First Year Experience
Informational Session

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Agenda

- Importance of High-Impact Practices and the First Year Experience
- Overview of what we currently have in place to understand the needs of Canisius
- Regional/Peer First Year Seminar Models
- Pilot Proposal
- Question and Answer
What is a High Impact Practice?

“What is a High Impact Practice?

“An investment of time and energy over an extended period that has unusually positive effects on student engagement in educationally purposeful behavior” (Kuh, 2010).

• To encourage engagement, institutions direct students toward appropriate opportunities, directly addressing the challenge of getting students in venues that will optimize their learning.

• These High-Impact efforts require student initiative, faculty-student interaction, and provide opportunities to apply knowledge in other settings.
When done right, here are the High-Impact Practices that have been identified through years of NSSE research:

- First-year experiences
- Common intellectual experiences
- Learning communities
- Writing-intensive courses
- Collaborative assignments and projects
- Undergraduate research
- Diversity/global learning
- Service learning and community-based learning
- Internships
- Capstone courses and projects
Figure 1
Impact of Educationally Purposeful Activities on First Academic Year GPA by Precollege Achievement Level
Recommendations for High Impact Practice Implementation

- Institutionalization:
  - Kuh (2017) recommends committing to reach every student at least twice
    1. Within the first year
    2. Junior or senior year connected to the major
First Year Experience

Trends from the National Resource Center

- More than 90% of colleges and universities have a first year experience to assist students with their transition to college

- When looking at models, the most common is a 1 credit transition to college course
Holistic Approach to the First Year Experience

• The first year experience course is a significant piece of the support system to assist students with the transition to college.

• It is important to understand the current landscape of programs and offerings to see where a course/seminar fits for an institution.

• Overview of current programs, services, initiatives, and practices to help support new students at Canisius.
Student Success Teams

• Implemented in spring 2020 because relationships = retention
• Each student now has a team of faculty and staff that are now available to view in their student profile
  • Faculty advisor
  • Success coach
    • The respective success coach creates a students first semester schedule and then advisement moves to a faculty member in their respective major department (undecided students stay with Griff Center for Student Success)
  • Career coach
  • Financial aid advisor
## Summer/fall – all new students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Mandatory</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Student Registration</td>
<td>Griff Center</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>May/June/July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Student Orientation</td>
<td>NSO/Student Affairs</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Late August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion Module</td>
<td>NSO/Student Affairs</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Opens in Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Assault Prevention Module</td>
<td>NSO/Student Affairs</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Opens in Summer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positive Results from Changes

ACADEMIC PLANNING

**SCHEDULING**

- **92%** of first year participants felt they had a choice in their Fall semester academic schedule. This is a big improvement over Fall 2019, where only 67% of participants expressed feeling involved in that process. This is primarily due to the Griff Center's excellent efforts in improving first year student scheduling.

**ADVISEMENT**

- **94%** of participants found it helpful to meet with their Academic Success Coach prior to the start of the Fall semester. This is the first year of this effort, in response to the 76% of Fall 2019 participants who indicated they would appreciate this opportunity.
### Summer/fall – specialized programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Mandatory</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HEOP Summer Program</td>
<td>HEOP</td>
<td>HEOP</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Month of July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ULLC</td>
<td>ULLC Director</td>
<td>ULLC</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mid/Late August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bio Boot Camp</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Bio 111-fall</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A few days before NSO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Students</td>
<td>Center for International Ed</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>A few days before NSO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors</td>
<td>Honors Director</td>
<td>Honors</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>A few days before NSO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Ministry Immersion</td>
<td>Campus Ministry</td>
<td>Sign-up</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Week-long before NSO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALANA Orientation</td>
<td>ALANA Student Center</td>
<td>ALANA Students &amp; Friends</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Day before classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Mentoring</td>
<td>Griff Center</td>
<td>Academic Ret. Risk &amp; Volunteer</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Fall semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positive Results from Changes

- Using the data from the Retention Predictive Model, we were able to identify the first year students who came in academically at-risk.
- We strongly encouraged the 107 students who were academically at-risk to enroll in our academic mentoring program.
- Half of the students at-risk enrolled in the program.
- The program utilized a weekly guide for one on one mentor meetings similar to what all students would experience in FYE.
- When comparing average GPAs after fall 2020 semester:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrolled in Program</th>
<th>Not Enrolled in Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Fall – specialized courses for new students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Mandatory</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pathfinders (Undecided Students)</td>
<td>CAS/Griff Center</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Yes besides honors</td>
<td>Fall semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Exploration 101</td>
<td>WSB</td>
<td>WSB Majors &amp; Int. MarComm</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Fall semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griff 201</td>
<td>Griff Center</td>
<td>Transfers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Fall/spring semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Considerations for Canisius

- Retention Model
  - Academic, Engagement, and Financial
- Bus-X Model
- Academic Working Group of the Retention Committee
  - Group has been looking at FYE
  - Faculty Questionnaire
- How does play into our faculty advising model and our student success coaching?
- Inclusive Excellence
- HEOP, Honors, Pathfinders
- FYE will need human and financial resources
  - Instructors
  - Peer Mentors
  - Leadership of Program
Regional/Peer First Year Experience Offerings

- Niagara University
  - NU Beginnings (1 credit)
- St. Bonaventure University
  - SBU 101: Community of Learners (2 credits)
- Daemen College
  - IND 101: Critical Relationships (linked course)
- University at Buffalo
  - UB Seminar
    - New students (3 credits)
    - Transfer (1 credit)
- Nazareth College
  - ACS 101 (1 credit)
  - FYS (3 credits)
- LeMoyne College
  - COR 100: Transitions (3 credits)
- John Carroll University
  - FYS (3 credits)
- D’Youville College
  - FOCUS 101 (1 credit)
- University of Scranton
  - FYS (3 credits)
- Hilbert College
  - Foundations Seminar (3 credits)
- St. John Fisher
  - FYS (1 credit)
FYE Pilot Proposal
The committee was charged with developing a proposal for the structure, content, and implementation of a 1-credit pilot first year experience for fall 2021 to improve academic success and retention by ensuring our students have the opportunity to develop expected college-level academic skills and strategies, reinforce the resources available on campus, develop connections to the college, and build community on campus.
Why FYE?

**New students understand college expectations**

- **NA**: 6
- **Strongly Disagree**: 9
- **Disagree**: 50
- **Neither**: 17
- **Agree**: 10
- **Strongly Agree**: 2

**New students would benefit from FYE**

- **NA**: 6
- **Strongly Disagree**: 4
- **Disagree**: 3
- **Neither**: 9
- **Agree**: 48
- **Strongly Agree**: 26
Proposal Overview

● Structure
  ○ General architecture
  ○ Schedule
  ○ Syllabus & grading

● Components
  ○ Building community knowledge & connection to Canisius
  ○ Supporting skills for academic planning & success

● Implementation
  ○ Director(s) & instructors
  ○ Summer development
  ○ Support teams
    ■ Peer mentors
    ■ Assessment
    ■ Advisory committee
Structure: General Architecture

- 1-credit hour
- Not required
- Strongly encouraged during freshman scheduling appointments - programs with existing first year supports would have the opportunity to opt in or out
- Class sizes ideally 12-15 students -- no more than 18
  - Given exclusions above, approximately 325 students would be eligible to enroll
  - Would need 18 - 27 sections (18 sections @ 18 students, 22 sections @ 15 students, 27 sections @ 12 students)
- Organized by school/college paralleling student success coaches and ideally by major/cluster wherever possible following best practices
- Material hosted in common D2L supported by asynchronous resource repository available to all community members
Structure: Schedule

- First session during Friday of orientation week
- Majority of sections on Fridays
- May need additional sections for early morning, evening, and ONL
- May need 1 or 2 sections in spring 2022
- Ending around Thanksgiving is important for student success and retention efforts
  - Get students through registration (November 16)
  - Launch students towards finals
Structure: Syllabus & Grading

- Shared syllabus across sections
- Letter grade to promote engagement
- Focus on supports such as writing center and counseling center during busy midterm period
- Director and implementation committee to determine:
  - Picking a common read begun in orientation, connected to the four foundations, and potentially partnering with the Contemporary Writers Series
  - A culminating 100-day celebration events such as a presentation montage of first semester, study breaks, etc.
  - General philosophy on grading
- Contact hours for 1 credit: one hour is defined as 50 minutes. Minimally, 12.5 hours of instruction and 25 hours of outside work (i.e, 37.5 hours for a credit hour). However, in things like labs or internships, there is more directed work and less outside work.
- Implementation committee will want to think carefully about choices for creating an inclusive syllabus
Components: Building Community

Campus Priorities Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Score</th>
<th>Faculty Perspective</th>
<th>Staff Perspective</th>
<th>Faculty &amp; Staff Who Work Primarily with First Year Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity and inclusion</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication etiquette</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wellness resources</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student support services</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of a liberal arts education and the core</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clubs &amp; organizations</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty interview profiles &amp; course overviews</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesuit values</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus events</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canisius neighborhood</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canisius history</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values range from 3 (high priority) to 1 (low priority)
Components: Supporting Skills

### Academic Skills Priorities Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Priority Score</th>
<th>Faculty Perspective</th>
<th>Staff Perspective</th>
<th>Faculty &amp; Staff Who Work Primarily with First Year Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic integrity and other academic policies</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<td>Writing center resources</td>
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<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Note taking</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2L and other technology skills</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom behavior and netiquette</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test taking strategies</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutoring center</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library information literacy</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the portal and student profile</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and sorting/using email</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for faculty-student scholarship</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math/quantitative skills</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student success teams</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career center</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study abroad and faculty led travel courses</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values range from 3 (high priority) to 1 (low priority)
Implementation: Directors & Instructors

- **Directors**
  - Open call for directors to be launched ASAP
  - Course release and salary to be negotiated with VPs

- **Instructors**
  - Application process for instructors launched when directors are in place
  - Need across departments/clusters
  - Training period in late summer 2021
  - First session in orientation week
  - $1000 stipend
  - Opportunity to be on summer implementation committee for additional compensation
Implementation: Summer Development

- Led by directors
- Key campus partners for content areas with interested instructors
- Develop syllabus
- Develop D2L modules and associated activities and rubrics
- Wherever possible, use existing asynchronous resources from campus community
- Lead training of instructors not on implementation team
- Close coordination with support teams
- Weekly meetings with a week-long on campus implementation workshop
Implementation: Support Teams

- **Peer mentors**
  - Peer mentors identified by director and orientation team
  - Support engagement with materials
  - Additional student resource
  - Important leadership opportunity for students

- **Assessment**
  - Faculty expertise support
  - HESAA graduate student thesis to support assessment process
  - Integration of existing tools in Baseline & campus data

- **Advisory committee**
  - From summer implementation committee
  - Voices from across campus including peer mentors and HESAA students
  - Monthly meetings
  - Help oversee Fall 2021
  - Develop proposal for Fall 2022 FYE plan in Spring 2022
Questions?