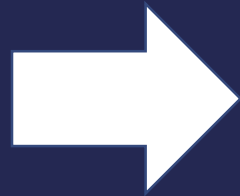




HOW A NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION AND NEW FRESHMAN COURSE CAN BOOST RETENTION

Professor Peter Higgins
Professor Steve Raynie
Gordon State College

THINKING ABOUT NON-COGNITIVE FACTORS LED TO WHERE WE ARE.



Ruminating on Brownies
with No Sugar

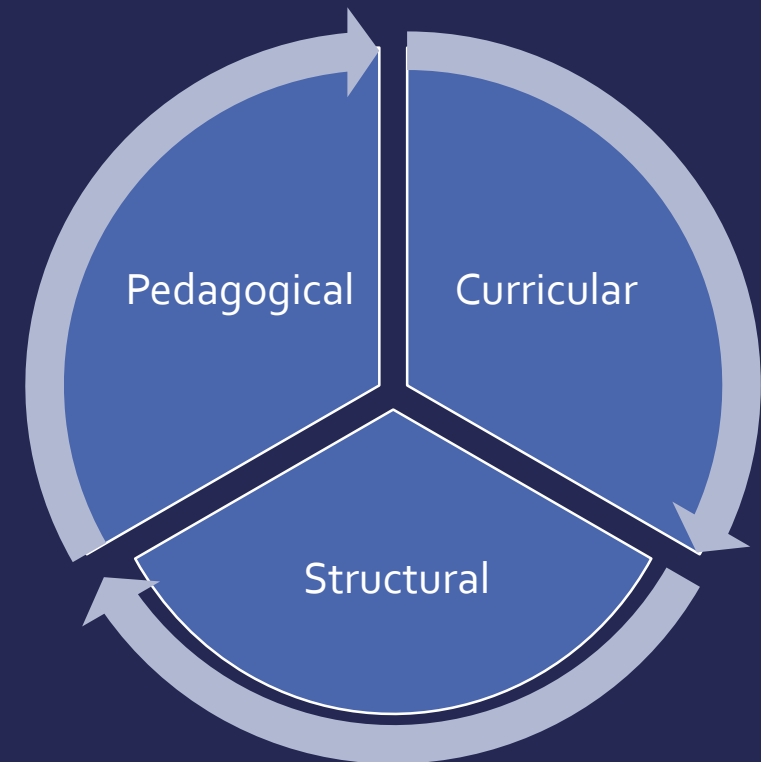
An Organized Momentum
Approach

Brownie Slide X 17

Thank you, Dr. Denley.

NSO → FIRE 1000 → ADVISING

- The NSO and FIRE and Part of a Larger Environment.
- Seeing the Whole System
 - Pedagogical (CETL, First Things First QEP)
 - Curricular (FIRE, PERTS Interventions, and co-requisite support)
 - Structural (Advising and Tutoring Support, CELL)



GUIDING MOMENTUM PRINCIPLES

Momentum Year

- Making a purpose program choice
- Creating a productive academic mindset
- Attempting the first 30 hours of a clear pathway
- Attempting 9 hours in an academic focus area
- Completing the initial English and math courses

Momentum Approach

- Deepening purposeful choices
- Cultivating productive academic mindsets
- Maintaining full momentum along a clear pathway
- Heightening academic engagement
- Completing critical milestones

ENGINEERING THE FIRST-YEAR ECOSYSTEM: NSO→FIRE→ADVISING

- Provide thematic continuity around momentum principles.
- Provide consistent experience in applying momentum principles.
- Reinforce momentum principles throughout the first-year experience.
- Understand that retention-building is more than a matter of academics.

THE FIRST-YEAR ECOLOGICAL ZONES

Cognitive unprepared /
Non-cognitive prepared

Cognitive prepared /
Non-cognitive prepared

Education Climate
Zones

Cognitive unprepared /
Non-cognitive unprepared

Cognitive prepared /
Non-cognitive unprepared

STEP 1: THE NSO

- For this part of the presentation, I am going to rely on Professor Peter Higgins, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- He will describe the details of his award-winning NSO.

PAINFUL BACKGROUND

- In Fall 2017, GSC administration made the decision to eliminate New Student Orientations entirely.
- Limited number of on-campus events (celebration dinners) but no orientation.
- Students were scheduled for classes based on surveys distributed and collected via email.

PREDICTABLE RESULTS

- Academic Armageddon for that Fall 2017 cohort
- 24.7% of FT, FT freshmen ended their first semester on academic suspension
- Almost 8 points higher than the previous cohort
- Raw numbers: 272 students (vs. 147 for the previous cohort)
- A similar increase in FT, FT freshmen who ended Fall 2017 on probation
- Barely half (55%) of FT, FT freshmen ended their first semester in Good Standing
- Continuing students did great! 87.61% in Good Standing

NEW LEADERSHIP

- Entirely rebuilt NSO for Fall 2018
- Campus-wide effort
- Momentum Year principles as our guide

PURPOSEFUL CHOICE

- Centerpiece of the new NSO program was a 75-minute advising session—designed by Deans, Department Heads, and select faculty.
- Organized by focus area/student's declared major
- Introduction to focus area (majors, expectations)
- Introduction to core curriculum
- Flexibility to move students who were in the “wrong place”

30 HOURS IN THE FIRST YEAR

- Benefits of 15+ hour schedules explained*
- Benefits of English and Math in first year explained*
- Focus area courses explained
- FIRE 1000 explained/Mindset introduced

PURPOSEFUL CHOICE AND 30+ HOURS

- At end of sessions, students completed a scheduling form
- First Quiz!
- Also, scheduling survey about preferred class times/days/campuses

GOOD RESULTS FOR 15+!

Styp Desc (group)	Credit_Hrs ..	Term Code					
		201608		201708		201808	
		Pidm	Percent	Pidm	Percent	Pidm	Percent
New Freshman	Part-time	114	13.62%	86	7.84%	57	7.00%
	FT 12-14	562	67.14%	675	61.53%	260	31.94%
	FT 15+	161	19.24%	336	30.63%	497	61.06%
	Total	837	100.00%	1,097	100.00%	814	100.00%
Other Regular	Part-time	1,024	37.77%	834	35.98%	766	34.64%
	FT 12-14	1,207	44.52%	951	41.03%	895	40.48%
	FT 15+	480	17.71%	533	22.99%	550	24.88%
	Total	2,711	100.00%	2,318	100.00%	2,211	100.00%

CORRECT MATH COURSE

Course	# of Fall 2017 Freshmen Enrolled	Percentage of Fall 2017 Freshmen Enrolled	# of Fall 2018 Freshmen Enrolled	Percentage of Fall 2018 Freshmen Enrolled
MATH 1111	567	62.5%	172	31.8%
MATH 1001	339	37.4%	368	68.14%

MORE PURPOSEFUL CHOICES

- The percentage of FT, FT freshmen picking “General Studies” (our de facto “undecided”) as their major dropped
- 16% in Fall 2017 to only 10% for the Fall 2018 cohort

INCREASED ACADEMIC SUCCESS: FALL 2017 VS. FALL 2018 FT, FT FRESHMEN

- A 43% decrease in freshmen mid-term Fs
- 70.7% in Good Standing at end of Fall (55%)
- 58.2% retention (a 10.2 point increase)
- Other juicy retention tidbits that Dr. Raynie will address shortly

SUMMARY

- Had the opportunity to start from scratch while Momentum Year was gearing up
- Campus-wide effort to rebuild the NSOs
- Conscious effort to have the new orientation and the new first-year seminar (FIRE 1000) work together, complementing each other to address Momentum Year goals.
- NSO: purposeful choice, 15+ hour schedules, correct Math course
- FIRE 1000: Academic/growth mindset, critical thinking, social belonging

STEP 2: FIRE 1000

- FIRE 1000 is not an extended orientation course.
- It incorporates momentum principles into its organization.
- FIRE 1000 is a research-based academic class that is part of Gordon State's core curriculum.
- FIRE 1000 is taken by all new freshmen students.
- FIRE 1000 supports Gordon State College's Area B learning goal of developing critical thinking while also addressing the key non-cognitive student success factors of growth mindset, social belonging, and purposeful major choice.

FIRE UNITS

Unit 1: Academic Self-Discovery and Self-Regulation: The Story of You

Unit 2: Reflection and Growth Mindset

Unit 3: Understanding Field-Specific Issues to Guide Future Academic Investigations

Unit 4: Critical Literacy in Cross-Curricular Problem Solving

FIRE 1000 & THE MOMENTUM APPROACH

Deepen purposeful choices

- FIRE 1000 courses are versioned for one of eight areas:
 - Business
 - Education
 - Fine Arts
 - Humanities
 - Nursing & Health Sciences
 - Social Sciences (includes history)
 - STEM/Biology
 - STEM
- We also introduce students to undergraduate research principles.

FIRE 1000 & THE MOMENTUM APPROACH

Deepen purposeful choices

- We bring in guest speakers from the community, from the Gordon Foundation board, and from among the faculty.
- We have critical thinking projects in Unit 4 to whet students' appetites for undergraduate research.
- An entire unit of the course is devoted to developing a personal development and graduation plan.
 - Awareness of obstacles & a plan to overcome them
 - Semester-by-semester course choices
 - Financing education
 - Back-up plan for a major

FIRE 1000 AND THE MOMENTUM APPROACH

Cultivate productive academic mindsets

- One unit of the course focuses on reflecting on and developing growth mindset and grit.
- The unit also includes material about emotional intelligence, a Jungian type (MTBI) personality assessment, and goal-setting.
- The main text of the course is Carol Dweck's *Growth Mindset*.
- Other readings include exemplars who have overcome obstacles:
 - Booker T. Washington
 - Malcolm X
 - Frederick Douglass
 - Sandra Cisneros
 - Amy Tan

FIRE 1000 AND THE MOMENTUM APPROACH

Maintain full momentum along a clear pathway

- FIRE 1000 instructors are the advisors for the students in their courses & see the students twice per week in class and during office hours.
- Advisors help students create 15-16 credit hour schedules for the next semester.
- Advisors help students work the plans they develop in the course.

FIRE 1000 AND THE MOMENTUM APPROACH

Maintain full momentum along a clear pathway

- Advisors work with the Career Services office to make visible and document NACEWEB criteria (career readiness define)
- Advisors aid students in navigating unfamiliar institutional terrain.
- Advisors advocate for and mentor students during the critical first year.

FIRE 1000 AND THE MOMENTUM APPROACH

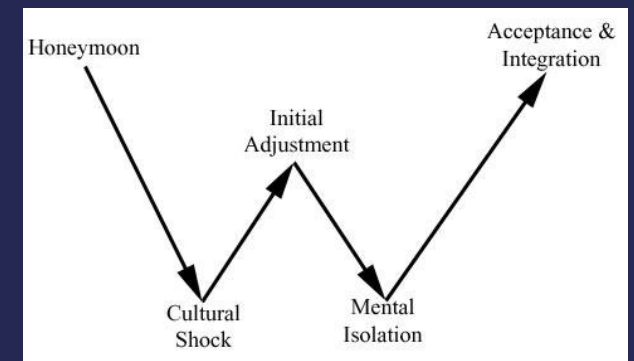
Heighten academic engagement (while being aware of systemic academic inequities)

- The course includes material designed heighten feelings social belonging.
- As mentioned, the FIRE instructor is the students' advisor. They get to know their students as people.
- The course begins with growth mindset and grit, with goal-setting and reflection that promotes self-monitoring skills.

FIRE 1000 AND THE MOMENTUM APPROACH

Complete critical milestones

- Advisors help students learn more quickly about resources to help with math and English milestone courses.
- FIRE 1000 promotes awareness of a developmental continuum rather than the binary “college-ready” or “not college-ready.”
 - Students are less likely to believe early on that they are not “college-ready.”
 - Interventions mitigate the culture shock phase of the W-curve.
- Students adopt a new mindset.
 - ~~I have never been a good student.~~
 - I am learning that I can be a good student.



Zeller & Mosier, 1993

A LITTLE RETENTION DATA

Table 1: First-time full-time freshmen

Retention Rates (Interactive)
first-time full-time freshmen

Disaggregated by: Cohort Term/FIRE ABC/DFW

		Cohort Count	Retained Count	Graduated Count	Retention Rate
Fall 2016	Null	740	420	0	56.8%
Fall 2017	Null	1,047	502	1	48.0%
Fall 2018	Null	39	22	0	56.4%
	ABC	520	365	1	70.4%
	DFW	195	51	0	26.2%

*NOTE - Cohort Term with * indicates the retention term date (following fall semester) is based on preliminary operational data and not persisted midterm census date.*

FVSU GAP - Not FVSU GAP

None - Null
Gender - F & M
Ethnicity/Race - All

Table 2: African American students

Retention Rates (Interactive)
first-time full-time freshmen

Disaggregated by: Cohort Term/FIRE ABC/DFW

		Cohort Count	Retained Count	Graduated Count	Retention Rate
Fall 2016	Null	303	162	0	53.5%
Fall 2017	Null	539	226	0	41.9%
Fall 2018	Null	10	5	0	50.0%
	ABC	234	159	0	67.9%
	DFW	106	26	0	24.5%

*NOTE - Cohort Term with * indicates the retention term date (following fall semester) is based on preliminary operational data and not persisted midterm census date.*

FVSU GAP - Not FVSU GAP

None - Null
Gender - F & M
Ethnicity/Race - Black or African American

A LITTLE RETENTION DATA

Table 3: African American Male Students

Retention Rates (Interactive)
first-time full-time freshmen

Disaggregated by: Cohort Term/FIRE ABC/DFW

		Cohort Count	Retained Count	Graduated Count	Retention Rate
Fall 2016	Null	118	45	0	38.1%
Fall 2017	Null	199	84	0	42.2%
Fall 2018	Null	5	3	0	60.0%
	ABC	61	47	0	77.0%
	DFW	52	15	0	28.8%

*NOTE - Cohort Term with * indicates the retention term date (following fall semester) is based on preliminary operational data and not persisted midterm census date.*

FVSU GAP - Not FVSU GAP

None - Null
Gender - M
Ethnicity/Race - Black or African American

Table 4: First Generation Students

Retention Rates (Interactive)
first-time full-time freshmen

Disaggregated by: Cohort Term/FIRE ABC/DFW

		Cohort Count	Retained Count	Graduated Count	Retention Rate
Fall 2016	Null	200	110	0	55.0%
Fall 2017	Null	286	127	0	44.4%
Fall 2018	Null	6	2	0	33.3%
	ABC	122	88	1	73.0%
	DFW	58	14	0	24.1%

*NOTE - Cohort Term with * indicates the retention term date (following fall semester) is based on preliminary operational data and not persisted midterm census date.*

FVSU GAP - Not FVSU GAP

First Generation Status - Y
FIRE ABC/DFW - Null, ABC, DFW
None - Null

A LITTLE RETENTION DATA

Table 5: Learning Support Students

Retention Rates (Interactive)
first-time full-time freshmen

Disaggregated by: FIRE ABC/DFW/Cohort Term

		Cohort Count	Retained Count	Graduated Count	Retention Rate
Null	Fall 2013	550	284	0	51.6%
	Fall 2014	530	300	0	56.6%
	Fall 2015	492	270	0	54.9%
	Fall 2016	354	211	0	59.6%
	Fall 2017	459	168	0	36.6%
	Fall 2018	13	7	0	53.8%
ABC	Fall 2018	287	197	0	68.6%
DFW	Fall 2018	152	41	0	27.0%

*NOTE - Cohort Term with * indicates the retention term date (following fall semester) is based on preliminary operational data and not persisted midterm census date.*

FVSU GAP - Not FVSU GAP

FIRE ABC/DFW - All
LS Code - E, EM, ER and 4 more
None - Null

Table 6: Residential Students

Retention Rates (Interactive)
first-time full-time freshmen

Disaggregated by: FIRE ABC/DFW/Cohort Term

		Cohort Count	Retained Count	Graduated Count	Retention Rate
Null	Fall 2016	358	191	0	53.4%
	Fall 2017	588	251	0	42.7%
	Fall 2018	10	5	0	50.0%
ABC	Fall 2018	268	191	0	71.3%
DFW	Fall 2018	109	31	0	28.4%

*NOTE - Cohort Term with * indicates the retention term date (following fall semester) is based on preliminary operational data and not persisted midterm census date.*

FVSU GAP - Not FVSU GAP

Housing Status - Resident
FIRE ABC/DFW - Null, ABC, Commuting and 5 more
None - Null, ABC, DFW

STEP 3: ADVISING TRANSITION

Sophomore Induction Event at the End of the First Year

Main Event (Celebrate)

- Welcome from the President
- Guest Speaker
- Stand for Highlander Oath (Students Repeat)
- Distribution of Certificates
- Sing Alma Mater with chorus

Satellite Events Following by School (Connect)

- Upper-level Student Presence
- Focus Area Faculty , Department Head, and Dean Presence
- Club Sign-up



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