FIRST YEAR PROGRAMS
SURVEY OVERVIEW

• Survey purpose: to collect information on the nature and scope of first-year programs available to native first-time freshmen and new transfer students across CUNY.

• Conducted via Survey Monkey in spring-summer 2013. Eighteen colleges responded (all but the School of Professional Studies (SPS) who do not serve first-time freshman).

• Data was analyzed in Spring 2014 and distributed to the CUE Council in Fall 2014.
HIGHLIGHTS

• Most common first year initiatives
  • Special Advisement (94%)
  • First year seminar (74%)
  • Learning communities (79%)

• Other common offerings
  • Writing Intensive courses (84%)
  • Undergraduate Research (74%)
  • Common Readings (47%)
NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

- Offered by all colleges
- Mandatory student participation (57%)
- Optional programs report 59% participation rate
- Mandatory programs report 94% participation rate
- Online & in person orientation available (30%)
- Only in person (70%)
- Orientation for families, optional (64%)
14 colleges (74%) offer a first year seminar:

- Credit-bearing course (5 colleges) 36%
- Non-credit course (9 colleges) 64%
- Full semester (8 colleges) 57%
- Shorter, condensed sessions (4) 28%
- Course content focus on skills development (71%)
- Content is stand-alone (64%)
- Content is linked to content in another course (35%)
FIRST YEAR SEMINAR CONTENT
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- Campus services (100%)
- College culture and expectations (85%)
- GenEd Goals (64%)
- Academic goals and planning (92%)
- Career goals and planning (85%)
- Library services/ Information literacy (71%)
- Ethics/Academic Integrity (78%)
- Critical thinking/problem solving (78%)
- Writing effectively (57%)
- Speaking effectively (50%)
- Reading strategies (50%)
- Memory strategies (64%)
FIRST YEAR SEMINAR CONTENT

Series 1:
- Memory Strategies
- Note Taking
- Test Taking
- Time Management
- General Study Skills
- Stress Management
- Financial Literacy
- Health and Wellness
- Managing Relationships
- Understanding Diversity
- Civic Responsibility/Leadership
- Transferable Skills Development
FIRST YEAR SEMINAR CONTENT

- Self-assessment/metacognition (71%)
- Note taking (78%)
- Test taking (71%)
- Time management (100%)
- General study skills (85%)
- Stress Management (71%)
- Financial Literacy (21%)
- Health & wellness (64%)
- Managing relationships (71%)
- Civic Responsibility/Leadership (57%)
- Understanding Diversity (71%)
- Transferable skills development (50%)
LEARNING COMMUNITIES

• 74% of the colleges report offering access to learning communities for first year students.

• 79% of these colleges organize their learning communities around a theme or topic.

• Reported themes included, but were not limited to, those centered on political and cultural awareness, literature and history, and the social sciences (humanities, anthropology, etc).
COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING & INTERNSHIPS

• 58% percent of colleges report offering access to community-based learning opportunities for first year students.

• 64% of these colleges provide professional development, or other forms of support.

• 42% of colleges report that first year students have access to internships.

• 63% of these colleges provide professional development, or other forms of support.

• Colleges with internship opportunities also report that they are linked to a course or department, and the most common are related to business, health and social services.
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

• While offered at 74% of the reporting colleges, there is little participation in undergraduate research opportunities for first year students.

• Most colleges reporting 1-3% participation.

• These research opportunities are typically in the mathematics, biology and chemistry departments, with one college reporting research work in the area of business and political science.
FIRST SUMMER ACTIVITIES

• 47% percent of colleges report encouraging student to participate in summer activities at the end of their first year.

• University Skills Immersion Program (USIP) is the most common offering.

• Other examples include advisement, summer success programs, and specialized programs in science, math and reading.
CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & PEER MENTORING

• 78% report offering co-curricular activities for first year students.

• Of these, they also offer peer mentoring. Rates of participation of peer mentors vary widely from serving less than 10% of the first year students, up to all of the first year students, depending on the campus.

• Co-curricular activities reported:
  • Student clubs (reading and career development focused)
  • Student government
  • Community service initiatives
  • Students fairs focused on school spirit, career and wellness
  • Common reading
FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO IMPROVE FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

• 42% percent of the reporting colleges provide professional development for faculty to help improve the first year experience for students.

• Examples cited include:
  • workshops on motivating students,
  • advising first year students, and the
  • orientation of new faculty in general.

• Four colleges indicate having a department dedicated to first year students/programs.
TRANSFER STUDENTS

- 11 colleges report having a dedicated advisor for transfer students.

- Two colleges report having a dedicated orientation for transfer students, both report that this is a non-credit and alone course that covers general information about campus programs and policies.

- 37% report that transfer students are offered professional development support for writing intensive courses.

- 58% offer travel opportunities.

- 53% offer co-curricular activities.

- 21% offer peer mentoring.

- 21% offer faculty training to work with transfer students.