as making the greatest contribution to retention on their campuses (ACT, 2010).

North Carolina is a late-comer to the completion mandate, but new performance funding proposals mean that we too will shift from enrollment funding to funding that is, at least partially, based on student completion outcomes. If we are not careful, this completion agenda can have unintended consequences. As was recently pointed out by Gary Rhoades (2012) of the Center for the Future for Higher Education (and others – for example, Walters, 2012) the rush to completion and the focus on the numeric of retention and graduation rates has the potential to water down academic rigor and, importantly, to disadvantage underprepared students. We do not have to teach our students well to meet the new performance metrics; we simply have to make sure our students pass through our classrooms and, eventually, walk away with a diploma. But, if we respond to the pressure to retain and graduate more students by allowing the quality of our students’ education to deteriorate, we put our students’ futures at risk. Hence, we must find a way to both meet the new retention and graduate rate goals and continue to offer our students high quality academic experiences and a world-class education that will allow them to acquire the critical thinking, writing, and analytical skills they need to compete in the economy of the future. We must make sure that our students have the preparation (and the resources) they need to learn and to succeed: rigorous curricula, excellent and involved faculty, and a wide array of readily available academic support services. The first-year seminar is an integral part of this preparation.

First-year seminars are best understood with reference to, and in the context of, a wider focus on the first-year experience, just as the first-year experience itself must be understood with reference to the whole of the collegiate experience. Undergraduate education serves a broad purpose: “to turn eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds into twenty-one and twenty-two-year-olds, to help them grow up, to learn who they are, to search for a larger purpose for their lives, and to leave college as better human beings” (Lewis, 2006). The first-year seminar helps to set the tone and the stage for that massive endeavor, or at least it ought to. It is not synonymous with the first-year experience, but the seminar is the most visible emblem and unifying force of that experience. It is the centerpiece of what is acknowledged to be a reform movement more than 30 years in the making (since 1980). Various forms of first-year courses, though, have been in existence in American higher education since the late 1800s (Gordon, 1989), most of these
having been designed to equip students with knowledge about their institution and about college life more generally.

Among the many objectives cited by institutions offering first-year seminars are retention, persistence, enhanced academic performance, intellectual development, intellectual confidence, engagement, positive connections/interactions with faculty and peers, career exploration, and awareness and use of campus support resources. Although the original course goals were more education-specific (for example, they included gaining an understanding of student development in higher education), as it is currently taught ECU’s own version of the first-year seminar, COAD 1000, has four main purposes: to develop a sense of belonging, to develop academic skills, to develop life skills, and to develop career direction.

COAD 1000 (originally EDUC 1000) has been taught at ECU since 1989 (see Appendix A) and can boast many successes. For example, although there is no apparent increase in graduate rates for students taking COAD 1000, the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate of students taking COAD 1000 does exceed the University-wide retention rate by approximately 2%. This suggests that the students who take COAD 1000 do benefit from their participation in this first-year experience. Hence, the longstanding interest in systematically reviewing and rethinking the COAD 1000 programmatic structure in an effort to make it both more effective and more relevant to the needs of our current generation of undergraduate students. As just one example, the lack of faculty participation in the course (there were only 5 faculty instructors out of a total of 83 in 2011) has been a perennial cause for concern, and it is a problem that is amplified when one considers that one of the most prominent and consistent findings in the literature on the first-year experience is that faculty engagement in these seminars is critical (see, for example, Alexander and Gardner, 2009). Another shortcoming of the current COAD 1000 offering is that less than half of the first-year student population enrolls in the seminar in any given year.

The work of the UNIV 1000 Committee was undertaken in response to, and informed by, several recent developments, including the University of North Carolina’s policy of tying enrollment growth funding to retention and graduation rates, a strategic plan that commits East Carolina to develop one of the nation’s best first-year programs, the 2008 report of the Strategic Enrollment Management Task Force, the 2010 report of the First-Year Experience Study Group, and ECU’s engagement in the Foundations of Excellence® self-study process coordinated by the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. Together, these initiatives have formed the backdrop against which our committee has conducted its analyses.

Most important, in 2010, following the recommendation of the First-Year Experience Study Group as outlined in its final report (see Appendix A), ECU embarked on a comprehensive self-study of all aspects of its first-year experience in an effort to improve student learning and increase persistence toward degree completion. Numerous ECU faculty, staff, and administrators have participated in the Foundations of Excellence® initiative over the past year and a half, many of them as members of one or more of nine foundational dimension committees: Philosophy, Organization, Learning, Faculty/Campus Culture, Transitions, All Students, Diversity, Roles and Purposes, and Improvement. With a campus-wide conversation focused on the first college year and related concerns, it was appropriate to convene a smaller
group of faculty and student affairs educators to consider the particular role of the first-year seminar in contributing to a more holistic, integrated, and meaningful first-year experience.

The Committee was charged with the following tasks:

- Identify the various models of delivery of first-year seminar courses
- Review all pertinent information on the successes, failures, and issues with the current model
- Consult with colleagues in the various Foundations of Excellence dimensions committees throughout the process
- Choose among the models or develop a model of delivery specific to the needs and desires of the ECU experience based on all pertinent information
- Specify objectives and learning outcomes for the content of the optimal course of ECU freshmen
- Consider the nature of content and whether or not such content requires more than one course
- Detail the resources necessary to implement the model(s) chosen
- Provide any other information relative to the decision-making process for implementing UNIV 1000

Committee members (Appendix B) began work in September 2011, with the previous committee’s report (Appendix B2) as background and with the following operating assumptions:

- A first-year seminar is one – albeit integral – component of an overarching, integrated, and multi-faceted first-year experience, one that includes orientation, advising, mentoring, interactions with faculty, and many other mutually reinforcing practices. We must resist the temptation to ask too much of the seminar, lest it become the de facto hub of first-year programming, thereby excusing the rest of the campus from responsibility for assisting in first-year success.

- A campus as large and diverse as ours properly reflects multiple – and sometimes conflicting – understandings of undergraduate student development and the special challenges faced by students in transition. These various understandings may be informed by combinations of personal experience, professional orientation, disciplinary affiliation, and numerous other identity distinctions. Our committee membership represents a number of relevant groups on campus, but there are certainly others that are missing from our deliberations. We welcome the input and insights of additional campus constituencies in the interest of strengthening our recommendations. Our collaborative work over the past several months has been a reminder that there are educators among our ranks who possess expert knowledge and substantial experience in student development theory and practice, and we squander these at our peril.

- We must increase and enhance faculty involvement in the first-year seminar. If students are to understand and navigate the nuances of academic craft and culture, it is important that faculty play a more direct, engaged role as their guides. Letting students in on the mystery of what academics are up to (or think they’re up to) when they teach, conduct
research, and otherwise engage in the life of the mind or the world of ideas will begin to reveal aspects of our scholarly community that seem impenetrable to many first-year students. While we hope and expect that much about the academy will be unveiled to students as they journey through, we believe that structured opportunities for them to be clued in to this strange new world – as an object of study and analysis in its own right – constitutes a strong start.

Part II of the report presents theoretical and empirical support for first-year seminar effects and effectiveness, nationally and at ECU. Part III briefly examines types of seminars and their advantages. Part IV reviews elements of the first-year experience currently on offer at ECU. Part V presents 2 models for the first-year seminar at ECU. In Part VI, we summarize and conclude our study and advance our overarching recommendation for a path forward that allows for the development and implementation of a first-year seminar that has a common set of academic and developmental objectives for all first-year students at East Carolina University. The Appendices include detailed course proposals for both the extended orientation (current) and the academic/hybrid model for the first-year seminar, information about the financial and time resources needed for each model, and various other information that the committee hopes will be of use to the Faculty Senate committee(s) that take on the responsibility for developing and implementing this important curricular redesign.

II. Theoretical and Empirical Support for Seminar Effects/Effectiveness

An understanding of the principles of student success and student development theory is crucial in institutional planning for a successful transition for incoming first-year students. The first-year seminar draws on two broad categories of student development theory: (a) developmental theories of student change and (b) theories of college student change (Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005). Developmental theories of student change focus on the nature or content of student changes, whereas theories of college student change focus on the sources of change. The basic concepts of these theories are summarized in Appendix C. Here we focus on specifically on the first year of college.

The First Year of College

Upcraft, Gardner, and Barefoot (2005) have taken stock of the accomplishments of the first-year experience movement, which they identify as follows:

- Increased campus-wide, national, and international conversation and action about the first year of college
- The introduction and revision of initiatives designed to help first-year students succeed
- The expansion of research and scholarship on the first year of college
- The development of closer collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs
- The emergence of credible assessment studies to demonstrate the efficacy of initiatives to help first-year students succeed
The integration of technology into first-year initiatives
The inclusion of diversity in first-year initiatives
The centrality of the classroom in efforts to promote first-year student success
Increased external funding in support of the first-year experience

But, there are many remaining challenges:

- There is no consensus about a clear sense of purpose in the first year
- First-year student academic success rates are still too low
- College is far less challenging than first-year students expect
- Building first-year initiatives that are responsive to today’s increasingly diverse students is still a challenge
- The link from research and assessment to policy and practice is still weak
- Several myths about the first year of college still abound
- The priority on the first year of college is still not sufficiently high on some campuses
- Institutional efforts to help first-year students succeed are still not sufficiently integrated
- Efforts to help first-year students succeed are too often focused on retention rather than student learning
- There is a continuing struggle for status of first-year initiatives among competing institutional priorities
- Many student success initiatives are marginal to first-year students’ academic experience

Finally, there are a number of major developmental issues facing students as they enter college, including:

- Developing feelings of intellectual and academic competence
- Establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships
- Exploring identity
- Making career decisions
- Considering issues of faith and spirituality
- Developing civic responsibility

II. Types of Seminars and Their Advantages

First-year seminars tend to fall into four distinct types (Swing, 2002): (1) college transition (also known as extended orientation), (2) academic theme (with either uniform or special content), (3) discipline-based, and (4) remedial/study skills themed seminars. While the majority of first-year seminars are of the college transition themed variety, academic seminars appear to be an increasingly popular choice, as is the potentially even more rapidly growing type of seminar that we will call a hybrid themed version—effectively a first-year seminar that contains some combination of more than one of the above approaches. We briefly discuss these three main
types of first-year seminars (college transition, academic, and hybrid), along with some advantages of each approach.

**College Transition/Extended Orientation Seminars**

College transition themed seminars typically deal with content aimed at assisting students in making a more healthy academic, social, and psychological adjustment to the college world. Topics often focus on college resources, life transitions, basic academic skills, and student development issues. In a recent review of 19 of East Carolina University’s peer institutions, approximately 15 institutions offered college transition themed first-year seminars; in a 2009 survey of first-year seminars, approximately 40% of U.S. institutions offered college transition seminars (Padgett et al., 2009).

Significant research has demonstrated the effectiveness of first-year seminars in positively impacting academic and adjustment variables for new college students (Porter & Swing, 2006; Tobolowsky et al., 2005). However, research examining the specific strengths and limitations of the various types of seminars is much more limited. Friedman and Marsh (2009) compared special academic and college transition seminars in looking at one-year retention rates, grade point averages (after the first year), and student course perceptions at Appalachian State University. Results indicated no significant differences on the variables of retention and grade point averages; however, students in transition seminars reported significantly greater satisfaction with out-of-class engagement and knowledge of campus policies than their counterparts in academic themed seminars. In addition, while not statistically significant, the transition seminar group had higher means than the academic seminar group on all measured factors relating to student success.

While their study did not look at seminar type as a predictor of persistence, Porter and Swing’s (2006) research indicated that student ratings of several course effectiveness factors were significantly positively correlated with the intent to persist. These factors included study skills, campus policies, campus engagement, peer connection, and health information—suggesting the importance of effective teaching of these topics in any first-year seminar.

**Academic Seminars**

Academic seminars are discipline-based seminars often “offered as an introduction to a major or academic department and are usually housed in individual academic departments” (Friedman & Marsh, 2009). Typically, there are three types of academic seminars (Padgett & Keup, 2011):

1. **Academic seminars with uniform content across sections.** These seminars have a primary focus on an academic theme or discipline, with consistent content across all sections within a department. These often incorporate academic skills components, such as critical thinking and expository writing.
2. **Academic seminars on various topics.** These freshmen seminars employ variable section-themed content, usually based on the faculty members’ expertise, academic interests, or research.
(3) Preprofessional or major-linked academic seminars. These seminars are typically taken by students interested in pursuing a particular profession or academic major. They are usually taught by faculty within professional schools, with content designed to prepare students for the demands of a particular major.

A strength of the academic seminar model is increased interaction between first-year students and faculty. Student-faculty interaction in and out of the classroom has been shown to promote student academic integration and, ultimately, persistence (Gordon & Grites, 1984; Kuh, Schuh, & Whitt, 1991). Academic freshmen seminars taught by departmental faculty create small support groups of students and faculty, resulting in high levels of interactivity, mutual trust, and respect (Keup & Barefoot, 2005).

Several studies have evaluated the effectiveness of academic seminars compared to other types. Swing (2002) found that students rated these types of seminars as highly effective in improving academic/cognitive skills and critical thinking skills and in “using engaging pedagogies.” In a similar study comparing academic and “college transition” (extended orientation) type first-year seminars at Appalachian State University, Friedman and Marsh (2009) found no significant differences in GPAs or one-year retention levels among those students enrolled in each.

**Hybrid Seminars**

The term “hybrid model” was introduced around 2006 and includes those freshmen seminars that intentionally blend elements from both the academic and extended orientation types (Padgett and Keup, 2011). A hybrid seminar focuses on teaching academic content while also reinforcing student success skills and orienting students to campus life. Careful reading of the most comprehensive study of various seminar types (Tobolowsky, Cox, & Wagner, 2005) shows that there is much overlap in classification of hybrid, and academic seminars. Some hybrid courses are taught as a “learning community” by some combination of departmental faculty and academic advisors or student affairs educators. Others are taught by academic faculty with the support of student affairs and academic affairs staff. Some courses listed as “academic” by Tobolowsky et al. (2005) have strong and intentional extended-orientation and study skills components. This overlap in styles is makes compiling comparative data difficult, but it also illuminates an important point: academics, student development, and study skills are all important to student success.

Several studies have reported favorable outcomes with the hybrid model. Students participating in a hybrid class report a deeper understanding of the purpose of a college education, an increased belief that professors are interested in their personal success, and a stronger connection to the university, to faculty, and to campus resources (Sommers, 1997).

Of private 4-year institutions, the University of Calgary, the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, the University of Delaware, and the University of Texas at El Paso, all have “academic” seminars with strong student development and study skill components. These seminars fit into our definition of the hybrid seminar model. Longitudinal studies of these seminars (Tobolowsky et al., 2005) reveal that these hybrid seminars have significant positive impacts on student retention and student learning. Tobolowsky et al. (2005) report the following reports that the
academic/hybrid seminar had the following benefits for student learning and performance ratings at the University of Calgary: students who take academic/hybrid courses taught by faculty members are “more comfortable speaking to professors, using the library, and adapting in general to the university environment. They also rate collaborative work more positively . . ., report a much higher level of one-to-one engagement with the professor than in most other courses, . . . are more likely to return to the library a number of times as their research questions deepen, seek a wide range of sources of information, write exploratory drafts . . ., and integrate primary and secondary sources into an argument rather than merely reporting information.”

Further, a study of the academic/hybrid seminar at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, revealed that “fall-to-fall retention rates for . . . 1997 to 2001 were higher for students who took the seminar compared to those who did not.” Also, student surveys showed that communication skills, use of campus resources, relationships with faculty, adjustment to college, technology skills, and integration into the campus community greatly improved as a result of the academic/hybrid seminar. Similar results were also seen at the University of Delaware (where the seminar has a combined focus on academic and psychosocial transition into the university) at UT El Paso. Interestingly, at UT El Paso, students who entered the university in an “at risk” category (with academic, language, or economic difficulties) had significantly higher retention rates over a four year study period than those who did not take the academic/hybrid seminar.

**IV. Review of What ECU Currently Offers**

ECU’s version of the first-year seminar, COAD 1000, has had a relatively long history of fostering first-year student development and success. The course was first offered at ECU in 1988 as a two hour non-credit bearing course with a limited number of sections that were taught under the direction of Don Joyner and titled EDUC 1000. After a three-year pilot study of the course, research indicated that students enrolled in EDUC 1000 were retained at a higher rate than students electing not to enroll in the course. The University’s curriculum committee approved EDUC 1000 as a one-hour course offering in 1991. The course was moved to the Department of Counselor and Adult Education in 1993, resulting in the prefix change to COAD 1000. By the mid-1990s, with the increased national emphasis on student success and persistence, the course offerings were expanded and taught (voluntarily) by academic advisors, student life staff, and ECU faculty.

The COAD 1000 course is a graded, one credit hour course that meets two times each week. The course is not mandatory but is highly recommended to incoming freshmen and transfer students. The course is promoted throughout the New Student Orientation program. Currently, the course resides in the Department of Higher, Adult, and Counselor Education (formerly the Department of Counselor and Adult Education), with implementation and operational oversight provided by the Office of Student Transitions and First Year Programs. The course is designed with four overarching goals:

1. **To help students develop a sense of belonging.** Class size is kept between twenty and twenty-five students to enhance connections between students and the instructor.
Students are introduced to East Carolina University resources, organizations, and traditions in order to help students feel a part of the campus environment.

2. **To teach academic skills.** Students are taught how to read a textbook, how to take notes during a lecture, memory techniques, and test-taking skills. Academic policies are reviewed so that students are familiar with requirements and information in the course catalog. Grade Point Average calculations are reviewed.

3. **To assist students with life skills.** Class discussions include time management techniques, stress management, alcohol, drug usage, relationships, diversity, leadership, and more.

4. **To begin the career development process.** Sections that are major-specific can address major requirements and career options for particular majors. Other sections address career exploration in broad terms (values, personality types, etc.).

These goals are met through eleven core competencies that must be covered in each section of the course. These competencies are College Transition, Campus Resources, Academic Rules and Regulations, Study Skills (time management, test taking, note taking, reading, memory), Learning Styles, Registration, Diversity, Life Skills (including money management, stress management, alcohol, drugs, relationships, sleep, and safety), Career Exploration, Technology, and Leadership. It should be noted that many of the topics listed here are taught in other courses across campus. For example, all of the drug and alcohol material is taught by disciplinary professional in the required HLTH 1000 course that is required of all ECU students. As the format and content of first-year seminar is discussed, it will be necessary to determine which, if any, of these topics is not appropriate for an extended-orientation model taught by non-disciplinary professional.

Sections may be designed for students interested in a particular major, learning community, program, or population, but all sections must still cover the core competencies. A common first page of the syllabus that outlines the course description, goals, and objectives is used for each section.

The COAD 1000 course experienced tremendous growth between 2001, when 4.6% of the incoming freshman class was enrolled in a course, to a record enrollment of 45.8% in 2009. In fall 2011, over 1,600 students were enrolled in the 89 sections of the course, equivalent to 43.8% of the incoming class. There are as many sections of the course offered as possible, which is determined by the number of instructors recruited. The goal is to offer COAD 1000 to all the students who want to take the course. In fall 2011, there were 29 sections open to all students, 40 sections offered by major (e.g., Allied Health, Business, Undecided), and 20 special topic sections (e.g., African American Male, GLBT, Teaching Fellows, Transfer).

COAD 1000 is also offered during the spring semester. One section is typically reserved for students who start college during the spring semester. Other sections (in addition to READ 1031 sections) are populated with fall first-time, full-time students who are on academic probation after the first semester and who did not take COAD the first semester.

Instructors are academic advisors, student affairs educators, staff members (including library staff), and faculty. In fall 2011, there were 33 sections taught by academic advisors, 33 sections
taught by student affairs educators, 12 taught by staff members, and 5 sections taught by faculty. Most COAD 1000 courses are taught by student affairs or advising center staff, who teach the class as part of their normal job duties. The few faculty who teach the course, usually teach it as an overload (in addition to their regular teaching load).

The Department of Higher, Adult, and Counselor Education personnel committee approves adjunct instructors. Candidates submit a current CV and a statement of purpose for teaching the course and are required to have at least eighteen hours towards a master’s degree or a demonstrated commitment to students. Dr. Vivian Mott, Chair of the Department of Higher, Adult, and Counselor Education, reviews the Student Opinion of Instructor Survey results for returning instructors.

All new instructors are required to attend training sessions. The training ensures understanding of the history and purposes of the course, core competencies, student development theories, and teaching and learning styles. Also discussed are syllabus construction, classroom activities, available resources, and classroom knowledge.

At the request of the UNIV 1000 committee, fall 2011 instructors were asked how much time was spent preparing and teaching the COAD 1000 course. Fifty-one individuals responded to the request and reported that between 2 and 4 hours were spent teaching the course (some instructors have two sections) and just over 3 hours each week preparing for class. There was no correlation between time spent preparing for class and the number of years teaching the course.

As currently taught, COAD 1000 reaches 43.3% of the first-year students and uses approximately 7020 hours of employee time, mainly from staff members in Student Affairs and the Academic Advising Collaborative. These staff members serve as instructors for each of 90 sections. In addition there are frequent class presentations by other staff members. In fall 2011, there were over 232 hours spent by offices presenting to COAD 1000 sections. These included Alcohol and Drugs (Bob Morphet), Study Skills and GPA Calculations (Pirate Tutoring Center), Financial Literacy (Mark Weitzel, Len Rhodes, and Bill Pratt), and others. The 232 hours did not include some offices, such as the Ledonia Wright Cultural Center and the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, which are known to present in various sections.

COAD 1000 is one component of a full complement of programs, initiatives, and activities supporting first-year student success. These additional programs include Undergraduate Admissions, New Student Orientation, Pirate Read, New Student Welcome and Convocation, Plunge Into Purple, Advising, Campus Living, Pirate Tutoring Center, the First-Year Composition Program, and Transfer Student Services. More detailed information about each of these areas can be found in Appendix C.

Data from COAD

The two “performance standards” that are paramount in most performance funding models are freshman-to-sophomore-retention rates and 4- and 6-year graduate rates. In order to determine the effectiveness of COAD 1000 from the perspective of these performance standards, we review two data sets: (1) a series of studies by the Division of Enrollment Management that examines
sets of data covering various periods from 2000 through 2008 and (2) a new IPAR data set that covers academic years 2000 through 2011.

This analysis focuses on students who took COAD 1000 during the first semester of their freshman year. It disregards data concerning students who took other “intervention” courses (e.g., READ 1031) and students who took COAD 1000 in the spring semester of their freshman year. We make this distinction because we are concerned about the effectiveness of a first-year seminar for ALL students, not about courses for students with demonstrated deficiencies (such as READ 1031) or courses for students in academic difficulty (such as the spring sections of COAD 1000). In some cases, it was impossible to disentangle the data – to split the data in such a way that fall semester COAD students could be analyzed separately from students in other types of courses. When this was the case, we ignored the data altogether.

**Previous Analyses**

Although there are several studies that examine the impact of COAD 1000 on various subgroups of students (based on gender and race, for example), the sample sizes in these studies are too small to make the studies statistically useful. For example, in a 2004-2007 study that tracks students who took COAD 1000 by race and ethnicity (Table 1), the sample size was so small for black students and for Hispanic/Asian/Native American students that the year-to-year high levels of volatility in retention rates for that group are likely a result of the small sample size.

Another report, titled “COAD ECU Retention Table 2008-2010,” is shown in its entirety in Table 2. While high retention rates, such as those shown in Table 2, would be encouraging, they are difficult to interpret because it is unclear how long the students were retained and because not all COAD students are included in the sample set.

| Table 1. Proportion of COAD 1000 Students Retained by Race/Ethnicity and Enrollment |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Enrolled in COAD 1000 | White | Black | Hispanic/Asian/ Native American | All Students with Racial/Ethnic Designation |
| Fall 2004 | Yes | 80.7% (n=300) | 79.6% (n=35) | 85.7% (n=12) | 80.2% |
| | No | 79.9% (n=1,782) | 76.9% (n=333) | 75.5% (n=108) | 75.2% |
| Fall 2005 | Yes | 78.7% (n=576) | 78.3% (n=112) | 76.9% (n=30) | 78.9% |
| | No | 78.8% (n=1,399) | 76.3% (n=228) | 82.3% (n=116) | 78.7% |
| Fall 2006 | Yes | 79.5% (n=763) | 84.0% (n=121) | 85.7% (n=36) | 80.2% |
| | No | 75.1% (n=1,402) | 80.8% (n=390) | 71.6% (n=111) | 75.8% |
| Fall 2007 | Yes | 78.1% (n=804) | 79.9% (n=115) | 68.2% (n=30) | 78.1% |
| | No | 75.1% (n=1,572) | 76.1% (n=302) | 71.5% (n=108) | 74.8% |

**New IPAR Data Compilation**

Because of such difficulties with previously collected data, and in the hope that a new data set might be more useful for the purposes of this report, we requested that IPAR compile an independent data set that would allow comparison of retention and graduate rates for students who did and did not take COAD 1000 in the fall semester of their freshman year. Tables 3 and 4 summarize the newly compiled IPAR data. These data compare the key indicators for students
who took COAD 1000 with those who did not take COAD 1000: graduation rates (2000 through 2007) and retention rates (2000 through 2010).

Table 2. Report entitled “COAD ECU Retention Table 2008-2010.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total students enrolled in COAD – fall semester</th>
<th>COAD students who returned following fall semester</th>
<th>COAD retention rate</th>
<th>University goal retention rate</th>
<th>University retention rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008 – 2009</td>
<td>1728</td>
<td>1634</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>78.7%</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 - 2010</td>
<td>1682*</td>
<td>1603</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 – 2011</td>
<td>1748*</td>
<td>1639</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>81.36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*CHE cohorts not included

Table 3. Retention rates for first-time, full-time freshman. Overall, the median freshman-to-sophomore retention rate for those who took COAD 1000 is 3.9% higher than for those who did not take COAD 1000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Time Full Time Freshman - Retention Rates</th>
<th>Did not register for COAD 1000 first year (median = 76.8)</th>
<th>Registered for COAD 1000 first fall term (median = 80.3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2000</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>80.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2001</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>83.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2002</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2003</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>82.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2004</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>80.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2005</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>79.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2006</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>80.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>84.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total All Cohorts</td>
<td></td>
<td>median = 76.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data-based Conclusions

It is extremely difficult to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of COAD 1000 based on these data sets because (1) in most of the data sets, the sample size is small relative to the total number of first semester freshman and (2) the sampling strategy (questions asked) does not allow for analysis of causation. Nevertheless, it is striking that the difference in retention and graduate rates between students who took COAD 1000 and those who did is so small (in either the positive or negative direction). As shown in Table 4, for two of the eight of the years for which there are data (2000 and 2004), there is less than 1 percentage point difference between the 4-year graduate rates for COAD and non-COAD students. And, for three of the eight data years, students who did not take COAD 1000 showed higher 4-year graduation rates than those who did take the course. In general, the 6-year graduate rates show slightly larger positive differences for student who took COAD. Even so, with the exception of 2001, the 6-year graduate rates for
students who took COAD 1000 improved an average of only 2.92% over those that did not. Taken as a whole, the data in Tables 3 and 4 suggest that there is no statistically based reason to suggest that COAD 1000 has any influence at all (either positive or negative) on students’ graduation and retention rates.

In summary, even when students who took COAD 1000 were seemingly retained at higher rates than those who did not take the course, there is no way to determine the causation because there are many factors that can impact retention rates (e.g., actively engaged parents, more motivated students, etc.). Whether or not enrollment in COAD 1000 was among those factors is unknown.

TABLE 4. Four- and six-year graduation rates for student who did and did not take COAD 1000 for the 8-year period from 2000 through 2007. Note that in five of the eight years for which there are 4-year graduate-rate data the difference between those who took COAD 1000 and those who did not take the course is either less than 1% (2000 and 2004) or negative (that is, student who did not take COAD were more likely to graduate in four years than those who did take the course).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Time Full Time Freshman Graduation Rates</th>
<th>Graduating After N Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not register for course first year</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered for course first fall term</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not register for course first year</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered for course first fall term</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2002</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not register for course first year</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered for course first fall term</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not register for course first year</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered for course first fall term</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not register for course first year</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered for course first fall term</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2005</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not register for course first year</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered for course first fall term</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not register for course first year</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered for course first fall term</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not register for course first year</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered for course first fall term</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. Recommendations for Seminar Format at ECU

The overarching recommendation of the UNIV 1000 committee is that East Carolina University adopt a first-year seminar framework that ensures that students are academically challenged from outset of their college experience while also providing them the practical skills and acculturation that are needed for college success.

Multiple course formats could be used to accomplish these objectives. The UNIV1000 committee provides two of those models (Figure 1) and suggests that the university community (using the in-place curriculum design, review, and implementation procedures) begin a discussion of which model would best serve ECU’s students.

![Diagram of seminar formats](image)

Figure 1. Two models for a required first-year seminar that were developed by this committee. Model I is the Extended-Orientation model that is used in the current COAD 1000 course. Model II is a faculty-led, theme-based Academic/Hybrid course that could be (at the discretion of the faculty member) focused on an individual discipline or theme and taught by an individual faculty member, team-taught (in the case of an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary theme), or taught in collaboration with a student affairs educator.

The two proposed models are summarized below (and compared in Table 5). Details about these models (including the course rationale and logistics, content, learning objectives, estimated costs in terms of time and money) are presented in Appendices E and F to this report and a description of the learning community proposed to development an evaluation model for these seminars is presented in Appendix G.
Table 5. Comparison of the two first-year seminar models discussed here and detailed in the Appendices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brief Description</th>
<th>COAD 1000</th>
<th>ESS Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>extended orientation seminar</td>
<td>disciplinary (or multidisciplinary) theme-based academic/hybrid seminar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Focus (in order of emphasis)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>COAD 1000</th>
<th>ESS Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adjustment to college life</td>
<td>• academic engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student development</td>
<td>• intellectual engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>academic skills development</td>
<td>• academic skills development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intellectual engagement</td>
<td>• student development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• adjustment to college life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Format**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>COAD 1000</th>
<th>ESS Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 semester hour of academic credit</td>
<td>• 3 semester hours of academic credit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multiple expert guest lecturers</td>
<td>• academic engagement around a theme-based project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>co-curricular events</td>
<td>• required co-curricular events/workshops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staffing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>COAD 1000</th>
<th>ESS Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mostly student affairs educators and academic advisors</td>
<td>academic unit faculty (with or without SA educators)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cost estimate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>COAD 1000</th>
<th>ESS Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200 sections x 20 students/section; $1500 per instructor per section = $300,000 estimated maximum total cost = $75/SCH</td>
<td>160 sections x 25 students; &quot;replacement&quot; faculty for 50% of those section = $400,000 estimated maximum total cost = $67/SCH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the purposes of this report, the phrase “academic engagement” is meant to describe the ways that students are encultured to the processes of learning and creating knowledge within a discipline or an interdisciplinary context. It includes, but is not limited to, actively engaging students in the process of asking questions, assembling evidence, formulating answers, and communicating those answers in ways that are appropriate to the particular discipline. Students undertake research-based learning that, through their own experience, unveils for them the processes of investigation and discovery that are at the heart of the academic enterprise.

Regardless of the seminar model that is ultimately chosen by the faculty as the best format for ECU, all first-year seminars, no matter their format, must have the following underlying course goals:

- *To help students become oriented to the intellectual life,*
- *To assist students with life skills and introduce them to campus services,*
- *To introduce students to civic engagement and academic life,* and
- *To provide students with opportunities for active academic engagement from the first course at the university.*

**Model I: UNIV1000 – Extended-Orientation Seminar (as currently used in COAD 1000)**

This model makes use of the extended orientation model currently on offer at ECU through COAD 1000 (1 credit hour). In addition to changing the course title to UNIV 1000, the new version of this extended orientation course will have the following characteristics:
The seminar will require active student involvement and personal responsibility and emphasize oral and written communications.

Individual section will be taught by a variety of instructors, including student affairs educators and academic advisors; faculty members will continue to be encouraged to teach sections as well.

Peer mentors may be utilized, depending on availability and instructor request.

Class size will be capped at 20 students.

The course will be recommended, but not required.

Special sections will be offered for GLBT students, African American males, transfer students, international students, and others.

The course focuses on the psychosocial integration of students into the college community. As discussed in Part II of this report, this integration is essential for the success of our students and is equally challenging for both academically disadvantaged and academically well-prepared students. The extended-orientation course may be taught by a disciplinary faculty member, but to-date most sections have been taught by Student Affairs educators with the aid of various student affairs specialists (counselors, tutoring center personnel, etc.) from across the campus.

A variety of desired learning outcomes and course objectives (as detailed in Appendix D) are used to help the student become acculturated to life on campus, develop life skills, investigate career development opportunities, develop the study and critical thinking skills that are necessary for academic success, and take responsibility for their own success in college.

This course is designed to be interactive among students and instructor and to focus on group discussion and group activities. Lectures, guest speakers, field trips, exploration activities, and written assignments are included.

All instructors follow the same syllabus template and must attend training prior to teaching the course. Training typically is six to eight hours long and covers the purpose of the course, core competencies, syllabus construction, helpful activities, and classroom management tips. The training is led by the coordinators of the course. (See Appendix D for more details.)

**Model II: Academic/Hybrid Seminar (the Emerging Scholars Seminar)**

The Emerging Scholars Seminar (ESS) is proposed as a new academically oriented, hybrid seminar to be required for all first-year students with the goal of enhancing student success. The ESS program introduces students to academic culture through faculty-led, small-group exploration of a discipline-based theme. ESS courses would be hybrid courses, designed to explicitly help students thrive and achieve their academic potential in the university environment by combining both academic and student success components. The courses would include an intentional focus on building academic success skills and co-curricular involvement by integrating skills training in the context of specific disciplinary themes and academic content. In this way the ESS program helps the university efficiently maximize the utilization of limited resources by bridging the gap between the talent pools in Student Affairs, Academic Advising, and the faculty members in the academic units. This seminar will provide a foundation for a
better model of undergraduate education that pays attention to the development of the whole student.

It is increasingly acknowledged that the best and most effective approaches to undergraduate education are student-centered models that contribute to the intellectual, social, emotional, and personal development of the whole student. Such integrated approaches to university education (1) help students become engaged citizens capable of understanding a complex, diverse, globalized world, (2) promote the acquisition of the skills and abilities that enable students to gain and utilize knowledge to solve real-world problems, guided by informed social responsibility, and (3) provide students with entrée into the intellectual life that constitutes the university experience. This integrated approach to undergraduate education requires coordination of the efforts of the three key groups that directly affect student success: Student Affairs, Academic Advising, and the faculty members in the academic units and programs across campus.

A hybrid seminar focuses on teaching students academic content while also reinforcing student success skills and orienting students to campus life. The proposed ESS would introduce students to academic culture through the exploration of a discipline-based theme, employing active and engaged research-based learning. The theme explored in each seminar will be developed with the intention of piquing the interest of first-year students. The seminar content will be used as a vehicle for demonstrating the academic enterprise for the students and engaging them with the subject matter, research methods, and written and verbal communication styles appropriate to the discipline underlying the seminar. An array of skills that are crucial to academic success (critical thinking, critical reading, writing, speaking, library-, laboratory-, or field-based research, note-taking, etc.) will be taught to students through their practical application to problem-solving. Broadly speaking, the theme-based seminars will help entering freshmen become acculturated to the academic world by participating in it.

Faculty members and staff members from Student Affairs and Academic Advising will collaborate to (1) implement coordinated efforts to address the social, personal, and academic development of the student, (2) call upon their specialized knowledge to teach associated content, and (3) encourage co-curricular activities, such as cultural events, lectures, films, and other experiences that complement seminar themes. Scholar Skills Building (SSB) workshops, online modules, and residence hall-based events will address particular skills or deficits, including note-taking skills, registration, study skills, technology, and the like. Through these efforts, the first-year seminar will help students realize their fullest potential as learners and as well-rounded people.

Course proposals and individual course syllabi will be developed by faculty members in the academic units and would be approved via the regular course proposal and approval process. All faculty members who teach an ESS course will receive training prior to teaching the seminars to ensure that they are up-to-speed on the student development issue that they will need to address in the context of the course, and students would register for the course during orientation and the normal preregistration process. At least two variations one the individual-faculty-taught ESS course are envisioned: a team-taught version which matches a disciplinary faculty member with
a student affairs educator and a team-taught interdisciplinary version that is team-taught by two or more disciplinary faculty members (see Appendices E for details.)

## VI. Primary Conclusions and Recommended Steps Forward

What is known (from the literature in the field and from the experience of other universities) is that engaging students from the beginning of their academic careers is essential to their success and that engagement with faculty is most crucial. A first-year seminar program that ensures such active engagement, coupled with a robust assessment program designed to determine the effectiveness of that program, is essential for the future of our university.

Although this committee did not reach an agreement as to the specific model that would be best for East Carolina University and our students, we did agree – without dissent – that a high-quality first-year seminar is an important component of a strong first-year program, an important key to enhancing student success, and important to some performance metrics. The committee also agreed that, because the curriculum is the purview of the faculty, the final decision about how to implement a required first-year seminar must be handed over to the normal faculty governance channels, namely to the academic units, the Faculty Senate, and the various curriculum and academic standards committees on campus.

The committee hopes that this report will be used as jumping off point for a campus-wide discussion concerning enhancing student success via first-year programs. Further, the members of the committee would welcome the opportunity to continue to participate in this important discussion and decision-making processes.

The primary conclusions of this effort are intended to offer a path forward for utilizing the first-year seminar to improve key performance metrics while at the same time focusing on academic quality and introducing students to the life of the mind.

The committee recommends that ECU take the following next steps toward an integrated first-year program:

1. **Pilot several academic/hybrid seminars, along with the currently offered COAD 1000 course (with minor modifications as highlighted in this report), during the fall 2012 semester.** Under any future scenario, it will be necessary to continue teaching multiple types of seminars as we transition into the final first-year seminar model or models.

2. **Ensure that all first-year seminars have the following underlying objectives:**
   - to help students become oriented to the intellectual life,
   - to assist students with life skills,
   - to engage students in university and academic life, and
   - to provide opportunities for active academic engagement from the first course at the university.

3. **Immediately begin a robust, longitudinal study of the effectiveness of first-year seminars at ECU.** All sections of both the pilot academic/hybrid seminar and COAD 1000 should be assessed in a manner similar to other courses on campus, and a controlled longitudinal study of the seminar program (based on well-defined
outcomes/objectives) should be undertaken. Participation in the Pirate CREWS project would facilitate development of high quality assessment and evaluation instruments and appropriate use of the resulting data.

4. **Begin in the fall 2012 semester, the process of review of the models proposed herein and of the curriculum implications of requiring a first-year seminar of all incoming students.** The UNIV 1000 committee offers this report as a starting point for that review and welcomes the opportunity to continue to participate in the important campus-wide discussion and decision-making. Because these are curricular proposals, this process must proceed through the existing curriculum review and implementation procedures as overseen by the Faculty Senate. A challenging first-year seminar that achieves the objectives outlined above would benefit all students; however, many degree programs leave students with no free electives that would allow for the additional requirement of a multi-credit first-year course. Creative solutions to this problem could involve a reassessment of program requirements, the use of existing course designations, and other issues that are within the purview of the faculty.

5. **Before mandating that all students take a first-year seminar, a campus-wide decision must be made whether to offer a single or multiple seminar models.**

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**VII. References Cited**


Gordon and Grites, 1984;


Swing 2002


Appendices

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A Brief History of the First-Year Seminar at ECU

In 1987, Dr. Don Joyner, who at the time was a “University Residence Counselor,” returned from a First-Year-Experience conference excited about the idea of a course for freshmen. Dr. Carolyn Fulghum, Dean of Students at the time, directed Don to the Retention Committee of the Faculty Senate. Dr. Susan Smith (Clinical Laboratory Sciences), a member of that committee, formed a faculty sub-committee to develop a course proposal and lead it through the course approval process. This committee was told that in order for the course to carry credit it would have to have an “academic home.” Dr. Dorothy Muller, then Dean of the Office of Undergraduate Studies, first asked Dr. Eugene Ryan, Dean of Arts and Sciences. Dean Ryan declined. Later, Dr. Charles Coble, Dean of the School of Education, agreed to house the course in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. In 1987, the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) approved EDUC 1000 (2 s.h), with the understanding that it would be reviewed again in 3 years. Dr. Joyner was hired to direct the program. During the three-year period the number of sections taught per semester ranged from three to fifteen.

In 1991, at the end of the three-year trial period, the UCC again approved EDUC 1000, but only as a one-hour course. The UCC concluded that EDUC was a “developmental” not an “academic” course and therefore this one hour should not count as hours toward graduation. (The approved Course Proposal is attached.)

The 1990-1992 Catalog includes the following:

EDUC 1000: Freshman and the University 2 sh. Prerequisite: Limited to student enrolled in first two semesters at ECU and with fewer than 32 sh. of credit. Provides an introduction to the university: the goals of higher education, the development of academic skills and processes, the use of university resources and services, the exploration of career options, and the enhancement of personal skills vital to student success. May not be counted toward a degree in the School of Home Economics.

In 1993 the course moved to the COAD Dept. and became COAD 1000. Some restrictions were added to the 1996 catalog description:

May not be counted toward general education, certification, or degree requirements. Prerequisite: Limited to student enrolled in first two semesters at ECU and with fewer than 32 sh of credit. Provides an introduction to the university: the goals of higher education, the development of academic skills and processes, the use of university resources and services, the exploration of career options, and the enhancement of personal skills vital to student success.” (209)
In 1996, several changes occurred. EDUC 1000 was moved to Undergraduate Studies with Dr. Joyner coordinating it in his role as Coordinator of the Freshman Seminar and Associate Director for the Academic Support Center. However, the course was still offered through the School of Education. Dean Muller asked to offer the course out of the Office of Undergraduate Studies as UNIV 1000, but the VCAA at that time would not support the move. The Faculty Senate also opposed this move. The title was changed to COAD 1000: Student Development and Learning in Higher Education. The credit hours were reduced from 2 to 1, but the course was granted graduation credit, instead of institutional credit (like MATH 0045).

The description from the 1996-1997 Undergraduate Catalogue reads:

\[\text{COAD 1000: Student Development and Learning in Higher Education. 2 classroom hours per week. Limited to students enrolled in the first two semesters at ECU or consent of instructor. Introduction to student life at the university with particular focus on the development of academic skills, learning processes, career decision-making, and personal attributes essential for student success}'' \text{ (p. 212 of 1996-1997 Catalog).}\]

COAD 1000 remained under the direction of Undergraduates Studies until Provost William Swart discontinued the office in 2003. At this time, Dr. Joyner became the Asst. Vice Chancellor for Academic Services in the Provost’s office. Dr. Jayne Geissler administered COAD 1000 under Don from 2003 until 2005, when that was assigned to role to Dr. Al Smith, Director of the First-Year Center (also in the Provost’s office).

\[\text{Based on information provided to the UNIV 1000 Committee by Dr. Dorothy Muller and Dr. Don Joyner.}\]

\[\text{Appendix A1 (next pages)}\]

\[\text{Original COAD 1000 Proposal and Syllabus (then called EDUC 1000)}\]
MEMO

TO: Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
FROM: John J. Schmidt, Chair
        Counselor and Adult Education
DATE: October 20, 1995
RE: Course proposal COAD 1000

Please put the enclosed proposal on the agenda for consideration at the next curriculum committee.

Thank you
East Carolina University
COURSE PROPOSAL FORM
(Revised 6-14-91)

Date 9/7/95 This is a proposal for a: ______ new course

X revision of an existing course

I. CATALOG INFORMATION

A. Course Number & Title (cleared by the Registrar's Office?) X yes ____ no
   COAD 1000 Student Development and Learning in Higher Education

B. Credit Hours: 2/1 (graduate credit)

C. Weekly:
   (1) Classroom lecture hours required: 2
   (2) Circle which type:
       lab/studio/practicum/internship hours required: 0
       Ratio of number of lab hours: ______ to number of credit hours: ______

D. Prerequisites:
   Limited to students enrolled in first two semesters at ECU, or permission of instructor.

E. Catalog Description:
   An introduction to student life at the university with particular focus on the development of
   academic skills, learning processes, career decision-making, and personal attributes essential
   for student success.

F. Current Catalog Placement (by page number): 1994-96
   Undergraduate Catalog
   209 (formerly EDUC 1000)

   Graduate Catalog

G. Degree Programs or Courses affected by this proposal (by catalog page number).
   MUST SEND A PHOTOCOPY OF THE CATALOG PAGES(S) SHOWING THE CHANGES
   AND THE PROPOSED CHANGES IN CATALOG FORMAT TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE
   CURRICULUM COMMITTEE AND TO THE APPROPRIATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
   CHAIR(S).

   Undergraduate Catalog

   Graduate Catalog
II. NATURE OF COURSE

A. Textbook(s)

See Attached as page 5.

B. Course Objectives:

In this course, students will:

(1) identify and use university programs and services to enhance their development and learning.
(2) examine university policies and programs in becoming more astute educational consumers.
(3) learn time management strategies, note-taking skills, study skills, and other behaviors that contribute to educational success.
(4) discuss theories of student development in higher education and apply these theories in understanding their own development.
(5) use career interest inventories in learning about career development and vocational choice.
(6) develop personal skills and attributes to make appropriate life-style decisions that benefit their college success.
(7) define multiculturalism and its influence on student development and university life.

C. State how this proposed course relates to your unit's operational plan, including program assessment.

This course relates to several unit goals including objectives to demonstrate excellence in undergraduate education, to recruit, retain, and graduate academically proficient and talented students, and to develop a university culture based on respect for individual rights and human diversity.

D. Syllabus:

See Attached

E. Requirements of Students: (For 5000-level courses, please clearly indicate the distinctions in requirements for graduate and undergraduate students.)

Typically, students will demonstrate knowledge of the course material through a research paper, mid-term and final exam, a book report, and essays during the semester.

F. Competencies (for courses affecting teacher education degrees)

X not applicable
______when applicable, attach as page 5 and label "II.E. Competencies"
III. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE COURSE

A. Need for the Course

1. Degree(s), if any, for which this course is required and any changes in the credit hours required for completion of degree caused by the addition of this course:

NONE

2. Reason for offering course: (if recommended to meet the standards of certain accrediting agencies, documentation should be provided to the chairs of the appropriate curriculum committees.)

Evidence over the past few years indicates that this course has a positive effect on students' performance and retention. This revision should strengthen this objective and at the same time introduce students to the field of student development in higher education.

3. Expected yearly student enrollment: 250

B. Staff and Facilities

1. Staff needed to offer course:
   X present staff is adequate
   ______ additional staff is needed; if so, describe:

2. Facilities needed to offer course:
   X present facilities are adequate
   ______ additional facilities are needed; if so, describe:

3. Library resources:
   X initial resources are adequate
   ______ additional resources are inadequate; if so, estimate the cost necessary for acquisition of initial resources: $________

4. Computer resources in department/unit:
   X initial computer resources are adequate
   ______ initial computer resources are inadequate; if so, estimate the cost necessary for acquisition of initial computer resources $________

5. Additional cost involved: 0

6. Unit Head's Signature: __________________________
   Official Title: Charlie Coble, Dean SOE
C. Miscellaneous

1. Interdisciplinary action and/or coordination with other affected departments or interests:
   
   X not applicable
   
   applicable (Please clarify below, indicating affected units, and provide documentation to chairs of the curriculum committees.)

2. Clarification on any apparent overlapping or duplication of course(s) currently offered by any other ECU department or school:

   X not applicable
   
   applicable (Please clarify below and provide, to the curriculum committee chairs, documentation of notification to (and response of) those other units concerning this proposed course.)

3. Statement and date of departmental, unit, or program action:

   X approved
   
   not approved
   
   not applicable other (explain) Date 10/19/94

4. Statement and date of Director of Computing Center if computer use external to the unit is anticipated:

   X applicable (Please check each applicable statement below)
   
   will need mainframe computer system
   
   will need statistical services
   
   will need network connections
   
   will need computer labs for students
   
   not applicable

   Signature: (Director of CIS)_________________________ Date __________

5. Statement and date of Council For Teacher Education action:

   X approved
   
   not approved
   
   not acted upon as yet Date __________

6. Statement and date of College or School Curriculum Committee action:

   (Indicate College or School of Education)

   X approved
   
   not approved
   
   not acted upon as yet Date 10/16/95

7. Statement and date of University Curriculum Committee action

   approved
   
   not approved
   
   not acted upon as yet Date __________

8. Statement and date of Graduate Council Curriculum Committee Action:

   approved
   
   not approved
   
   not acted upon as yet Date __________
Distribution:
Copies of the proposal along with a cover letter indicating the action to be taken must reach the appropriate committees at least 10 days in advance of their scheduled monthly meetings. Check with your individual college or school as to the number of copies of the proposal needed by the college's or school's curriculum committee and to whom they are to be sent. Once approval is given by the college or school, 1000-5000-level course proposals are to be sent for consideration to the University Curriculum Committee as follows: 3 copies to the chairperson, 2 copies to the secretary, 3 to the SGA office, 1 to each of the committee members (list available from Faculty Senate Office, 140 Rawl Annex), and 2 to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. All 5000- and 6000-level course proposals are to be sent for consideration to the Graduate Council Curriculum Committee; send 3 copies to the committee chair and 1 copy to each member of the Graduate Council and to non-council representatives on its curriculum committee (list available from the Graduate School Office, 113 Ragsdale).

Proposal prepared by Name ____________________________

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7) *Curriculum Supplement to the 1994-1996 Undergraduate and Graduate catalogs*. (Fall 1995).
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Appendix A2  Report of the 2010 Committee on COAD 1000

UNIV 1000 Working Group 16 August 2010

Final Report and Recommendations
to the Retention and Graduation Task Force

Marianna Walker, Alan White (Co-Chairs), Mary Beth Corbin, Paul Schwager, Lee Sutton

The UNIV 1000 Working Group was appointed by the Retention and Graduation Taskforce (Austin Bunch, Chair) to study the feasibility of implementing a course for all freshmen. The Group met through the Spring Semester and summer of 2010. We present the following report and recommendations for consideration by the Retention and Graduation Taskforce and the ECU Academic Council.

Current COAD 1000 Course

COAD 1000: Student Development and Learning in Higher Education

COAD 1000 is a one-hour credit freshman seminar course that is typically offered in the fall semester. The course is designed as an extended orientation course to help the student develop a sense of belonging, gain academic skills, learn life skills, and explore career and major options.

In fall 2009, there were ninety-one sections of the course offered and had a total enrollment of 1,812 new students. The following special interest sections were offered during fall 2009: Teaching Fellows/Maynard Scholars; Williams Scholars; Athletes; First Generation; International students; two large sections (capped at 100) and two on-line sections.

COAD 1000 is offered in the spring semester typically as an academic recovery course for freshmen who are on academic warning or probation (and have not previously taken the course).

REGISTRATION
Students register for COAD 1000 occurs during or following orientation. Students who attend orientation hear about the course over the two day period. On day two, students may register for COAD 1000 when they meet with their academic advisor or at the end of day two, there is a COAD 1000 registration card the student completes and turns in to an orientation assistant. The COAD coordinator adds these students to sections following orientation. Students can also add themselves to some sections of COAD
1000 following orientation. Students who do not attend orientation can add themselves to the open sections of COAD 1000 beginning August 20.

**COURSE CURRICULUM**

Instructors are notified they must cover eleven core competencies throughout the course. These core competencies are: College Transition, Campus Resources, Academic Rules and Regulations, Study Skills (time management, note taking, reading, memory, test taking), Learning Styles, Course Registration, Diversity, Life Skills (stress management, financial management, alcohol/drugs, and wellness), Career Exploration, Technology, and Leadership.

Below is the page of the syllabus that is given to each instructor to use as the beginning of the syllabus for the course.

**INSTRUCTORS**

The course is instructed on a volunteer basis by academic advisors, student affairs staff, enrollment services staff, and faculty members. Of the ninety-three fall 2009 sections, three instructors were faculty and 65 were “other” (academic advisors, student affairs, and enrollment services staff).

**Approval Process**

New instructors must submit a statement detailing their interest in teaching the course as well as current resume/curriculum vitae. These are submitted to the COAD department personnel committee for approval. Instructors must have completed 18 hours towards a master’s degree in a helping field or otherwise demonstrate their commitment to students. Returning instructors are approved based on the most current SOIS scores.

**Training**

New instructors must attend training prior to teaching the course. Training typically is six to eight hours long and covers the purpose of the course, core competencies, syllabus construction, and helpful activities and classroom management tips. The training is led by the coordinators of the course.

**COURSE TEXT**

The course text is a customized publication that pulls chapters related to the competencies from a variety of sources. East Carolina University specific information is included.

Course Description
COAD 1000. Student Development and Learning in Higher Education. Introduction to student life at East Carolina University. Focus on development of academic skills, learning processes, career decision-making, and personal attributes essential for student success.

Course Goals
The objective of COAD 1000 is to provide training and experiences to allow students to be successful in their first year of college and beyond. Topics to be covered include understanding the transition from high school to college, student development and motivation, goal-setting skills, learning styles, memory development, listening skills, note-taking skills, study skills, test taking, communication, critical-thinking skills, ECU academic rules and regulations, and career development issues.

Course Objectives
By the end of the semester, you will be able to:
A. Discuss your responsibility as a student for your own success in college.
B. Describe ways you can create a successful experience in college.
C. List, describe, and use specific methods to:
   1. Deal with changes in your personal and professional life.
   2. Improve motivation and goal-setting skills.
   3. Understand personal learning style and adapt study skills.
   4. Take effective notes and prepare for and take tests successfully.
   5. Understand your personality profile and fit to major/career choice.
   6. Develop a philosophy of career development.
   7. Locate and utilize a variety of services and resource materials at ECU.
   8. Be knowledgeable about student opportunities in extra-curricular activities.
   9. Understand ECU academic rules and regulations and advising / registration procedures.

Instructional Methodology
This course is designed to be interactive among students and professor. Focus will be on group discussion and group activities. Lecture, guest speakers, field trips, and exploration activities will be included.

Students with Disabilities  East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138 (252) 737-1016 (Voice/TTY).
Proposed UNIV 1000 Recommendations

Recommendations regarding course instruction personnel and oversight.

- UNIV 1000 will be mandatory for all freshmen and will be offered primarily the Fall Semester. Transfer students with less than 30 hrs will be required to take the course.
- As many sections of UNIV 1000 as possible should be taught by faculty, with advisors and others used as course resources, guest instructors, etc.
- Faculty who teach UNIV 1000 should receive standard compensation for each section taught (we propose $1000 to $1500 per course section).
- Oversight for the UNIV 1000 course offerings should be at the unit/college level. Each unit/college will be responsible for offering a certain number of sections of UNIV 1000, based on intended majors. Sections should adhere to the core requirements of the syllabus, so there is common course content across the university. Units/colleges can add discipline specific content as needed.
- Student credit hours will be assigned to the home unit of the instructor teaching the respective course section. (Undecided major sections may be offered through the College of Arts and Sciences).
- Ideally the course size should be between 20-25 students to encourage interaction, but due to the size of the endeavor and limited resources we propose that the average number of students per section of UNIV 1000 will be 30, with an enforced maximum of 40.

UNIV 1000 Course Intent, Content, and Syllabus

It is imperative that goals and objectives for UNIV 1000 are clearly stated in the course syllabus. Syllabi from the current COAD 1000 course focus on the Core Competencies: college transition, campus resources, academic rules and regulations, study skills, learning styles, registration, diversity, life skills, career exploration, technology and leadership.

The purpose and intent of the course are to keep students excited about ECU, to help them succeed in and out of the classroom, and to develop the whole student. Students are provided a variety of academic and social opportunities and presented with a road map for survival at the university. Improved student success and retention of first-year students are the main desired outcomes.

The content and structure of the course may vary slightly from instructor to instructor as each instructor will inflect his or her unique spin on the university and student perspectives as outlined above. COAD 1000 now is 1 credit hour, which seems to suffice in covering the basic Core Competencies. The course structure and content would change if the credit was increased to 2 hours, but the intent would not. As a course that is not disciplined based, the challenge for each instructor/professor will be to convey the purpose and intent while adhering generally to the structure and content of the standardized lesson plan.
**UNIV 1000 Course Modules**

In order to reinforce and support the interactive nature of this course it is suggested that innovative course modules be created by subject area experts across campus. Once the standard course content is determined by the representative group, the modules can be identified and appropriate experts identified. For instance, a group of Instructional Technology Consultants from the colleges might create some basic Blackboard modules. The goal of these modules is to allow the students to learn the basics which will allow the instructor to make the actual teaching sessions much more interactive and engaging.

**UNIV 1000 Course Curriculum Approval Process**

Approval of a proposed UNIV 1000 course will require review by all the various colleges, schools, departments and code units on campus. This presents a problem in navigation through the curriculum approval process. We recommend a unified approval of the proposed UNIV 1000 course in all colleges. A representative group will produce a generic new course proposal, which is general enough to allow approval in all the colleges, yet allow for modification within each unit as necessary. Each college will put the same, generic new course proposal through their own curriculum approval process. Once all colleges have approved, the proposal will move through the university-level curriculum approval process as a unified course proposal. There will be some SACS considerations regarding CIP code assignment for the course. Generic and multiple CIP codes should allow for a broad range of faculty to teach the course without credentialing problems arising. Each college will be responsible for assuring proper instructor credentials.

**UNIV 1000 Pilot and Implementation**

We recommend implementing as many of these UNIV 1000 recommendations as are feasible this fall semester 2010. During academic year 2010-11, UNIV 1000 course proposals should go through the college and university curriculum approval process outlined above. Full implementation of UNIV 1000 for all incoming freshmen would start in the fall semester 2011.
Appendix B

This report is respectfully submitted by the UNIV1000 committee.

Co-Chairs:
MaryBeth Corbin – Director, Office of Student Transitions and First Year Programs
David Siegel – Associate Professor, Dept. of Higher, Adult, and Counselor Education

Members:
Brenda Bertrand – Associate Professor, Dept. of Nutrition Science
Anthony Britt – Director of Admissions
Elizabeth Coghill – Associate Director, Pirate Tutoring Center
Matthew Dwyer – Director, Center for Counseling and Student Development
Todd Fraley – Associate Professor, School of Communication
Jayne Geissler – Executive Director for Retention Programs and Undergraduate Studies
Karen Kus – Director, Advising Center, College of Business
Derek Maher – Associate Professor and Director, Religious Studies Program
Diane Majewski – Disability Support Services and College STAR
Catherine Rigsby – Professor, Dept. of Geological Sciences
Karen Smith – Associate Director, Office of Student Transitions and First Year Programs
Karen Vail-Smith – Teaching Instructor, Dept. of Health Education and Promotion

Ex-officio members:
Austin Bunch – Senior Associate Provost, Enrollment Service
Virginia Hardy – Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs
Developmental Theories of Student Change

Developmental theories of student change include (1) psychosocial development (including identity formation) theories, (2) cognitive-structural theories, (3) typological theories, and (4) person-environment interaction theories and models.

Psychosocial Development (Including Identity Formation):

These theories consider individual development as the completion of a series of developmental tasks. Chickering and Reisser’s (1993) theory of identity development is a prominent example. This theory can be helpful in understanding the progression of students’ identity development during college. Students move through seven vectors at different rates and in various orders, with vectors interacting with and building upon one another:

- Vector 1 – Developing Competence: Intellectual, physical, and interpersonal
- Vector 2 – Managing Emotions: Ability to recognize and accept emotions and express and control them
- Vector 3 – Moving Through Autonomy Toward Interdependence: Emotional independence, self-direction, problem solving, and awareness of interconnectedness with others
- Vector 4 – Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships: Increased tolerance and appreciation of differences, and capacity for healthy, lasting, intimate relationships with partners and close friends
- Vector 5 – Establishing Identity: Comfort with body and appearance, comfort with gender and sexual orientation, self-acceptance and self-esteem
- Vector 6 – Developing Purpose: Developing clear vocational goals, personal interests and activities, strong interpersonal commitments, and intentionality
- Vector 7 – Developing Integrity: Humanizing values, personalizing values, and developing congruence

Cognitive-Structural Development

William Perry’s (1970) Scheme of Intellectual and Ethical Development is an example of cognitive-structural development theory. Unlike the theory of identity development, students within Perry’s model progress in a hierarchical manner. Each stage represents a different way of thinking. This scheme illustrates behavior that might be observed in first-year students; they might view the world in terms of “right or wrong” or “black and white” and become frustrated when instructors challenge them to think in shades of gray. Providing assignments that promote critical thinking and analytical consideration of information will assist students in moving along a continuum from dualism to relativism:
• Dualism: Students view the world dichotomously and assume that authorities have all the answers. Students typically have trouble with reflection, comparison, and analysis, because they see learning as little more than a simple information exchange.
• Multiplicity: Students in this stage of development tend to view knowledge subjectively and believe that everyone has the right to their own opinion.
• Relativism: Students recognize the need to support opinions, given that all opinions are no longer equally valid. Context is taken into account and analysis and synthesis now occur. The capacity for empathy is now present.
• Commitment to Relativism: Students learn to tolerate ambiguity and to make choices in a contextual world. They develop a personal set of values and are able to make choices and commitments in the absence of complete information. Continual learning becomes important.

Typological Models

These models highlight the relatively stable differences in ways that individuals perceive and respond to the world and then categorizes individuals according to distinctive characteristics (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). This model would be useful in assisting faculty and student affairs educators in understanding the differences among students and how they react in different ways to similar experiences.

Person-Environment Interaction Theories and Models

These models focus on how the environment influences an individual’s behavior through interactions with characteristics of the individual (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). These models try to identify origins of behavior and provide frameworks for talking about student change and college effects (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Theories of College Student Change

Theories of college student change, or models of student retention, do not focus on student change or development but instead attempt to predict which students will remain in college and why (Skipper, 2005). Astin’s model of college involvement and Tinto’s model of student departure are widely acknowledged as the most influential in this category of theories.

Astin’s model is based on the theory that the larger the investment that students make in their educational experiences, the more likely they are to persist and to be successful in their educational endeavors (Skipper, 2005). Astin’s theory is based on five premises:

• Involvement is the physical and psychological investment of energy into an object (the object being general, as in the college experience, or more specific, as in preparing for an exam)
• Involvement occurs along a continuum, with students displaying different levels of involvement with different objects at different times
• Involvement has both quantitative and qualitative dimensions
Both quantity and quality of involvement are important to student learning and development.
The effectiveness of educational experiences is “directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement” (p. 68, Skipper).

Student involvement includes an extensive range of experiences from academics to extracurricular activities to living and working on or off campus.

Tinto’s model of student departure is similar to Astin’s theory, in that “the degree to which a student is integrated into the academic and social environments of the college determines whether a student will remain enrolled at a particular institution” (p. 68, Skipper). Tinto’s model focuses on the actions of others and how those actions shape the formal and informal environments in which students operate (Skipper, 2005).

The model includes a student’s pre-entry characteristics (family background, skills and abilities, prior educational experiences), which influence the ability to make initial goal commitments, both to the institution and to graduation. These initial commitments weigh against external commitments and are shaped by the student’s academic and social experiences within the institution. If the student becomes integrated within the university, the initial commitment may be reinforced; however, if the student does not integrate within the campus community, the initial commitments may weaken and lead to departure.

These models posit that students’ social integration with the university is a critical component of their development and, ultimately, of their decision to persist to graduation (UNIV 101 Faculty Resource Manual, 2011). The first-year seminar is designed to promote social integration and campus engagement. Providing opportunities to introduce students to campus resources, student clubs and organizations, and other out-of-classroom experiences might induce them to become more actively engaged, thereby enhancing their learning and development (UNIV 101 Faculty Resource Manual, 2011).
Appendix D

Other First-Year Experience Offerings at ECU

In December 2009, a First-Year Experience (FYE) Study Group was assembled to examine and enhance the experience of students in their first college year at East Carolina University. The group began by determining current programs at ECU that contribute to the experience of a first-year student. Much of the information below is from the Final Report of the First Year Experience Study Group. Some of the information has been updated to reflect current practices.

Undergraduate Admissions
Undergraduate Admissions attracts, recruits, processes, decisions, and enrolls specifically targeted numbers and types of new students to assist with meeting ECU’s enrollment projections and retention. Enrolling better qualified/prepared students is a very important step in improving enrollment and retention.

Our mission is to provide competent, courteous, respectful and efficient professional service to prospective students and their families as they navigate through the inquiry, application, decision, and enrollment process at East Carolina University. We are committed to ensuring that our students receive the equity and access required to achieve academic goals.

Undergraduate Admissions attracts prospective students to ECU through recruitment activities, responds to inquiries and addresses questions about ECU and its programs, processes materials for evaluation, and offers admission to qualified applicants to meet goals.

Higher admissions standards translate into higher retention and graduation rates. When undergraduate admissions employees are invited to collaborate with programs such as New Student Orientation, COAD 1000, or move-in day, admissions personnel are not only being exposed to students and parents but students we personally recruited and admitted to ECU. For the student, this exposure, seeing “a familiar face in the crowd,” has proven to be very comforting. Students are more inclined to seek the assistance of admissions representatives throughout their college career.

New Student Orientation
New Student Orientation is a two-day program held in June and July. During orientation, students take a math placement test (if necessary), meet with an academic advisor, and register for classes. Students are introduced to campus life by eating in the dining halls, staying on campus (if they choose), and learning about campus organizations and resources. Students also meet with an upper class student in small groups.

There are also New Student Orientation programs in August for those who were unable to attend the summer program, one in January for students who begin in the spring semester, two Transfer Orientation programs, and an orientation for students who begin in summer school.
A Family Program runs concurrently with the student program, which introduces family members to ECU and resources on campus for their student. It is designed to provide strategies for helping students make the transition to ECU and to answer parent questions.

The goals of orientation are for new students to gain/learn the following attributes:

- **A Sense of Belonging**
  - Making new friends
  - Connecting to the University
  - Finding a contact person that they can go to for answers (advisor, OA, faculty, administrator, other student)
  - Discovering what the university has to offer (resources, organizations, etc.)
  - Feeling comfortable with ECU

- **Academic Skills**
  - Learning how to be successful academically and what to expect
  - Learning academic policies and procedures

- **Life Skills**
  - Getting an overview/a sampling of what college life will be like
  - Learning how to be self-reliant
  - Discussing situations they may face when beginning college

- **Career Development**
  - Gaining an idea of what their major will be like

In addition, students learn to

- Take care of the necessary “business” before attending school, for example – placement test, registration, ID card
- Answer any questions

The orientation for family members has several purposes:

- Inform family members about policies at ECU (academic, FERPA, etc.)
- Acquaint family members with resources on campus for their student (and for parents)
- Explain the academic, social, and personal transitions their student may encounter and provide tips on how they can support their student
- Help them feel comfortable about their student attending ECU

New Student Orientation lays the groundwork for other programs to build upon. Discussions begun at New Student Orientation continue through the COAD course. New Student Orientation is part of the Office of Student Transitions and First Year Programs.

**Pirate Read**

Students are encouraged to read a common book over the summer. The book is then used during the fall semester in coursework such as English 1100 and COAD 1000. Other events are planned to complement the book in all areas of campus. A committee led by representatives from the Office of Student Transitions and First Year Programs and the First-Year Composition Program oversees the selection process and event planning.

The purpose of the summer read program is to:
• Orient students to the academic community
• Prepare students for the college-level environment
• Allow students to share a common reading experience with fellow classmates, faculty, and staff
• Serve as a source of ideas that can be shared across the curriculum

New Student Welcome and Convocation
The “New Student Welcome and Convocation” is designed to foster community building traditions, student involvement, and campus commitment.

A committee comprised of Student Affairs educators, Faculty and Enrollment Services staff, and through the Office of Student Transitions and First Year Programs, have planned a comprehensive convocation that will celebrate first-year students’ entry into higher education; officially welcome them to college; build a sense of group identity or community among members of entering class; share the institution’s mission and expectations; and create a favorable first impression of ECU for entering students.

All new students are invited to the fall convocation in Minges Coliseum welcoming them to the university. Students will hear short presentations from the Chancellor, SGA President, Provost and Faculty representative. The Vice-Provost of Student Affairs will present first-year advocate awards to individuals who have contributed greatly to growth and development of new students.

Plunge Into Purple
Plunge into Purple (PIP), formerly called Weeks of Welcome, serves to foster traditions, student involvement, a connection to campus, and an introduction to University life. Coordinated through the Office of Student Transitions and First Year Programs, PIP helps students to acclimate to college life in a safe, educational, appropriately social environment. The Plunge Into Purple activities occur during the first six weeks of fall and three weeks of spring semesters.

Fall programs include: Walk the Plank, Purple Impressions, Pirate Palooza, ECU Stars, Get a Clue, Faculty Lunches, and Connect at the Cupola with academic units. Spring programs included Polar Bear Plunge, Get a Clue, MLK, Jr. Day of Service and Vigil, and Welcome Back Cocoa.

Campus Living
Campus Living uses the D.R.I.V/E.S. Programming model (Diversity, Relationships, Intellect, Values/Ethics, Safety to frame programming for students who are living in the residence halls. This model is based on the student development theory of Arthur Chickering and Linda Reisser. Over the course of each semester, each Resident Advisor is required to facilitate 2 programs in each of the categories. In the fall semester, a variety of other programming requirements include all-hall programs, floor/community events, bulletin boards, and student meetings.

There is a specific First Year Programming Guide that is used in the Freshman Experience (FX) halls. These program areas include academics, campus connections, social justice and service, life skills, and health and wellness. Each of these areas are addressed during the first six weeks of the fall semester.
In the Fall of 2012, all freshmen will be required to live on campus.

Advising

The Academic Advising Collaborative works with students during Open Houses, New Student Orientation, and (for at least the first year in most majors) the first year of attendance. Many professional advisors continue to work with students through graduation.

The mission of the East Carolina University Academic Advising Collaborative is to guide, serve and support students by partnering with academic departments and support services, to promote diverse educational experiences, and to foster professional success and responsible citizenship. The mission of the AAC is consistent with ECU’s mission.

Effective advising is often cited as the number one influence on retention. Advising interacts with just about every constituent on campus.

The primary function of the academic advisor is to assist in educating students with regard to major/career decisions and progression towards graduation. Retention at ECU and timely graduation of students is at the forefront of university goals. ECU retention (freshman to sophomore year) has consistently hovered between 75%-79% over the past ten years. Our goal is to increase retention to 82% in three years. Four-year graduation rates have been slightly under 30%, and the goal is to increase to 32.5% in three years. Advising is one of many critical aspects to increase these numbers. As advisor responsibilities are noted, the primary mission is to increase our effectiveness which is large measured by retention and graduation rates. Although each advising unit has its own unique duties to help support this mission, the overall advisor responsibilities include the following:

- Provide major and career exploration for students
- Meet with advisee each semester to discuss registration for upcoming semester
- Complete graduation audits depending on advising center
- Provide study skills advice and refer to appropriate resource(s)
- Refer students to other support services on campus
- Teach freshman seminar course (COAD 1000)
- Participate in the New Student Orientations programs for students/parents
- Participate in educational workshops on developmental advising, technology, and academic support
- Plan and deliver academic advising workshops to professional and faculty advisors and present academic information to various campus groups
- Participate in student life activities and serve on campus committees

Pirate Tutoring Center

The Pirate Tutoring Center (PTC) is a retention initiative created in 2008 as a direct response to a student support need identified by the advising collaborative. It is housed under the Academic Advising and Support Center and is physically located in Joyner Library.

Tutoring is offered every Monday through Wednesday primarily for 1000 and 2000 level courses. Appointment based tutoring is also available. Pirate Tutoring Center staff will also
meet individually with students who wish to improve their study skills on a one on one basis. Assistance focuses on the following topics: obtaining college success, enhancing test taking skills, improving study habits, learning textbook reading tips, effective note taking in lectures, improving academic time management and motivation, developing course success strategies and referrals to other campus resources if needed. Specialized workshops are sponsored by the Pirate Tutoring Center throughout the academic year.

First-Year Composition Program
All incoming first-year students are required to take English 1100 and English 1200 as a first step toward meeting the Liberal Arts Foundations Goals in the area of Writing Competence. The Faculty Senate has approved the following Foundations Goals for the area of Writing Competence:

Goal 1. Students will learn to use various heuristic and planning tactics in preparing a written composition. In drafting and revising, they will learn to choose words carefully, exploit English syntax fully, and ensure coherence. They will learn to edit for standard written English usage, punctuation, and spelling. They will also become competent in using the computer to perform those processes.
Rationale: The ability to engage in the writing process—discovering subjects, exploring subjects; and drafting, revising, and editing manuscripts—is an aptitude fundamental to academic achievement and to a full civic life.

Goal 2. Students will improve their reading skills in order to understand literally, to infer, to recognize ideological bias, and to evaluate. They will deepen their sensitivities to connections and differences among texts. They will increase their capacities for reflecting on experience and analyzing and solving problems creatively.
Rationale: The ability to engage in reading and thinking critically is an aptitude fundamental to academic achievement and to a full civic life.

Goal 3. Students will learn the aims and means of the expositor and the advocate and will learn to write in order to inform and to persuade.
Rationale: The ability to write clear and expository and argumentative compositions is an aptitude fundamental to academic achievement and to a full civic life.

Goal 4. Students will learn to formulate research questions, identify and search both print and electronic bibliographic indexes, locate resources in the library, and read widely for selected kinds of information. They will learn to incorporate information gained from the library and other sources into their compositions, citing documents appropriately.
Rationale: The ability to conduct bibliographic research and to use library resources effectively in written compositions is an aptitude fundamental to academic achievement and to a full civic life.

The Composition Program also houses a tutoring center – the First-Year Writing Studio – for all students in English 1100 and 1200. According to its website, “The First-Year Writing Studio offers free one-on-one help sessions to English 1100 and 1200 students. Our writing consultants, all English graduate students, can help you organize thoughts, brainstorm ideas, document
sources, use grammar handbooks, and clarify your paper's focus. While we are not an editing service, consultants will help you learn to spot and correct grammatical and mechanical problems. You may schedule an appointment to guarantee assistance, or you may drop by when you like and see if a consultant is available.”

In the past, the English 1100 curriculum has connected with the First-Year Center in the past through an assignment that asked students to investigate and write about issues of adjusting to college life. While not every section used this assignment (experienced instructors are permitted to design their own assignments, with the stipulation that they must be working toward the course outcome goals), several did. Currently, the English 1100 curriculum has been connected to the Pirate Read book selection.

Transfer Student Services
Transfer Student Services, as part of the Office of Student Transitions and First Year Programs, assists students in a seamless transition from a community college, junior college or other four year institution to ECU. Transfer student programming/activities reflect current best practices for transfer student development including the Tau Sigma Honor Society, transfer student representative on SGA, transfer student COAD 1000, Inner Pirate Network group, transfer student advisory board in collaboration with admissions and community college liaisons (Pitt and Craven), and ECU Extends.
Appendix E

The Extended-Orientation Model: COAD 1000 syllabus
(see Part III of the main body of this report for discussion of this model)

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
COAD 1000
Student Development and Learning in Higher Education

Instructor:
Office:
Email:
Phone:

Required Text
Course Pack: COAD 1000 Freshman Seminar, East Carolina, ISBN 978-0-7380-4826-0, Published by Hayden-McNeil

Course Description
COAD 1000. Student Development and Learning in Higher Education, An Introduction to student life at East Carolina University. Focus on development of academic skills, learning processes, career decision-making, and personal attributes essential for student success.

Course Goals
The goal of COAD 1000 is to provide training and experiences to allow students to be successful in their first year of college and beyond. Topics to be covered include understanding the transition from high school to college, student development and motivation, goal-setting skills, learning styles, memory development, listening skills, note-taking skills, study skills, test taking, communication, critical-thinking skills, ECU academic rules and regulations, and career development issues.

Desired Learning Outcomes
1. Students will develop a sense of belonging to the university through the following relationships – peer to peer, peer to faculty, and student to staff and campus resources.
2. Students will be introduced to academic skills necessary to become a successful student.
3. Students will continue development of life skills including but not limited to time management, stress management, money management, and safety.
4. Students will be introduced to career development opportunities and become equipped with skills necessary to become a successful employer/employee.

Course Objectives
By the end of the semester, you will be able to:
D. Discuss your responsibility as a student for your own success in college.
E. Describe ways you can create a successful experience in college.
F. List, describe, and use specific methods to:
5. Deal with changes in your personal and professional life.
6. Improve motivation and goal-setting skills.
7. Understand personal learning style and adapt study skills.
8. Take effective notes and prepare for and take tests successfully.
9. Understand your personality profile and fit to major/career choice.
10. Develop a philosophy of career development.
11. Locate and utilize a variety of services and resource materials at ECU.
12. Be knowledgeable about student opportunities in extra-curricular activities.
13. Understand ECU academic rules and regulations and advising / registration procedures.

Instructional Methodology
This course is designed to be interactive among students and professor. Focus will be on group discussion and group activities. Lecture, guest speakers, field trips, and exploration activities will be included.

This course requires active student involvement and personal responsibility and emphasizes speaking and writing through assignments such as journaling, reflection and one minute-papers as well as an assigned paper based on self-reflection throughout the seminar.

Evaluation
Attendance/participation 100 points
Writing Assignments 100 points
Paper 100 points
Class Reflection/Presentation 100 points
Final exam 100 points

Grading Scale - Points
500 - 440 A
439 - 380 B
379 - 320 C
319 - 260 D
259 and below F
Academic Expectations

As a student in this course, you have a right to expect:

- a complete syllabus with clearly stated assignments, due dates, course objectives, and a fair grading policy
- complete contact information for the professor
- a course that begins and ends within the time allotted for the semester
- opportunities to discuss the course, and related topics, with the professor outside of class
- the opportunity to have drafts of papers/assignments reviewed by the professor if submitted well in advance of the due date
- the return of papers/assignments within two weeks provided they were turned in on time
- reevaluation of any work that a student thinks may have been graded unfairly
- assistance in locating supporting materials to complete papers/assignments

As the instructor for this course, I have the right to expect that students will:

- prepare for each instructional module by reading all required assignments
- actively participate in online discussions serving as both student and teacher
- ask for clarification or assistance when needed
- share any concerns about the course in a timely manner
- turn in assignments on time
- inform me about any extenuating circumstances affecting course participation
- observe codes of academic honesty in the completion of all course work
- understand online learning moves quickly and requires self-discipline; students will actively participate in the discussion online for the same amount of time each week that he/she would normally spend in the classroom for a 3-hour course
- spend an adequate amount of time preparing for course discussions; it is estimated for an upper-level undergraduate course such as this that prep time will be at least the same amount of time as in-class time. Therefore for this online course students should expect to spend 6 hours per week just on this course – 3 hours preparing and 3 hours in discussion.


University Resources

University policies set the boundaries that affect your class, as well as set behavioral and support standards. Following is a list of resources for a variety of policies and statements. These are all links on the ECU homepage.

- University Policies and Regulations (Code of Conduct, Academic Integrity, etc.)
- Disability Support Services
- Technology access and use
- Office of Institutional Equity
- Academic Library Services
- Computer Labs
- Student Handbook online
- Academic Calendar
- University Writing Center
- Pirate Tutoring Center
Paper (minimum 3 pages – double spaced) – due

Choose one of the following:

1. Write about a significant moment(s) in your life that helped shape who you are today.

2. Write a letter (as if it were going to the chancellor of the college) about your experiences at East Carolina University. Be honest and include both positive and negative experiences (residential life, student activities, food, classroom, etc). Include any comments or suggestions you think would have made your first semester experience better.

3. Career Development Paper: Research a job field or major you are thinking about and address the following questions in paragraph form:
   - What job field or major are you thinking about?
   - What attracts you to this particular area?
   - Why do you feel this area is right for you?
   - What are the various jobs you can receive with a major in ________?
   - What education do you need for this field? What other degrees or advance degrees might you have to obtain?
   - How is the job market in this field?
   - What is the entry-level salary range for this field?
   - What could you do to find out more information?
   - Incorporate information you learned on True Colors in your paper.

4. ECU Pirate Read: The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lackes by Rebecca Skloot

   There are three options to select from:

   1. Write a reflection paper based on the evening presentation by David Lackes.
   2. Reflect upon Henrietta’s life: What challenges did she and her family face? What do you think their greatest strengths were? (Pg. 381, Reading Group Guide)
   3. As much as this book is about Henrietta Lackes, it is also about Deborah learning of the mother she barely knew, while also finding out the truth about her sister. Imagine discovering similar information about one of your family members. How would you react? What questions would you ask? (Pg. 379, Reading Group Guide)

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<th>Notes</th>
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<td>Introduction/Course Overview</td>
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<td>Monday, August 27, 2012</td>
<td>College Transition/How’s it Going?</td>
<td>Icebreaker</td>
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<td>College Transition/Sense of</td>
<td>One Minute Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>Time Management</td>
<td>Chapter 3 - Journal</td>
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<td>Learning Styles</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
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<td>Alcohol, Drugs and Relationships – Bob Morphet</td>
<td>Chapter 7 – One minute paper (Tailgating)</td>
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<td>Monday, September 24, 2012</td>
<td>True Colors – Aaron Lucier</td>
<td>Chapter 6 – One minute paper</td>
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<td>Wednesday, Sept. 26, 2012</td>
<td>Catch up – Where are you in your transition?</td>
<td>Journal</td>
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<td>Monday, October 1, 2012</td>
<td>Immortal Life of Henrietta Lackes – Pirate Read</td>
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<td>Monday, October 15, 2012</td>
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<td>Wednesday, October 17, 2012</td>
<td>Faculty Interview</td>
<td>NO CLASS – Reflection paper based on interview due on 10/22</td>
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<td>(Homecoming/Halloween)</td>
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<td>RHA presentation/Check-in</td>
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<td>Values, Good Decision Making</td>
<td>Stephen Gray</td>
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<td>Intramurals/Club Sports</td>
<td>Mark Parker/Jon Wall</td>
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<td>Campus Rec &amp; Wellness</td>
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**Retention Requirements**

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<td>60 or more semester hours</td>
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The Academic/Hybrid Seminar Model

This Appendix to the UNIV 1000 Committee argues in favor of an *Emerging Scholars Seminar*, a faculty-driven academically oriented hybrid seminar. It has eight parts:

- A proposal for the Emerging Scholars Seminar program that presents the model in broad terms (Appendix F1)
- A FAQ document directed toward faculty members (see Appendix F2)
- Sample syllabi demonstrating how the ESS academic/hybrid model would be implemented as a single discipline (Appendix F3)
- Sample course description for a team-taught multidiscipline ESS course (Appendix F4)
- Proposal and example syllabus for a faculty member/student affairs educator, collaborative academic/hybrid seminar (Appendix F5 and F6)
- A time study that informs cost estimates for all first-year seminar models (Appendix F7)
- Why ECU should adopt an academic/hybrid seminar as the *only* first-year seminar (Appendix F8)

Appendix F1

**The Emerging Scholars Seminar Program**

“Following orientation, students should begin a yearlong first-year experience program—best conceived and implemented as a small group seminar lead by full-time faculty members. Through that year, students would gain valuable experience, get to know faculty members, and gather firsthand information about standards and expectations; the presence of full-time faculty, including senior professors, in first year seminars signals the faculty’s seriousness about setting and communicating high expectations and promoting readiness for college work.”¹

**Executive summary**

This section of the UNIV 1000 report recommends that a new academically oriented seminar be required for all first-year students in order to enhance student success. The Emerging Scholars Seminar (ESS) program introduces students to academic culture through faculty-led, small-group exploration of a discipline-based theme. ESS courses would be hybrid courses, designed to explicitly help students thrive and achieve their academic potential in the university environment by combining both academic and student success components. They would include an intentional focus on building academic success skills and co-curricular involvement by

integrating skills training in the context of specific disciplinary themes and academic content. In this way the ESS program helps the university efficiently maximize the utilization of limited resources by bridging the gap between the talent pools in Student Affairs, Academic Advising, and the faculty members in the academic units. This seminar will provide a foundation for a better model of undergraduate education that pays attention to the development of the whole student.

**Introduction**

It is increasingly acknowledged that the best and most effective approaches to undergraduate education are student-centered models that contribute to the intellectual, social, emotional, and personal development of the whole student. Such integrated approaches to university education (1) help students become engaged citizens capable of understanding a complex, diverse, globalized world, (2) promote the acquisition of the skills and abilities that enable students to gain and utilize knowledge to solve real-world problems, guided by informed social responsibility, and (3) provide students with entrée into the intellectual life that constitutes the university experience. This integrated approach to undergraduate education requires coordination of the efforts of the three key groups that directly affect student success: Student Affairs, Academic Advising, and the faculty members in the academic units and programs across campus. Through coordinating the distinct roles, programs, and interventions of these groups, enhanced freshman-to-sophomore retention, greater persistence, and improved four- and six-year graduation rates will result.

Student Affairs contributes to student success by providing programs meant to orient students to campus life, promote social integration and personal growth, and optimize student learning. At ECU, these goals are pursued through programs, such as Orientation, Plunge Into Purple, Pirate Read, and targeted programming based in the campus residences and the First Year Center. The new requirement to have virtually all first-year students reside in residence halls will provide additional opportunities for helping first-year students integrate into the university experience. The Advising Collaborative plays a fundamental role in supporting student success by helping students to select classes and identify a major, teaching them about rules, regulations, and practices of the university, guiding them to available resources, serving as an initial interface between students and academic departments, providing tutoring through the Pirate Tutoring Center, and helping students progress to graduation and prepare for a career. And, the academic units and their faculty members are central to student success because they provide the basic education that underlies the foundations curriculum, serve as the students’ academic home, and provide the specific education that constitutes their major. Faculty members in the academic units teach students how to ask and answer questions, what counts as legitimate evidence for those answers, and what methodologies are appropriate within the various disciplines. Faculty members stimulate students to engage academically, to think critically, and to communicate effectively. In many cases, faculty members are also responsible for the academic advising for students in their majors.

One strategy to engage Student Affairs, Academic Advising, and the faculty in coordinating services is an academically oriented first-year seminar program required of all first-year students — the Emerging Scholars Seminar (ESS) program. This model causes students, faculty
members, and staff to think differently about undergraduate education by promoting active, experiential, and research-based learning, while simultaneously making students aware of the resources at ECU and helping them develop academic success skills in the context of the academic content of the course. The Emerging Scholars Seminars would be discipline-based low-enrollment courses that dynamically engage first-year students in the consideration of sophisticated topics. Students will use methods of analysis that engage them from the outset of their academic careers in critical reading, speaking, and writing. Students benefit from an academically oriented first-year seminar because it serves “as a kind of microculture that illustrates and explains the characteristics of the greater culture of teaching and learning of which it is a critical part.”

Basic Model of a Hybrid First-year Seminar

A hybrid seminar focuses on teaching students academic content while also reinforcing student success skills and orienting students to campus life. The proposed ESS would introduce students to academic culture through the exploration of a discipline-based theme, employing active and engaged research-based learning. The small-class format is particularly important for first-year students; with few exceptions, this population of students is generally enrolled in large and anonymous classes in which struggling students can be overlooked and even superior students can become disengaged. The theme explored in each seminar will be developed with the intention of piquing the interest of first-year students. The seminar content will be used as a vehicle for demonstrating the academic enterprise for the students and engaging them with the subject matter, research methods, and written and verbal communication styles appropriate to the discipline underlying the seminar. An array of skills that are crucial to academic success (critical thinking, critical reading, writing, speaking, library-, laboratory-, or field-based research, note-taking, etc.) will be taught to students through their practical application to problem-solving. Broadly speaking, the theme-based seminars will help entering freshmen become acculturated to the academic world by participating in it.

Faculty members and staff members from Student Affairs and Academic Advising will collaborate to (1) implement coordinated efforts to address the social, personal, and academic development of the student, (2) call upon their specialized knowledge to teach associated content, and (3) encourage co-curricular activities, such as cultural events, lectures, films, and other experiences that complement seminar themes. Scholar Skills Building (SSB) workshops, online modules, and residence hall-based events will address particular skills or deficits, including note-taking skills, registration, study skills, technology, and the like. Through these efforts, the first-year seminar will help students realize their fullest potential as learners and as well-rounded people.

Faculty members from across campus will offer first-year seminars on topics related to their respective areas of expertise and interests. The seminars will be designed to meet the objectives of stimulating student interest, inspiring them to learn, and helping them to become scholars. The seminar is not meant to provide a comprehensive introduction to the discipline as would be the case in a standard first-year survey course. Instead, faculty members will expose students to

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2 Ibid., 140.
a well-defined theme within their own area of expertise and do this in greater depth than would ordinarily be possible in the more classic survey course, perhaps prevailing upon their own current research, some timely subject matter or current event, or some theme that would illustrate, by way of concrete examples, problems faced by society and individuals. Although the theme would be focused, the treatment of it would be deeper than other courses students typically encounter in their first year. Course themes that advance other university strategic objectives — such as diversity awareness, global readiness, leadership, health care innovations, or themes relating to the arts, culture, or quality of life — are particularly appropriate.

Exposing students to focused disciplinary content in a small class setting at the beginning of their academic careers will help them gain the foundational academic skills — critical-thinking, problem-solving, effective communication — that will contribute to success both academically and otherwise. Learning how a particular discipline asks questions, undertakes research, formulates answers, and communicates insights, will better prepare students to engage other disciplines during the rest of their academic careers. Since students will have a broad menu of options, they will be able to self-select into a course on a topic in which they are interested. By providing first-year students with a venue for studying advanced topics at the beginning of their university education, “inverting the curricular pyramid,” faculty members can help establish a good foundation by igniting academic engagement in new students.

In addition to exploring the theme around which the seminar is organized, faculty members teaching the first-year seminars will engage students in a discussion of how research is conducted and applied within their discipline, using the subject matter under consideration as an example. They will help students understand how the subject being explored is related to other fields of human inquiry. Finally, any high quality seminar of this type would involve the explanation and utilization of discipline-specific critical thinking skills and would help students to enhance their written and verbal communication and problem-solving skills. Broadly speaking, the course should be designed to teach students how to learn by engaging them in the processes of investigation, learning, and communication characteristic of a specific disciplinary inquiry. The learning methods will be active, engaged, and research-based. Where appropriate, faculty members may elect to team-teach courses either within a discipline or across disciplines, and peer mentors may be utilized.

Faculty members will also make explicit for the students both the standards of performance and the strategies that are required for them to succeed in the present class as well as in the rest of their academic lives. As the content of the course is being taught, faculty members will simultaneously teach students how to learn the material. For example, it might be the case that in a 75-minute seminar class, a professor might halt the academic discussion after 60 minutes and engage the students in a conversation about successful strategies for participating in classroom discussions. More than is customary in other classes, professors would make explicit

3 A similar first-year seminar at the University of Maryland advocated “introducing students to big questions immediately, rather than waiting until after students complete introductory surveys and various specialties within their majors.”

for their students exactly how to read assigned material, take notes on readings, conceive and execute assignments, study for exams, and so forth. Although in most classes, faculty member might take for granted that students have acquired the foundational skills (note-taking, inquiry, and communication) that are essential to academic success, those skills would be examined and reconsidered in the first-year seminar so that students are given as much help as possible in establishing good work habits and effective skills that will lead to academic success.

Contact with faculty members outside of class dramatically enhances retention and academic success. Faculty members would be encouraged to make use of these findings by organizing outside activities with their students — perhaps arranging a few smaller group meetings at downtown coffee or tea houses; expeditions to the Greenville Museum; walks down to the river; visits to scientific laboratories, music rooms, or artists’ studios on campus; or the like. In some cases, these outside meetings might directly support course content, whereas in other cases, they may simply provide opportunities for building rapport between faculty members and students.

“Scholar Skills Building” Program

In an effort to further foster student success and to help students realize their fullest potential, formal collaborations between the members of the Academic Advising Collaborative, the Student Affairs staff, and the Academic Affairs faculty members teaching first-year seminars must be actively pursued. Advisors and Student Affairs educators possess a rich knowledge base that can help to promote the emotional and personal development of students, enhance their command of particular academic skills, and enable students to acclimate to university life. In connection with the ESS courses, the central feature of the collaboration between the Academic Advising Collaborative and Student Affairs on the one hand and Academic Affairs on the other would be the development of a program of “Scholar Skills Building” (SSB) workshops and online modules.

A schedule of specialized presentations would be published each fall listing a broad range of options, and each student would be required to participate in eight programs. Some topics would be required of all students (time management, leadership, campus organizations), whereas others may be required by a specific professor for a specific course (laboratory research methods, research ethics, quantitative skill sets), and yet others would be at the discretion of the student (money management, roommate problems). For the required SSB programs, all of the students in a single ESS course could enroll as a cohort. The professor would then reinforce those presentations by harmonizing the schedule of classroom conversations with the schedule of SSB programs. (Please see the sample syllabus, God in the Voting Booth, for an example of how this coordination could occur.) Attendance would be a requirement of the first-year seminar and not

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4 Examples of SSB presentations include: leadership, study skills, research methods, note-taking, test-taking, critical reading, critical thinking, library research, paper-writing, oral communication, time management, stress management, money management, roommate problems, academic rules and regulations, college transition, diversity, campus resources, how to select classes, how to register for classes, how to select a major, career exploration, technology, and safety. Advisors and Student Affairs educators with expertise in certain areas would offer the sessions as part of their regular workload.
an “extra-credit” activity. A One-Stop registration system such as is currently used for faculty and staff training programs (“University Program”) could be employed, and a modified PassPort system could be used to track participation in these events. In-class assessment would assure that students were learning the material presented in the SSB programs. Additional logistical and operational issues are addressed in the attached ESS faculty FAQs.

**Faculty Development Program**

Faculty members will teach the ESS courses in a new way that is distinct from most of their other lower-division courses by incorporating student development into the course plan, hence faculty development will be crucial. A faculty member and a staff member involved in the Undergraduate Studies or the First Year Center will provide support as faculty members aspiring to teach ESS courses develop course proposals. They will aid faculty members in complying with the expectations of the course, coordinate a faculty orientation workshop prior to the fall semester, and provide assistance in coordinating with Student Affairs educators and advisors. The workshops will include active discussions of student development issues that are essential to the understanding of our incoming students and presentations about the full range of programs and interventions directed toward first-year students. In addition, there will be a detailed explication of the upcoming and ongoing Academic Affairs- and Student Life-sponsored Scholar Skill Building (SSB) Workshops and Modules that can be incorporated into the ESS courses. Participating faculty members will need to become conversant with the material that the students are learning in their SSB programming so that the faculty members can connect it back into the academic dimensions of the course.

**Primary Recommendations**

- It is recommended that all students be required to complete an ESS-designated course in the fall semester of their first year. Courses requesting the ESS designation would be screened by a faculty committee, perhaps initially the Foundations Curriculum and Instructional Effectiveness Committee, in much the same way as are courses that request the WI, diversity, or global designations. Separate sections would be created for transfer students. The ESS course could qualify for Foundations credit or satisfy other requirements.
- No additional salary should be provided to faculty or staff for teaching the ESS courses or the SSB workshops. These endeavors should be considered, respectively, part of the regular teaching load of faculty members and part of the job description of staff members. Peer mentors may be utilized.
- Academic units will have to be rewarded for providing seminars or, at the very least, held harmless. Offering low enrollment courses to improve the preparation of first-year students and enhance retention benefits the entire university. Hence, units offering such courses should not be penalized for lower enrollments in any PPC or similar evaluative process.
- Each ESS course will be offered under the academic unit prefix of the faculty member who is teaching the course. Student Credit Hours will be assigned to the academic unit of the faculty member, and the curriculum review of the course will be based in that unit, as is the norm with all other courses. There will need to be a process of transition from
COAD to the ESS, and it is likely that COAD will continue to be taught in the during the transition period.

Related Recommendations

- Orientation should be extended to at least 3 or 4 days so that more information could be transmitted to incoming students. More faculty members should be involved in the orientation process.
- Programming for first-year students in the First Year Center and the residence halls should be coordinated.

Resources needed

- Based on the number of current entering freshman, ECU would need to offer 160 ESS sections. Faculty members from across the university would be encouraged to propose ESS courses and no faculty member would be allowed to teach more than one seminar per year. There are 34 academic units offering over 100 undergraduate degree programs, at ECU. We suggest that a call for ESS course proposals go out to the entire graduate and undergraduate faculty, with a specific request that each academic unit offer at least one ESS and that the units with large enrollments and multiple degree programs offer multiple seminars. As stated above, faculty would teach these seminars as part of their workload, units would receive the SCHs associated with the seminars, and units would be held harmless if teaching an ESS resulted in a lowering of unit SCHs (because of the lower enrollment required of ESS courses).
- Upon full elaboration of this model, the enrollment of 4,000 students would require 160 sections of 25 students (or 200 sections of 20 students). In some cases, academic units would be able to offer ESS courses without significantly impacting their degree programs or normal course offerings. If, however, it becomes necessary for a unit offer the ESS as an additional course, this would require extra resources. In all cases, tenure and tenure-track faculty members will be encouraged to teach ESS program. If the course that an ESS faculty member would normally teach must be offered, their teaching assignment would be replaced by fixed-term faculty members at approximately $4500 per section. Given the “hold-harmless” provision stated above, it is difficult to estimate how many units would be required to offer an ESS as an additional course, instead of in place of a course a faculty member would normally teach. The “hold-harmless” provision obviates the need to teach the normal large-enrollment course in order to maintain unit SCH levels. Hence, units would be encouraged to look carefully at their offerings and to make sure that offering both an ESS section and a regular freshman course (with the added cost of a replacement faculty member) is absolutely necessary for their students (necessary for degree completion, for entrance into degree programs that require specific course sequences, etc.). Before final implementation, units would be requested to make this determination and to justify the need to hire a replacement faculty member too teach a regularly scheduled lower division course.

If, as an untested assumption, the university needed to hire replacement faculty for 50% of the faculty teaching ESS sections (so that the classes they would otherwise teach could be offered), it would be necessary to hire faculty members to teach 80
replacement sections; meaning that 10 full-time-equivalent fixed term faculty positions (= 80 sections x 3 hours/section = 240 hours = 10 full-time equivalent fixed-term-faculty). This would cost approximately $400,000 (= 10 full-time equivalent fixed-term-faculty positions x $40,000/position). The 80 sections taught by these fixed-term faculty would generate 6,000 SCHs (= 80 sections x 3 s.h. x 25 students), for a total additional cost of approximately $67 per SCH.\(^5\)

- One staff position in the Undergraduate Studies or in the First Year Center would be need upon full implementation to coordinate the scheduling of the ESS courses, the SSB modules, and the Faculty Development Program. This would entail a reallocation of resources, instead of new resources, because there would be savings in Student Affairs and Advising. (See attached Time Study of transition from COAD 1000 to ESS.) The remaining hours that would be freed up by this plan would enable Student Affairs staff and advisors to concentrate on other initiatives that would help to raise retention and graduation rates.

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\(^5\) These calculations are based on the recent “ECU Structural Change Analysis: SCENARIOS,” produced by the Program Prioritization Committee, p. 6.
Appendix F2

Emerging Scholar Seminars at East Carolina University
Promoting Academic Engagement and Success

FACULTY REQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS . . .

What are the goals of the ESS program?
The primary goal of the ESS program is to enhance student success. To this end, the ESS program introduces students to academic culture through faculty-led, small-group exploration of a discipline-based theme. ESS courses are designed to explicitly help students to thrive and achieve their academic potential in the university environment.

What topics are appropriate for Emerging Scholars Seminars?
The Emerging Scholars Seminar (ESS) program is aimed at first-year college students with no background in the seminar topics. Without attempting to provide a general overview of a discipline, the seminars introduce students to topics in a particular field, allowing the student to explore themed timely subject matter, current events, or field of research. ESS classes allow students to explore how a scholar asks questions and pursues answers about a specific topic.

At what intellectual level should I present the topic of the seminar?
It will be important to challenge your students to engage in the intellectual pursuit of the seminar topic while, at the same time, nurturing them for success. The fundamental goals of the ESS program are to ease the students’ transition to college and to engage them in the life of the mind. Hence, you serve as a primary source of this information for your students – they will look to you for advice about college life, and as an ESS instructor, it is your role to help the students ask the right questions. To this end, every ESS course includes required Scholar Skills Building (SSB) workshops/modules and other co-curricular activities (see below).

How do students select and register for their ESS?
During orientation, incoming students are asked to select and prioritize three seminars from the list of those available; they will be registered for one of their preferred selections. The ESS website offers rich, faculty-provided, descriptions of each seminar offered. Most students register for ESS courses during orientation. Because of the nature of these seminars, as well as the associated workload, late registration is actively discouraged. ESS faculty may decide to admit students during the drop/add period, but such admission requires explicit permission of the individual faculty member.

How many hours per week do seminars meet?
Although most ESS courses carry 2 credit hours, they may carry 2, 3 or 4 credit hours. The specific number of hours will depend on the number of credit hours your ESS carries. Two SCH courses meet 2 hours per week, 3 SCH courses meet 3 hours per week, 4 SCH courses typically meet 4 hours per week (or the equivalent if laboratory, field, or studio time is part of the course). The decision about the number of semester hours for a specific course lies with the faculty member who will teach that course and may depend on things like the amount of laboratory, field, or library research planned. ESS courses are encouraged to meet at least twice per week for a minimum of 2 contact hours per week.
Are there any common expectations for ESS courses?  
Through the ESS program, faculty members illuminate for students a facet of their lives as scholars and share with students the thrill of discovery through class activities that involve active inquiry. To this end, all ESS offerings *must* do the following:

- Provide students the opportunity to work closely with a full-time faculty member and to develop an intellectual community with other students around a shared area of interest;
- Explore a narrowly defined theme that is both issue-oriented and advanced, but is not a survey of an entire field of knowledge;
- Be methodologically self-conscious by using the subject matter under consideration to engage students in discussion of how scholarship is conducted within the specific discipline – including how scholars pose problems, discover solutions, resolve controversies, and evaluate knowledge;
- Both explain and utilize discipline-specific, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills;
- Assist students in enhancing their written and verbal communication skills;
- Introduce students to the many components of their newly independent academic life and help them make connections with faculty, academic and student life support staff, other students, their coursework, and the university;
- Include an intentional focus on skills building and co-curricular involvement (*e.g.*, SSB learning experiences, cultural events, field trips, etc.) by requiring students to participate in at least at least 8 SSB learning experiences through the semester.

What co-curricular activities are available for my ESS class?  
Because co-curricular activities are a central feature of ESS offerings, there is active collaboration between the faculty teaching ESS courses and the Academic Advising Collaborative, the Division of Student Affairs, Joyner Library, the Pirate Tutoring Center, and the Writing Center. This collaboration has resulted in a program of Scholar Skills Building (SSB) workshops and online modules that focus on specific skills that are necessary for student success (note taking, library research, test taking, choosing a major, using campus technology, etc.). SSB workshops are offered regularly throughout the academic year and ESS faculty members are required to include a variety of these offerings in their courses.

A schedule of SSB workshops/modules and of known co-curricular activities (theater productions, museum exhibits, guest speakers, etc.) is maintained by Student Affairs; a link is provided on the *ESS Course Development* website.

Where can I find help getting, developing, and offering the non-academic components of my course?  
Support for the non-academic portions of ESSs is available through the Office of Student Affairs (or Undergraduate Studies), the Academic Library Services, the Pirate Tutoring Center, and Student Life. Contact information and details concerning the available types of support are provided at *ESS Course Development* website.
Are there resources available to help me develop my ESS?
YES! ESS faculty members are encouraged to work with Student Affairs while developing course syllabi. The Division of Student Affairs employs experts in student development, adjustment to college life, student services (disability services, counseling, etc.), and . . . These experts are available to help you incorporate skills building and co-curricular activities into your course. Many of these experts are also willing to actively participate in your course.

Is there any special training required for ESS faculty?
YES! All ESS faculty members are required to participate in ESS Faculty Training Workshops. These workshops include discussions of student development issues that are essential to the understanding of our incoming students, as well as information about both upcoming and ongoing Academic Affairs- and Student Life-sponsored Scholar Skill Building (SSB) Workshops and Modules that can be incorporated into your seminar.

May I use peer mentors in my ESS?
Although not required, faculty members may choose to have an undergraduate peer mentor for their seminar. The mentors may be junior or senior student volunteers who have been trained by the Pirate Tutoring Center or they may be junior or seniors who are majors from the faculty member’s discipline and who have been chosen by the faculty member (and have participated in the Pirate Tutoring Center training session).

Who approves ESS course proposals?
ESS approval is similar to other course approvals in that it is the responsibility of the faculty to review and approve all courses. The first step in this process is approval at the unit and college levels. Once these approvals have been garnered, all ESS proposals are reviewed by the First-Year Experiences Committee. The committee’s schedule, as well as the course proposal form, is available on the First-Year Experiences Committee website (via the Faculty Senate).

How will entering freshman find out about my ESS?
An ESS brochure is published annually and is distributed to all incoming freshman when they are admitted to the university. All ESS courses are described in that brochure. In addition, all incoming students receive information about ESS courses (including a complete listing of available courses and information about registration) during orientation and a listing of all past and current ESS offerings is available on the ESS website.
Appendix F3

Syllabus for a Sample Emerging Scholar Seminar
God in the Voting Booth: Religion and Politics in an Election Year
Instructor: Dr. Derek Maher
Fall 2012

Course Description:
The United States was founded on the idea of a separation of church and state. What do the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution say about the proper relations between religion and politics in the United States? How does religion influence electoral politics during an election year?

This course will expose students to theories about religion and politics. Definitions will be discussed and applied to different specific examples. Students will be exposed to and learn how to apply several distinct methods of investigation that are employed in the academic study of religion, and they will learn about a range of different perspectives on how religious views should influence the public policies. Through this exposure, the class will investigate hot-button issues like health care policy, abortion and contraception, educational policies concerning the teaching of creationism, whether the religious identity of the major party candidates should matter, religious code language, and other timely themes. Students will engage in group projects relating to the ongoing election campaigns, assessing the religious outreach of political campaigns, the political activities of faith communities, and the religious content of political speech.

Students will also learn how to write a paper, participate in classroom discussions, manage their time, select classes, choose a major, plan their academic career, and access resources at ECU. The course is intended to provide students with a set of tools and an array of information directed to student success. Unlike most other classes students will take at ECU, this one is designed to explicitly attend to helping students learn how to do the things that will be required to thrive in university.

Course Objectives:
By way of these inquiries, the student should be able to:
• Identify and describe foundational views on religion and politics from the founding documents of the US,
• Discuss religiously charged political rhetoric, and
• Apply those to contemporary questions of how religion and politics relate.
Students in this course will also:
• Become familiar with various methodologies employed in the academic study of religion,
• Cultivate critical thinking and reading comprehension skills,
• Learn to communicate more effectively, verbally and in writing, and
• Be exposed to the skills and resources that foster student success.
These objectives will be attained through lectures, classroom discussions, media presentations, and assignments. Challenging readings will supplement these strategies.
Assignments:

**Participation** – It is imperative that each student actively engage the class by attending each class, being prepared, participating in class discussions and other activities, and actively engaging in the group project activities. Twice during the semester, the professor will provide each student with a written assessment of how well the student is doing in the participation grade so that they can make adjustments to achieve their highest potential.

**Co-Curricular Learning Experiences** – Throughout the semester, each student will be required to attend eight modules or workshops on skills and information leading to student success. Faculty members, staff, and advisors across campus will offer special online modules or scheduled in-person workshops presenting a broad range of specific topics, including: study skills, time management, critical thinking, critical reading, writing, speaking, library-, laboratory-, or field-based research, note-taking, etc. By week 3, students must register for six of the eight module and workshops. By week 11, students must register for the remaining two. Students will register on OneStop, and their attendance will be monitored through the PassPort stamp system.

**Group Project and Paper** – During the semester, students will undertake a group project on one of the following five themes:

1. Investigate how presidential campaigns engage in outreach to religious communities on a local and national level.
2. Study how particular local, national, and international religious communities advocate for political outcomes.
3. Compile and analyze examples of religious code language in political campaigns.
4. Identify and assess particular issues in depth as they emerge in the campaign season.
5. Explore presidential candidates, past and present, with non-standard religious identities.

Students will collaborate on gathering information, organizing it, and presenting it to the group. At the same time, each student will write a 7-page thesis and defense research paper on some theme relating to their group project, using the information collected by their group. Students will work closely with the faculty member to develop and write their paper, and they will peer-review the papers of their peers in their group. The grade earned by each student will reflect how well they have engaged each stage in the process of working with the group and writing their own paper: researching the subject matter, formulating a thesis, writing the paper, peer-review, editing and revising, and finalizing the paper.

**Quizzes and Final Evaluation Exercise** – Prior to the drop date and at the end of the semester, students will take in-class quizzes on the course content. This final exercise will involve a written exit quiz and a group conversation about the effectiveness of the course.

**Reading excerpts from:**


**Videos and Websites:**
- Documentary: *Jesus Politics: Religion in the 2008 Election*

Additional Readings will be made available on Blackboard.

**Grading:** (500 possible points)
- Participation – 80 points
- Group Project and Paper – 150 points
- Quizzes – 25 points each = 100 points
- Co-Curricular Learning Experiences – 15 points each = 120 points
- Final evaluation exercise – 50 points

100-90% (500 – 450) = A; down to 80% (449 – 400) = B; down to 70% (399 – 350) = C; down to 60% (349 – 300) = D; below 60% (299 – 0) = F

**[Add in policies on attendance, academic integrity, classroom decorum, disruption, weather and emergency statement, disabilities, counseling center]**

**Meeting with your faculty member:** Students are urged to meet with their professors in their offices or after class. There is a very high correlation between such visits and student success in class. Each faculty member has at least 5 hours of scheduled office hours a week. Aside from those hours, they can often be found in their offices. If regular offices times are not practical, students are encouraged to request alternate times. **As part of the process of writing the paper, each student must meet with the professor to discuss their thesis and their research.**

**Course Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>ACADEMIC TOPICS IN CLASS</th>
<th>STUDENT SUCCESS IN CLASS</th>
<th>SUGGESTED SSB AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | • Review syllabus and introduce course  
     | • Read syllabus before class  
     | • How to Survive and How to Thrive in University  
     | • College Rules!, Chap. 1 and 14  
     | • Where are things on campus;  
     | • Time management;  
     | • Academic Rules and Regulations;  
     | • Blackboard 101;  
     | • Campus organizations |
| 2    | • Define the Field of Inquiry:  
     | • Church and State in the USA  
     | • Establish groups and commence group project  
     | • How to participate in class discussions  
     | • DEADLINE for Registering for 6 of the 8 required SSB/co-curricular activities!!  
     | • Note-taking; |
| 3    | • History of Religion in  
     | • How to read critically and  
     |  

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Supplemental Content</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>American Politics • Religion in the Founding Documents of the USA • Quiz I</td>
<td>how to take notes • <em>College Rules!</em>, Chap. 2 and 18 • Supreme Court: Religion and Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Memory-enhancement techniques; Time management; Library research skills; Campus technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Civic Religion and the Limits of Religious Advocacy</td>
<td><em>College Rules!</em>, Chap. 6 and 7 • Civic Religion and the Limits of Religious Advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Religion in Public Life • Quiz II</td>
<td>Library Research • <em>College Rules!</em>, Chapter 8 • Civic Religion and the Limits of Religious Advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Campaigning and Crusading</td>
<td>How to write a thesis • <em>College Rules!</em>, Chapter 9 • Campaigning and Crusading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Religious Code Language in Politics</td>
<td>Advising Week – Discuss Advising, Class Selection, Progress towards Graduation • (October 16 – drop date) • How to detect and avoid plagiarism • <em>College Rules!</em>, Chap. 4 and 5 • How to write a paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Quiz III • MEDIA DAYS – <em>Jesus Politics: Religion in the 2008 Election</em></td>
<td>How to connect the college experience to the world out there • <em>College Rules!</em>, Chap. 11 • Quiz III • MEDIA DAYS – <em>Jesus Politics: Religion in the 2008 Election</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Religion in Education • Teaching Evolution and Creationism</td>
<td>How we learn • <em>College Rules!</em>, Chap. 10 • Religion in Education • Teaching Evolution and Creationism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Religion and Health Care Policy</td>
<td>DEADLINE for Registering for final 2 of the 8 required SSB/co-curricular activities!! • <em>College Rules!</em>, Chapter 12 and 13 • Religion and Health Care Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>ELECTION DAY • Assessing the Results • How to edit and revise a paper • Quiz IV</td>
<td>How to become a lifetime learner • <em>College Rules!</em>, Chap. 15, 16, and 17 • ELECTION DAY • Assessing the Results • How to edit and revise a paper • Quiz IV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The schedule and procedures in the course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

Appendix F4

The following is a brief description of a potential team-taught, multidisciplinary ESS course. The description is written as it might appear in the student/orientation listing catalog of available ESS course. This course (in a different format!) was previously taught by a geologist (Dr. Catherin Rigsby) and two mathematics colleagues (Dr. Zachary Robinson and Dr. David Pravica). With minor modification, any of these course authors could teach it as an ESS course, either individually, or as a team-taught course with almost any combination of science, math and science, and/or science and social science faculty.

**Science and Society**

*Do you think science is too technical to meaningful to your life? Do you understand the difference between science and belief? Do you think science is fun? Do you trust scientists? Do you even know any scientists?! If not – and if you have any negative feelings about science at all – you are not alone. Science is one of the most mistrusted, yet most universally used, fields of modern inquiry.*

*The public distrusts science and scientists, yet rely everyday on the discoveries of science. The movement away from an understanding of the importance of science to modern life (think about sciences role in human health, in global energy, and in computer technology, to name just a few) is not new. Galileo died under house arrest because he refused to recant his theory that the Earth circled the Sun (not the other way around). Things aren’t quite that bad these days, but every day scientists are threatened by hate groups and politicians when their research suggests something that is not acceptable to any powerful group’s belief system (think evolution, global warming, new methods of extraction of hydrocarbons (fracking), and many other such topics).*

*In this ESS course we will use examples from history and from current media coverage of science to explore the meaning and methodologies of science in modern society. We will examine specific examples of science informing public policy by looking into the real science behind the headlines and working to understand how that science is (or is not) misunderstood and/or misconstrued by non-scientists.*

*In the process of this exploration, you will learn about the methodologies of science, visit science laboratories on campus, take a short field trip to a nearby locality to collect and analyze some data of your own, and (of course) learn many of the important skills of the mind necessary for success in the university.*
Appendix F5

Academic/Hybrid Course Model – Faculty/Student Affairs Collaborative Approach (3 credit hours)

Format

- Academic Seminar (2 hours) taught by faculty member
- Student Development Lab (1 hour) taught by Student Affairs Educator or Academic Advisor
- Class size capped at 25.
- Course is recommended but not required.
- The distinguishing characteristic of this model is that the two components are team-taught by a faculty member and a SA Educator or Academic Advisor.
- Encourage SA Educators and Academic Advisors to co-teach with their content counterpart. Example: Health faculty teach with HHP advisors or Health and Wellness Educators from Student Affairs
- Vail-Smith and Majewski will pilot/evaluate this model in fall 2012. Course prefix and number will be HLTH 1050. In addition to being a freshman seminar course, it will count toward the HLTH 1000 foundations requirement. It is recommended the professionals piloting these models in the fall conduct a shared research project in order to study the effectiveness/usefulness of the various models. Consider accomplishing this task by joining a faculty learning community in College STAR.

Staffing

- The academic seminar course will be taught by departmental faculty.
- The student development lab course will be taught by SA Educators and/or Academic Advisors.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will be oriented to the responsibilities of being a scholar in an academic community, introduced to critical thinking/problem solving skills and equipped with the skills necessary to be a successful student.
- Fostering intellectual inquiry and self-assessment, this seminar and lab will help students begin the process of taking responsibility for their education and personal development.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to…

- Explain the importance of the foundations curriculum and the ways in which academic study is structured at ECU.
- Articulate the importance of critical thinking and information literacy and apply the associated skills.
• Demonstrate appropriate note-taking, test-taking, and time-management skills and strategies
• Describe the value of co-curricular involvement and how it enhances their academic study at ECU.
• Identify and utilize ECU programs, resources, and services that will support their academic studies and co-curricular involvement.
• Develop a plan that demonstrates their responsibility for their own education, specifically how it relates to their interests, abilities, career choices, and personal development.

Faculty members will include relevant content objectives for the academic seminar portion of class.

Advantages

• Aligns with the student learning community format (i.e.: two instructors collaborating to teach/monitor student progress)
• Promotes seamless cooperation between the two university divisions (Academic Affairs and Student Affairs) and reveals a formal partnership between the divisions
• Demonstrates proper utilization of resources. Professionals teach their areas of expertise. The specialization of labor is adequately/appropriately distributed. Students receive credit for the foundation course HLTH 1000 following the successful completion of this course. It does not add an additional class to their list of required classes.
• Increased interactions between faculty and advisors. This communication will benefit student registration, student scheduling, and ultimately student graduation timeline.
• Utilizes the case management approach to monitoring student success.
• Provides for a shared research opportunity for faculty and staff

Challenges

Administrative Management
• It is recommended this hybrid model be managed by a faculty member.
• Recruitment, curriculum design, credential requirements, scheduling, training, evaluation, and all other day-to-operations are needed to implement this model university wide.
• This faculty member should be released from a portion of his/her teaching and research duties in order to fulfill the administrative responsibilities of managing this course.
• Staff support from academic advising and student affairs should be provided.

Staffing
• Approximately 200 faculty and staff members are needed to teach this model.
• At present, the level of commitment from faculty and staff to implement this model does not exist.
Compensation

- Faculty should teach this course as part of their academic load (not in addition to their standard teaching load). It needs to be determined if it is feasible to incorporate freshman seminar into some faculty teaching loads.
- Currently, no requirement or incentive for SA Educators to teach freshman seminar exists. It needs to be determined what compensation is available to SA Educators. The following compensations for SA Educators might include: release time to teach, a stipend, or travel money.
- Teaching academic seminar is currently part of the Academic Advisors scope of work.

F6: Syllabus for an Academic/Hybrid Faculty/SA Collaborative seminar

**HLTH 1050: How To Live To 100: Exploring the World’s “Blue Zones”**
**Academic Seminar and Student Development Lab**
**Fall 2012**

**Academic Seminar Instructor**
Karen Vail-Smith 3208 Belk Building 252.328.0026
vailsmithk@ecu.edu Office Hours: MWF 9-10; T-TH 1-2

**Student Development Lab Instructor**
Diane Majewski 154 Slay Building 252.737.1019
majewskid@ecu.edu Office Hours:

**Purpose of the Course**

Research indicates only about 1-in-5000 people in the U.S. live to be 100. Yet, studies suggest that about 10% of how long a person lives is predetermined by genetics; the other 90% is determined by lifestyle. What can we do to add years to our life (and life to our years)?

Students will evaluate the current evidence-based mainstream advice for improving their health and well-being. In addition, the lifestyles of cultures from around the world where people are living to age 100 at rates up to 10 times greater than the U.S. population will be studied. Students will conduct cross-cultural lifestyle comparisons of the “The Blue Zones” as it relates to their own health habits and lifestyle choices.

In addition, one class period each week will be devoted to learning new techniques and building on existing skills that will help students’ master academic content material and manage campus life. A broad range of topics will be presented including: study skills, time management strategies, thinking critically, effective textbook reading, basic writing skills, presentation skills, library research abilities, and note-taking strategies.
Textbooks
- The COAD 1000 text book (currently being revised, will be a required)

Course Objectives
At the completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Explain the “concept of health”
- Discuss the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the U.S;
- Identify health risk factors and strategies for reducing or eliminating them;
- Define Blue Zones
- Identify characteristics of those living in the world’s identified Blue Zones;
- Compare and contrast the Blue Zone health lifestyles with those promoted by traditional health promotion agencies and organizations in the U.S.
- Develop an Individual Health Promotion Plan based on lessons learned from the Blue Zones.
- Explain the importance of the foundations curriculum and the ways in which academic study is structured at ECU.
- Articulate the importance of critical thinking and information literacy and apply the associated skills.
- Demonstrate appropriate note-taking, test-taking, and time-management skills and strategies
- Describe the value of co-curricular involvement and how it enhances their academic study at ECU.
- Identify and utilize ECU programs, resources, and services that will support their academic studies and co-curricular involvement.
- Develop a plan that demonstrates their responsibility for their own education, specifically how it relates to their interests, abilities, career choices, and personal development.

Course Evaluation

Attendance/Participation
Your participation is a valued and important part of this course. Therefore, class attendance is expected. (The only excused absences are documented “Official University Excused Absences.”) An absence from the class results in an automatic deduction of five Attendance/Participation points. In order to receive credit for assignments, you must be in class the day assignments are due. Late assignments will not be accepted. For a complete definition of an “Official University Excused Absence” see our Bb page.

During class, cell phones must be on silent and put away in your book bag, purse, etc. NO LAPTOP COMPUTERS are allowed in class. Those not following this policy will be asked to leave class and counted absent. NO FOOD is allowed in class. (You may bring drinks.)

Exams
There will be a midterm and final exam. The exam will cover material from lecture and assigned readings.

Assignments
Students will complete the course assignments detailed in the course calendar at the end of this syllabus.
**Group Presentation**
Students will be assigned to a group. The group will conduct a comparison of the cultural health lifestyles in one of the four Blue Zones to their own cultural health lifestyle. Detailed information about the culture, lifestyles, and health habits of the two cultural lifestyles must be presented.

**Capstone Activity**
Students will write and present an essay outlining their personal health lifestyle improvement plan. This plan will synthesize the information learned from traditional health promotion methods in the US in conjunction with the health promotion methods utilized in the Blue Zones.

**Grading**
Students can earn a total of 600 points in this class. The more points earned; the higher the final grade.

**Possible Points**
- Attendance/Participation 100
- Mid-term Exam 100
- Final Exam 100
- Assignments 100
- Group Presentation 100
- Capstone Activity 100

**TOTAL** 600

**Grading Scale**
- A 600 – 540
- B 539 – 480
- C 479 – 420
- D 419 – 360
- F 359 and below

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**Course Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed. 8/22</td>
<td>Class Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri. 8/24</td>
<td>Coming to College: Paradigm Shift</td>
<td>Icebreaker activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon. 8/27</td>
<td>Traditional &quot;Concept of Health&quot;</td>
<td>Teague: Chapter 2</td>
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<td>Wed. 8/29</td>
<td>The Truth About Living Longer</td>
<td>BZ: Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Fri. 8/31</td>
<td>Making Connections: Differences between HS and College</td>
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<td>Mon. 9/3</td>
<td>Labor Day Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. 9/5</td>
<td>Leading Causes of Death: Heart Disease</td>
<td>Teague: Chapters 7 and 15</td>
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<td>Fri. 9/7</td>
<td>Eight is Great Time Management Plan and Three Step Study Plan</td>
<td>Bring Academic Planner to class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon. 9/10</td>
<td>Leading Causes of Death: Cancer</td>
<td>Teague: Chapter 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. 9/12</td>
<td>Leading Causes of Death: Infectious Disease &amp; Injuries</td>
<td>Teague: Chapter 14  (pages 296-312)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location/Activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri. 9/14</td>
<td>Get Connected @ Joyner Library</td>
<td>Field Trip to Library</td>
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<td>Mon. 9/17</td>
<td>Healthy Eating</td>
<td>Teague: Chapter 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. 9/19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri. 9/21</td>
<td>Step 1: Pre-Class Study Activities</td>
<td>Bring Academic Planner to Class</td>
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<td>Reading a text book</td>
<td>How to Use Your Textbook for Something Other than a Door Stop</td>
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<td>Video/strategy activity</td>
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<td>Mon. 9/24</td>
<td>Weight Management</td>
<td>Teague: Chapter 8</td>
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<td>Wed. 9/26</td>
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<td>Teague: Chapter 9</td>
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<td>Fri. 9/28</td>
<td>Step 2: In-Class Study Activities</td>
<td>Live Scribe Pen demo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Listening and Note taking</td>
<td>Bring Academic Planner to Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. 10/1</td>
<td>Sleep</td>
<td>Teague: Chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. 10/3</td>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
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<td>Fri. 10/5</td>
<td>Step 3: Post-Class Study Activities</td>
<td>Bring Academic Planner to Class</td>
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<td>Bring Teague Text and notes Ch. 5</td>
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<td>Mon. 10/8</td>
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<td>Wed. 10/10</td>
<td>Stress Management</td>
<td>Teague: Chapter 4</td>
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<td>Fri. 10/12</td>
<td>Pre-Registration (15th-19th)</td>
<td>Field Trip to the PTC</td>
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<td>16th Last day to drop</td>
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<td>Get Connected @ the PTC</td>
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<td>Mon. 10/15</td>
<td>Substance Use/Abuse</td>
<td>Teague: Chapter 10</td>
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<td>Wed. 10/17</td>
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<td>Fri. 10/19</td>
<td>Test Taking Strategies</td>
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<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Teague: Chapter 12</td>
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<td>Wed. 10/24</td>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>Teague: Chapter 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri. 10/26</td>
<td>Talking in front of the class—the Collegiate Way!</td>
<td>Bring draft of group presentation materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon. 10/29</td>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>Teague: Chapter 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. 10/31</td>
<td>Sardinia Group Presentation</td>
<td>BZ: Chapter 2</td>
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<td>Fri. 11/2</td>
<td>Academic Integrity/Code of Conduct</td>
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<td>Mon. 11/5</td>
<td>Okinawa Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Wed. 11/7</td>
<td>Loma Linda Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Fri. 11/9</td>
<td>Learner Sketch Tool</td>
<td>BZ: Chapter 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon. 11/12</td>
<td>Costa Rica Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Wed. 11/14</td>
<td>“Your Personal Blue Zone”</td>
<td>BZ: Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
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<td>Fri. 11/16</td>
<td>Money Management</td>
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<td>Mon. 11/19</td>
<td>Instructor Meetings</td>
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<td>Wed. 11/21</td>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
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<td>Fri. 11/23</td>
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<td>Mon. 11/27</td>
<td>Individual Presentations</td>
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<td>Wed. 11/28</td>
<td>Individual Presentations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri. 11/30</td>
<td>Preparing for Final Exams</td>
<td>How to Prepare for College Final Exams Video/Strategies Sheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon. 12/3</td>
<td>Final Class Evaluation</td>
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**FINAL EXAM: 11 am, Friday December 7th**
Appendix F7

Time Study of transition from COAD 1000 to ESS

1. Time spent by Student Affairs educators and advisors in the current model of COAD 1000
The current model reaches 43.3% of the first-year students and uses approximately 7020 hours of employee time, mainly from staff members in Student Affairs and the Academic Advising Collaborative. It depends upon have instructors for each of 90 sections and frequent class presentations from others staff members.

2700 hours = 90 sections of COAD currently x (15 weeks x 2 contact hours) – classroom time
4050 = 90 sections x 15 weeks x 3 hours prep time

270 hours = Time spent by invited guests spend visiting COAD classes (estimated at 3 hours per section x 90 sections)
7020 hours = Total

2. Time spent by Student Affairs educators and advisors in the ESS model
The proposed ESS model would reach 100% of first-year students, requiring 160 - 200 sections (depending on class size). Each first-year student would be required to participate in 8 sessions outside of class. Those sessions would be taught by staff members in Student Affairs and the Academic Advising Collaborative.

In some cases, sessions could be done online or in larger groups, thereby saving even more time. However, even assuming that all sessions were done in small group formats, advisors and SA staff: 1760 hours = 200 sections x 8 sessions (1280 hours total if there are 160 sections)

3. Co-teaching model
Depending on how this model was organized, it could require both staff and faculty members to attend all class meetings. If there is no overlap of faculty and staff in the classroom, the time expenditure would be equal to the previous model. If there is overlap, it would consume more staff time.

Conclusion
The ESS model would save at least 5260 hours of staff time among advisors and Student Affairs educators. This would be more than sufficient to hire a full-time staff person to oversee the scheduling and the mechanics of organizing the modules, scheduling of sections, liaising with faculty, etc. of the ESS model. Best of all, it would reach 100% of the first-year students instead of the current 43.3%.

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6 This number is reported by Karen Slough Smith of the Office of Student Transitions and First Year Programs, which now oversees COAD 1000.
7 See attached sheet prepared by Karen Slough Smith in which she says that 232 presentations were made to COAD sections. But she also notes that, “The total number of hours does not include presentations by Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Ledonia Wright Cultural Center, and others who often give presentations.”
Appendix F8

Why ECU should adopt an academic/hybrid seminar as the only first-year seminar

After a year of study and deliberation, some, but not all, of the UNIV 1000 committee members came to feel that it would be best to establish the Emerging Scholars Seminar (ESS) as a universal requirement for all first-year students and to completely eliminate the COAD 1000 course or any modified version of it. There are several reasons for this determination.

1. The ESS includes an element that is not a part of the COAD 1000 model. Whereas both courses endeavor to help students acclimate to life on campus, to successfully navigate the difficult process of social engagement, and to gain basic facility with study skills, the ESS model also helps students become academically engaged by introducing them to methods of inquiry, standards of evidence, and modalities of communicating the results of academic inquiry that are proper to a particular academic discipline or to an interdisciplinary context by actively engaging students in the learning process in such an environment. This particular form of academic engagement is absolutely essential for success in a university career, but it is not something that can be taught outside of actually having students participate in the learning process within a disciplinary or interdisciplinary course of study.

For the purposes of this report, the phrase “academic engagement” is meant to describe the ways that students are enculturated to the processes of learning and creating knowledge within a discipline or an interdisciplinary context. It includes, but is not limited to, actively engaging students in the process of asking questions, assembling evidence, formulating answers, and communicating those answers in ways that are appropriate to the particular discipline. ESS students undertake research-based learning that, through their own experience, unveils for them the processes of investigation and discovery that are at the heart of the academic enterprise. There is no subset of the first-year population of students that is not in need of the extra piece that the ESS offers. While the COAD model could certainly be more rigorous than it is, it cannot teach academic engagement, as that term is used in this report, unless it comes to be taught by academics with disciplinary expertise; in other words, it would have to become an ESS.

2. Because the ESS model includes good coverage of most of the material now being taught under COAD 1000, there would be no reason to continue that course. Students should not take the same material in two courses. Or, at least, they should not get credit for it twice. The content that is not intended to be included in the ESS course that is now covered in the COAD course is material concerning sex education, drug information, and the like. It was the opinion of those who designed the ESS model that this information was so technical and so subject to change that it really only ought to be taught by health education professionals. All of that material is more appropriately taught by area-specialists in HLTH 1000. Moreover, because HLTH 1000 will soon be taught only in the fall, first-year students will not need to be taught that material in the ESS.

3. The people who now mainly teach the COAD model would still be teaching the modules that cover material in which they have special expertise, but their time would be utilized far more
effectively. Appendix F7 has a time study that shows that this model would involve a
significant time savings for student affairs educators and advisors.

4. Many of the study skills that are now taught in COAD would be more effectively conveyed
within the context of an academic course. Students could be taught to take notes, write
academic papers, study for academic exams, etc. within a course that requires all of those
things. Advisors and student affairs educators would teach those study skills, and the
professor would reinforce those lessons in the structure of the ESS academic content and the
class assignments. The close collaboration that is envisioned in this model between faculty
members on the one hand and advisors and student affairs educators on the other is
recommended throughout the most innovative literature on the first-year experience,
including especially in the work of Dr. John Gardner and the Foundations of Excellence.
Appendix F3 has a syllabus that shows how this collaboration between faculty members and
both advisors and student affairs educators would work in the context of an ESS course.
Appendix G

Proposal for the Evaluation of First-Year Seminars at ECU

A primary recommendation of this report is that all sections of the first-year seminar at ECU should be assessed in a manner similar to other courses on campus, and a that controlled longitudinal study of the seminar program (based on well-defined outcomes/objectives) should be undertaken. The data from this study will be necessary for evaluation of the seminar program and can be used to improve the program as it matures as part of the larger first-year experience. Hence, it is important that the study start immediately and that it be designed well and with the help of professionals.

Members of the UNIV 1000 committee suggest that this be done as part of the College STAR program. College STAR, in collaboration with the Office for Faculty Excellence, provides faculty with a forum to learn from one another, conduct shared research linked to ideas about Universal Design for Learning and mentor/be mentored in the development or use of outstanding instructional practices. With research support structures in place, faculty learning community members in this program will have access to the College STAR evaluator, a space and structure for weekly community meetings, and an on-hand graduate assistant. The College STAR evaluator is a tenured faculty member from the College of Education who serves as the primary research support to the faculty learning communities.

Faculty and staff from the UNIV 1000 committee who are teaching COAD 1000 and the hybrid freshman seminar models, and who have been involved in the development of this report, have agreed to create a first-year seminar faculty learning community and immediately begin work, with the help of this evaluator, to develop and implement a common evaluation model that can be put in place in the fall semester 2012. This shared research opportunity will provide a forum for evaluating both COAD 1000 and the pilot academic/hybrid freshman seminar models.

The following pages briefly describe the learning communities that the College STAR program supports.
College STAR
Supporting Transition, Access, and Retention

**Pirate CREWS:** Collaborating for Retention and Engagement With ongoing Support: Cross-campus partnerships for teaching and learning

**Faculty Learning Communities**
Friday Mornings Joyner Library Room 2200 and 2201

College STAR, in collaboration with the Office for Faculty Excellence (OFE), provides faculty with a forum to learn from one another, conduct shared research linked to ideas about Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and students with learning differences, and mentor/be mentored in the development or use of outstanding instructional practices. Faculty members who are interested in exploring and researching their instructional practices as they relate to student outcomes are encouraged to join a *Pirate CREWS Faculty Learning Community*. Participants in these informal learning communities commit to active engagement and follow-through with a group defined project while benefitting from mentoring and/or community support during the experience. College STAR is the vehicle for fostering these learning communities in order to explore more deeply examples of best-practice instructional techniques in today’s college classroom.

The goals of Pirate CREWS Faculty Learning Communities are:
1) promote awareness and understandings about the variability in the ways students learn and effective strategies for teaching diverse groups of students
2) provide examples of practical instructional strategies and supports
3) provide assistance in the development of a plan for course development/enhancement, including a plan for assessment of impact on teaching/student learning.
4) encourage collaborative planning, course implementation, project assessment and scholarship of teaching
5) provide outlets for sharing learning community lessons learned with others on campus and in the educational community

Facilitation of a learning community of academic colleagues requires a few supports. OFE and College STAR will provide faculty:

- A space and structure for weekly community meetings
- Hospitality at some meetings
- An on-hand floating graduate assistant – shared by active learning communities
- Periodic connection with evaluation or statistics support
- Periodic support for minor materials (as possible and appropriate)
- Travel support (mileage and registration) to attend the spring College STAR shared learning conference
- A formal letter describing learning community participation to appropriate campus administration
A certificate of participation that can be included in faculty member Personnel Action Dossiers (PAD)

College STAR Learning Communities do require evidence of commitment. Faculty Learning Community members agree to:

- Meet weekly with your Pirate Crew
- Collaborate with a small group of colleagues (the learning community) to incorporate a common teaching strategy or learning resource into your instruction.
- Design and conduct action research on the impact of this common teaching strategy or learning resource. For some learning communities this will involve a semester of planning and a semester of implementation. Other communities may only last for one semester, conducting evaluation activities within that same time frame.
- Conduct at least one presentation through the Office of Faculty Excellence to share about your experiences and findings.
- Attend and present your research results at the College STAR Shared Learning Conference (May 14th and 15th 2012).
- Submit a manuscript or conference presentation proposal describing your project to the outlet of your choice.