

Suggestions Concerning Student Development and the SSP Role in the FYE Program

In four meetings we have discussed concerns regarding the SSP role in the FYE. This document expresses those concerns with a series of specific suggestions for the GE Task Force and GE Sub-Committee. On October 29 this document will be presented to Paul Draper, GE Task Force Chair, in a meeting including all interested parties.

A core question, proposed by the Provost, on which we focused is “What do our first year students need?”

1. Training and Mentoring on Advising Issues

CONCERN:

How can we ensure the quality and effectiveness of academic advising, especially on GE, choice of major, remediation, probation, and student retention issues?*

SUGGESTIONS:

- a. **After initial training sessions for faculty, SSPs and faculty share in the advising of students in their Learning Community Sections to ensure quality, provide mentoring, and address the wide range of concerns of first year students.**
- b. For faculty to become academic advisors/mentors for first year students (including undeclared students), they need to receive adequate training and on-going mentoring.
- c. An assessment procedure needs to be established to assure that all first year students are receiving adequate advising. The assessment procedure would address the effectiveness of advising for all students, including undeclared and remedial students, a determination of whether or not students are effectively advised on how to choose majors, and other issues.
- d. Advising sessions are generally most effective when held one-on-one, outside of class.
- e. Peer Mentors need to meet in one-on-one sessions outside class to build connections to students.

* A significant portion of SSP’s training and experience also centers on addressing transition issues in one-on-one advising: relationship-building, conflict resolution, anxiety, depression, time & stress management, living independently, substance abuse, diversity awareness, etc.

2. Collaborative Curriculum Development and Oversight

CONCERN:

How can we maintain the collaboration of faculty, SSPs and peer mentors around curriculum development and integration of academic and student development issues that has been so central to the proven success of the EMT Program?

SUGGESTIONS:

- a. **Student Development is a legitimate and important academic discipline with its own curriculum.** Appropriate EMT instructors with extensive experience need to be involved in training faculty on student development theory and practice.
- b. **We propose the inclusion in the model of a formal planning session every two weeks for each Learning Community Section, to include the faculty member, SSP, and Peer Mentor.** (See alternate model below.)
- c. A full-time Director of the FYE Program needs to be created to provide oversight and ensure that learning outcomes are established and that no component of the FYE Program becomes diminished in importance relative to the other components.
- d. We strongly recommend that an FYE curriculum committee be established which is responsible for on-going training, mentoring, and curriculum development – and that it includes SSPs with in-depth experience in student development/ college success issues, and academic advising (and possibly a Student Rep as well).

3. Co-Teaching FYE

CONCERN:

Co-teaching models community and addresses the needs of the whole student, using a variety of teaching modalities in an interactive learning community. How can we ensure collaborative co-teaching, with time to develop topics, in the new FYE model?

SUGGESTIONS:

- a. **We propose one 2-hour block/week of class time, co-taught by faculty, SSP, and Peer Mentor, in a flexible arrangement which could vary the amount of academic and student development content.** 50 minutes a week has been proven to be too little time to deliver a quality EMT Program. Many student development topics require two hours for presentation of material, discussion, and hands-on exercises to help students apply the material to their own lives.
- b. **To be a cohesive and equitable team, with SSPs not perceived as “prep-teachers” for faculty, planning should happen outside of class time.** We suggest that the LCS planning session (with faculty, SSP, and Peer Mentor) could alternate with the faculty planning session outlined in the GE Task Force model -Draft 3. One week all FYE faculty could meet to plan, and the alternate week each LCS team could meet to plan.
- c. Faculty should take an active role in delivering some of the student development curriculum. This could also include the large interdisciplinary lecture (ie., a lecture on alcohol/substance awareness and human development)

4. “At Risk” Student Issues and Impact on Diversity

CONCERN:

How can we ensure an environment that will attract and retain a more diverse student body?

SUGGESTIONS FOR EOP STUDENTS:

- a. The EOP Academy has been demonstrated to be an effective retention tool for this group. A key aspect of this program is the development of a learning community through student participation in a block program of classes. We believe it is vital to maintain this community building to enhance the success and retention of this vulnerable group of students who are so important to our community. **The best way to ensure this in the proposed FYE model is to designate 5-6 Learning Community Sections for EOP students only.** This would maintain a key aspect of the EOP Academy while integrating the program into the broader FYE effort.
- b. Because of the complexity of the issues facing EOP students (financial aid, extended work hours, racism and discrimination, family support issues, etc.) we believe it is **most appropriate for EOP Advisors to continue to be their primary advisors in FYE. The faculty advisor would provide mentoring as well as the vital academic component and acculturation to the University.**
- c. **We also propose the creation of a 1-unit UNIV 199 course required for all EOP students, and taught by SSPs and Peer Mentors.** This would be used to continue to build community for these students and address strategies for success for first-generation college transition issues.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DSS AND REMEDIAL STUDENTS:

- a. **The FYE Program must be flexible enough to accommodate the special needs of English 30/English 99 students and students with disabilities.** These special needs should be addressed with extra, intensive instruction and academic support, similar to the way the Tutorial Program and LSS support EOP Academy students in the current EMT Program. (See model below)
- b. –DSS provides additional advising for students with disabilities regarding academic accommodations and other disability-related issues.

5. SSP Role

CONCERN:

How do we effectively teach FYE with limited numbers of SSPs?

SUGGESTIONS:

- a) **We propose 60 20-person Learning Community Sections**
- b) It is unlikely that many SSPs can teach more than one LCS section, given their workloads.
- c) It might be possible to increase somewhat the number of FIGs taught by faculty with in-depth knowledge of student development?
- d) **We affirm SSP’s commitment to collaboration and co-teaching in the new FYE model, and assert its effectiveness in addressing the needs and education of the whole student.**

ALTERNATE MODEL PROPOSED BY SSPs

FALL SEMESTER

- **5 units, 5 hours/week class time, with 20 students/class (SPRING SEMESTER 4 units)**
- **Half the students advised by faculty member and half by SSPs in 1-on-1 sessions outside classtime**

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
FALL SEMESTER 50 minute class	<p>Seminar: Learning Community Section LCS</p> <p>20 students, 1 faculty, 1 SSP, 1 Peer Mentor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading discussion • Writing & research instruction & feedback • Student Dev/College Success topics • Community building activities 	<p>Large lecture</p>	<p>Seminar: LCS</p> <p>Lecture discussion Reading discussion Writing & research instruction & feedback</p>
Break	Break		Break
50 minute class	↓	(Alternate model proposes integrating EMT topics into Day 1 LCS)	↓
50-minute class	Additional UNIV/LSS 1-unit class offered EOP students through EOP Academy		

Outside class time	<i>alternates with</i> →	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty planning session every two weeks • Multiple planning sessions for each LCS team: faculty member, SSP (except in FIGs), and Peer Mentor) • One-on-one advising of students to address their individual concerns
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LEARNING COMMUNITY SECTIONS ARE BUILT AROUND THEMES ACCORDING TO:

- English placement per SAT/ACT/EPT scores or AP/IB acceleration
 - Engl 101 placement – currently 60% of freshmen
 - Critical Thinking level: AP/IB English level – currently 11% of freshmen
- English 99 and English 30 levels - currently 19.5% of freshmen.
 - Additional support/LSS unit offered through 1-unit UNIV 199 course?
- FIG participation
- EOP participation
 - Additional support/LSS unit for EOP sections offered through 1-unit UNIV 199 course.