

2-21-2012

Bridging the Information Literacy Gap: First-Year Students Reflect for Success

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Repository Citation

Fabbi, J. L., Gianoutsos, D., Forgues, D. (2012, February). Bridging the Information Literacy Gap: First-Year Students Reflect for Success. Presentation at Annual Conference on the First-Year Experience, San Antonio, TX.

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Bridging the Information Literacy Gap: First-Year Students Reflect for Success

February 21, 2012

Annual Conference on the First-Year Experience

J. Fabbi, D. Gianoutsos, D. Forgues

Introduction

“Undergraduate education in research universities requires renewed emphasis on a point strongly made by John Dewey almost a century ago: learning is based on discovery guided by mentoring rather than on the transmission of information. Inherent in inquiry-based learning is an element of reciprocity: faculty can learn from students as students are learning from faculty.”

--Reinventing Undergraduate Education (1998)

Introduction

- Context
- Collaboration
- Findings and Implications

UNLV Context

- Fall 2011: 22,138 undergraduate students; 72% were full-time; 5135 freshmen with a 76.4% first-yr retention rate (2010 to 2011); 40.6% six-year graduation rate
- Budget-induced movement to large-enrollment classes
 - Program eliminations and consolidations underway
- General Education Reform developments
 - Articulation of University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes, especially **Inquiry and Critical Thinking**
 - New general education requirements **extending vertically throughout the curriculum**
- Focus on enhancing the first-year experience for incoming students

University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULOs)

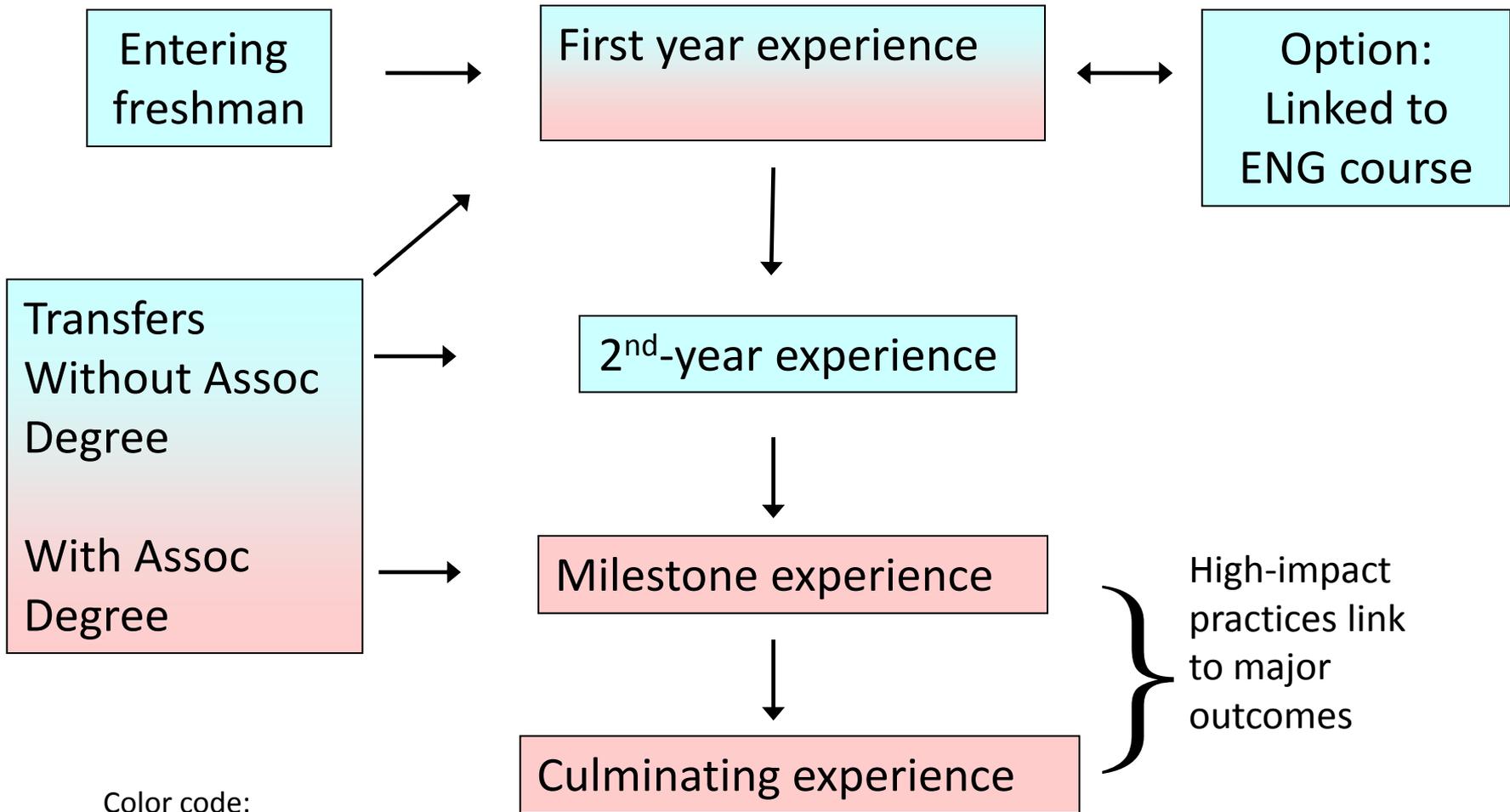
1. Intellectual Breadth & Lifelong Learning
2. Inquiry & Critical Thinking
3. Communication
4. Global/Multicultural
5. Citizenship & Ethics

Inquiry & Critical Thinking

Students should be able to identify problems, articulate questions, and use various forms of research and reasoning to guide collection, analysis, and use of information related to those problems.

Competence in the Inquiry and Critical Thinking outcome is defined by the following objectives:

1. Identify problems, articulate questions or hypotheses, and determine the need for information.
2. Access and collect the needed information from appropriate primary and secondary sources.
3. Use quantitative and qualitative methods, including the ability to recognize assumptions, draw inferences, make deductions, and interpret information to analyze problems in context and draw conclusions.
4. Recognize complexity of problems and identify different perspectives from which problems and questions can be viewed.
5. Evaluate and report on conclusions, including discussing the basis for and strength of findings, and identify areas where further inquiry is needed.
6. Identify, analyze, and evaluate reasoning and construct and defend reasonable arguments and explanations.



Color code:

University

Univ/Major

Major

NSHE Core remains intact

Collaboration

- Collaboration is voluntary.
- Collaboration requires parity between individuals.
- Collaboration is based on mutual goals.
- Collaboration depends on shared responsibility for participation in decision making.
- Individuals who collaborate share their resources.
- Individuals who collaborate share accountability for outcomes.

Academic Success Center

- Founded to provide academic support to students
- Undeclared student advising
- First Year Programs
- Learning Support Programs
 - Tutoring
 - Academic Success Coaching
- Student Athlete Academic Services

IDS 100

- FYE course designed for Exploring (undeclared) Majors
- 3-Credit, Elective
- Fall 2011: 4 16-wk sections (25 cap) & 1 Mid-Sem
- Topics: Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, Time Management, Civic Engagement, Campus Resources, Basic Research, Major/Career Exploration, etc.
- Course focus

Information Literacy

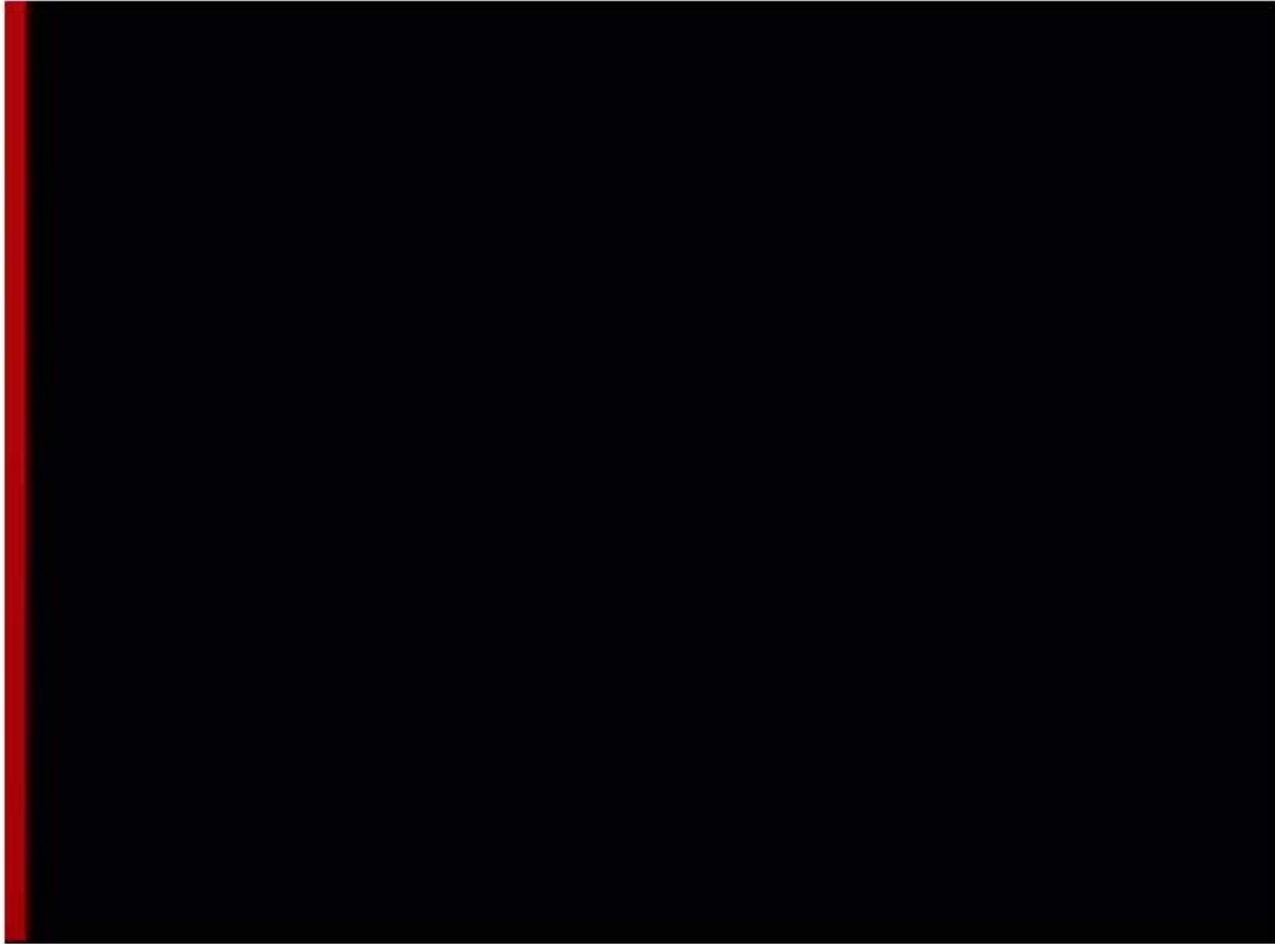
“...to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.”

*--American Library Association's Presidential Committee
on Information Literacy (1989)*

iSkills Assessment

- Developed by ETS
- Scenario based
- 14 items
- Web based
- One hour
- Measures seven competency areas: Define, Access, Evaluate, Manage, Integrate, Create, Communicate

iSkills



iSkills Activity

Sample scenario: *Employees in your company have been asked to provide information about the technology training courses that they have taken during the past year. They have sent e-mail messages to their supervisors and each supervisor has forwarded the information to the director of human resources. You've been asked to organize the information, evaluate the extent to which company-based courses are being utilized and make a recommendation to the human resources department about which courses should be continued next year.*

Evaluate and Create Task: *Using last year's attendance figures for courses offered by the company, decide which courses should be offered next year. Write an email to Ann Simpson with your recommendation, including as attachments any tables or charts that support your position.*

Test-takers are provided with a sample email inbox with both relevant and irrelevant information to work from.

How is this task relevant to what we want freshmen to know and be able to do?

IDS 100 and iSkills

- Week 1: Introduced to iSkills (in-class), Watched video (individually)
- Week 2: Took iSkills Assessment (class time), Followed up with Journal Reflection (individually)
- Week 4: Received and Reviewed Results (individually)
 - Week 4: Library Session on “Information Literacy,” Read scholarly and popular article, Wrote discussion post
- Week 5: Debriefing w/ Guest Speaker (in-class)
 - Week 12: Library Session on “Conducting topic research,” Topical Research Project Due
- Week 15: End-Semester Journal Reflection (individually)

Blue = Activities specific to iSkills

Cohort Data

Quantitative:

- iSkills score: $M = 207.85$, $SD = 58.18$
- Core high school GPA: ($M = 3.15$, $SD = .58$)
- iSkills score correlated positively ($p < .05$) with exploring major, core GPA, and the categories of 5-12 and 13+ honors course
- iSkills score correlated negatively ($p < .05$) with English not best language, Asian race, alternate admit, and the categories of no and 1-3 honors courses

Cohort Data

Qualitative Themes:

- The meaning of “research”
- Source of guidance
- Teacher pedagogy
- Factors affecting teacher pedagogy
- College preparation

Implications

For Practicality

- Measurability
- Campus collaboration
- Scale

For Practice

- Employing pedagogies that help to develop these skills
- Reflection

Discussion

What activities do you employ in the First Year Experience that would help students to develop their information literacy skills?

Questions?