Workshop:
Transition Pedagogy for First Year
Learning Success and Retention

Professor Sally Kift
ALTF Senior Fellow; OLT Discipline Scholar: Law
DVC (Academic), James Cook University, Australia

First Year Workshop
Victoria University of Wellington
21 January 2016
Student success is largely determined by student experiences during the first year.


http://www.freewebs.com/horseloversveen/the-far-side-comic.jpg
How might we frame better the ‘educational conditions in which we place students’ (Tinto, 2009, 2) to support first year learning, success and retention?

1. Approaches the first year in ways that are intentional, explicit, and based on clear philosophy/rationale for students’ first year.

2. Seeks to engage students in the collegiate experience both in and out of class.

3. Ensures that all first-year students encounter diverse ideas, viewpoints, and people.

4. Serves all first-year students, including various segments of the first-year student population, according to their needs.

5. Has organizational structures and policies that provide a comprehensive, coordinated approach to the first year.

6. Uses a variety of quantitative and qualitative designs and methods to examine all aspects of students’ first-year experience and to evaluate and understand the impact of institutional policies, strategies, and interventions.
First Year Focus – Foundational Dimensions®

(Four-Year College Version)

Foundational Dimensions statements constitute a model that provides institutions with a means to evaluate and improve the first year of college. As an evaluation tool, the model enables institutions both to confirm their strengths and to recognize the need for improvement. As an aspirational model, the Dimensions provide general guidelines for an intentional design of the first year. The Dimensions rest on four assumptions:

- The academic mission of an institution is preeminent;
- The first college year is central to the achievement of an institution’s mission and lays the foundation on which undergraduate education is built;
- Systematic evidence provides validation of the Dimensions;
- Collectively, the Dimensions constitute an ideal for improving not only the first college year, but also the entire undergraduate experience.

http://www.jngi.org/foe-program/
Foundations Institutions create organizational structures and policies that provide a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated approach to the first year. These structures and policies provide oversight and alignment of all first-year efforts. A coherent first-year experience is realized and maintained through effective partnerships among academic affairs, student affairs, and other administrative units and is enhanced by ongoing faculty and staff development activities and appropriate budgetary arrangements. (Organization)
What Matters to Student Success in the First Year of University?

George D. Kuh
Pacific Rim First Year in Higher Education Conference
QUT Gardens Point, Brisbane
July 5, 2007

Student engagement varies more within than between institutions.

George Kuh (2007)
Keynote at Pacific Rim FYHE Conference
FYE approaches (Kift, et al., 2010; Kift, 2009; Wilson, 2009; Kift, 2015)

- **1\textsuperscript{st} generation FYE**
  - Siloed co-curricular – professionals on curriculum’s periphery

- **2\textsuperscript{nd} generation FYE**
  - Curriculum focus – recognises entering diversity and supports student learning experience via pedagogy, curriculum design & L&T practice – requires faculty & professional partnerships

- **3\textsuperscript{rd} generation FYE**
  - 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} generation FYE quality assured, joined-up and seamless across institution, across all its disciplines, programs & services *via* faculty & professional partnerships

= **Transition pedagogy** –

*a guiding philosophy for intentional first year curriculum design and support that carefully scaffolds and mediates the first year learning experience for contemporary heterogeneous cohorts.*

Kift & Nelson (2005)

What are the **barriers / challenges** to shifting

from

primarily co-curricular ‘first generation’ FYE approaches

to

equitable ‘second and third generation’ FYE approaches

that focus on enhancing the student learning experience

through pedagogy, curriculum design,

and learning & teaching practices

that integrate curricular and co-curricular support?
ALTC FYE Fellowship:
As a result of broad sectoral engagement…

Six (6) Meta Observations

Six (6) Meta Observations (1)

1. Partnerships are crucial
   - Collective and coordinated work across academic, administrative and support areas
   - ‘I would very much to see a co-ordinated university-wide transition program, delivered in a timely fashion across the first year of study’
   - ‘[Like to hear more about] issues & ways academics can work with support/non-academic to enhance transition’; ‘…the two need to communicate more’

2. Partnerships are hard work
   - Internationally, all institutions struggling with whole-of-institution integration, coordination, coherency
   - ‘I found this session really useful. It was great to hear what people in other [areas of the university] are doing, Sometimes our team feels quite alone in what we are trying to do – rest of school not concerned.’

Otherwise FYE impact limited by role

‘[There is a] difference in perspectives between academic(s) and professional staff groups [regarding] what we are about’

‘Curriculum change often can’t be implemented by lecturers – and yet we are the ones who deal with the students!’

‘Probably better for academics who are able to facilitate change. SS (student services) are very limited in power BUT knowledge gained can be introduced to sow seeds to academics we have built a rapport with.’

‘Often the people that need to be at these forums are not. Eg – preaching to the converted! I need my HoD or program co-ordinator at these events – I simply can’t implement these changes we so desperately need.’
And this…

‘I would have said “very satisfied” [by the session] if it did not make me depressed. I am [subject coordinator] of a first semester first year [subject] with about 600 students (400 on my campus, 200 on another). I am the only academic on my campus, so have to do all the teaching and administration. I am not allowed to implement many of your ideas.’

Six (6) Meta Observations (2)

3. Student diversity sharpens focus on criticality of this work
   • Obvious way to support widening participation and student diversity is through coherent, integrated, intentional, supportive, inclusive FY curriculum design

4. Momentum for a sector-wide [and international] consensus
   • ‘[A] sector response that is unified and consistent will assist individual institutions & change agents [to] open up discussions that lead to action’
   • ‘[Need] support from the top – not just at institutional level but across institutions’
   • ‘…we battle the same issues across continents’
5. Normalising and validating are important

• As important for staff as for FY students
• ‘Knowing that every other institution is also grappling with the new and diverse cohort helps to foster collegiality on the issue of FY and what is best practice in the sector for FY.’
• ‘Reassuring to find that everyone faces the same issues with resources and feeling disempowered.’
• ‘Reassurance of ideas & heading in right direction’
Six (6) Meta Observations (4)

6. **This work is both professional and personal**
   - For both students and staff, experience can be very good *or* very bad *or* sadly mediocre
   - *The role play of a first year lecture* was so convincing and seemed to be channelling several professors…Aren’t the students all stupid though? If I hear that one more time in [my school] I will scream!
   - ‘*battle*’; ‘*depressed*’; ‘*desperately needed*’.

This work needs to be supported, valued, recognised, rewarded

Getting the institutional context right.

Action

Data analysis
Consensus re supporting student success for all
Consensus re ‘engaging’ student exp
Learning leadership & governance across silos
Area plans
Top level plan(s)
Institutional Vision

Reward & recognition
Staff development
Promotion criteria
Probation
KPIs
PP&R
Enabling policy environment

Initiatives to address

- external factors
- institutional factors
- personal factors


First Year Experience and Retention Policy

Intent

Students are at the heart of our University. JCU is committed to a whole-of-university approach in the provision of structured orientation and transition to help all commencing students adjust to study. The University recognises the significant challenges facing first year students and acknowledges their diversity and varying social and educational needs and aspirations.

Through this policy JCU will provide a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated approach to the First Year Experience that:

- is part of a coordinated, evidence-based improvement and success strategy
- develops quality first year experience and enactment
- is facilitated by high quality student Teaching and Assessment Policy
- provides equity of access to enrolment services and information
- is embedded in the University's culture and ethos
- improves life opportunities

Introduction

This plan provides the institutional framework for improving the student retention rates at Victoria University. It sets the direction for student retention initiatives at Victoria for the next three years.

A high-quality education is not just a potential, but an essential right. Victoria University engages and supports students to reach their full potential. This plan provides the institutional framework for improving student retention rates at Victoria University. It sets the direction for student retention initiatives at Victoria for the next three years. A high-quality education is not just a potential, but an essential right. Victoria University engages and supports students to reach their full potential. This plan provides the institutional framework for improving student retention rates at Victoria University. It sets the direction for student retention initiatives at Victoria for the next three years.
A transition pedagogy for a massified sector

• Because of diversity – there is a need to change our curriculum approaches
  – Widening access has fundamentally changed the assumptions that can be made about students’ [entry] skills and knowledge. This has not always led to the necessary changes in learning, teaching and assessment approaches. Johnson (2002, 11)

• Because of changing patterns of student engagement (e.g. working longer, attending less) we need to focus on contact we do have with our students
  – Therefore primary focus on (virtual & physical) classroom

• Curriculum as the ‘glue’ and the ‘organising device’
Total Student Experience...

Students’ total experience ...  
– not just what happens in the traditional classroom – shapes their judgements of quality, promotes retention and engages them in productive learning

Scott, G (2006) Accessing the Student Voice: Using CEQuery to identify what retains students and promotes engagement in productive learning in Australian higher education at vii  
http://www.uws.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/63955/HEIPCEQueryFinal_v2_1st_Feb_06.pdf
Background to

A Transition Pedagogy
and
The First Year Curriculum

Kift ALTC Senior Fellowship
http://transitionpedagogy.com/
Transition Pedagogy

Kift Senior Fellowship: 6 Curriculum Principles (2009)

[Higher Education word bingo]

[Concurrent with good teaching and good support]

1. Transition
2. Diversity
3. Design
4. Engagement
5. Assessment
6. Evaluation and Monitoring

A curriculum that does serious transition and retention work!

http://transitionpedagogy.com/
How do we **design** coherent, relevant and achievable first year curriculum that **both** aids transition to higher education learning **and** provides the platform for later year learning success and a lifetime of professional practice?
An Extract – CURRICULUM DESIGN

"Threshold Concepts" & "Troublesome Knowledge"


**Threshold concepts**: fundamental, transformative understandings that sit at the heart of discipline knowledge. Students need to 'get' them in order for core disciplinary knowledge to make sense. They are like a portal, opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking.

**Troublesome knowledge**: Difficult to grasp concepts; important to curr design because students get 'stuck’ in these places.

**Examples** of TCs, include:
- 'opportunity cost' in Economics
- 'gravity' in Physics & Engineering
- 'depreciation' in Accounting
- 'deconstruction for text analysis' in English literature.

http://www.ee.ucl.ac.uk/~mflanaga/thresholds.html
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARACTERISTIC</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformative</td>
<td>A shift occurs in the learner’s perception. New understandings are assimilated into a learner’s biography, becoming part of who they are, how they see and how they feel</td>
<td>In a Law course students learn the principles of justice and of ethical practice in lawyers’ roles – codes of conduct, ethical rules and responsibilities, limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irreversible</td>
<td>Once understood the learner is unlikely to forget it. New patterns and connections are recognised and earlier patterns of understanding cannot easily be retrieved. Subsequent variation or a rejection of the new concept is still possible</td>
<td>In an Education course students are required to reflect on performance feedback to identify and action learning opportunities and self-improvements. Reflective and critical thinking become inherent in their professional work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative</td>
<td>Exposes inter-relatedness, enabling students to coherently integrate what were previously seen as unrelated aspects of the subject. Things start to click into place</td>
<td>In a Health course students learn to deliver safe and effective collaborative healthcare. This calls upon their knowledge of the roles of other health practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bounded</td>
<td>Bordering with other thresholds or new conceptual spaces. The more interdisciplinary a subject, the more complex this will be</td>
<td>In a Tourism course students consider the social, economic, political and biophysical dimensions of sustainable tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troublesome knowledge</td>
<td>Difficult to grasp concepts - this may include concepts that: clash, compete or interact; appear illogical, unfamiliar or alien; counter-intuitive and initially very difficult for learners to accept</td>
<td>In an Accounting course the students’ desire for the ‘correct answer’ is counter intuitive to the modelling process that emphasises alternatives used to support problem solving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://www.ee.ucl.ac.uk/~mflanaga/thresholds.html
First year curriculum objectives for your degree program?

What do you think the FY curriculum objectives should be?
– i.e., complete this thought –

At the conclusion of the first year of the [your degree], you (students) should be able to –
First year curriculum objectives for your degree program?

Figure 1: Communication skills developmental continuum

- Preparedness to commence higher education study
- General academic and social communication language and literacy ability
- Engagement with disciplinary teaching, learning and assessment tasks
- Disciplinary academic, workplace and social communicative language and literacy ability
- Readiness to enter profession and/or further study
- Professional and social communicative language and literacy ability

Engaging first year students through their experience of transition pedagogy

Discuss...

How might transition learning, success & retention be enabled (better)?

- What’s happening now? What’s working?
- What needs to happen in your context? What ideas do these prompts trigger?
- What are the challenges? What barriers might prevent actioning the principle?
- How might any challenges be (partly) overcome?
- What types of support/ resources do you need? EG, how might partnerships between academic and professional/non-academic staff facilitate development & implementation of these strategies?
Workshop fun!!

• To identify and discuss **practical examples of, and strategies for**, good FY curriculum course design & support.
• To enact transition pedagogy & develop tools for whole-of-institution effect w/i & b/w teaching teams & across org silos.

**Worksheets – Principles into action for practice**

– One sheet for each principle, with some prompt questions
– For you to identify practical strategies to implement the principle
  • With more prompts
– Approx 10 mins per principle; Write ideas on template
– Think also about barriers (支线任务) to implementing these ideas **and** ways to overcome (解决方案)
– In your groups identify your favourite example/strategy for reportback.
How is student orientation and transition, as a process over time, proactively managed at your university? Particularly, how are effective partnerships between academic and professional staff facilitated to support your university’s vision for its students’ FYE?
First year students

“wished that they had a better orientation into what the university environment would be like. They all came with their own expectations, but there was nothing that really spelt out to them what they should expect in relation to teaching and learning, but also the whole of campus experience”.

- Mismatch between FYE expectations & reality
- “Culture shock”

ALTC Fellowship Student Commentary (2009)

http://transitionpedagogy.com/expert-commentary/student-perspective/
Summarizing before exam.

expectation  Reality

https://www.pinterest.com/pin/564920346980865792/
Some follow up questions...

• **Organisation** – What *organisational structures, policies and processes* should be put in place at your university to enable a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated approach to the first year experience?

• **Access to Support** – How are diverse student cohorts supported in a *just-in-time and just-for-me* way to access relevant support services over the first year student life cycle (e.g. academic and non-academic, generalist and specialist)?

• **Sense of belonging** – How is a *sense of academic and social belonging* fostered at your university (e.g. how are students supported to socialise)?
What being successful looks like…


**Strategies for learning success**

**University is challenging and you just need to Do it!**
- go to lectures
- participate
- do your readings
- talk about your classes

**Be organised**
- have a study routine
- use a wall planner with assignment due dates

**Keep a balance in life**
- connect with people
- look after yourself
- manage your money

**Know why you are studying**
- set goals that help your motivation and resilience when things get hard

**Ask when you need to**
- ask sooner, rather than later
- build on what you know

---

**Work ethic is the number one important skill in the top 10 rated by employers.**
*(Employers' study, 2015, Victoria University)*

**Regular lecture attendance increases your chances of passing and getting good grades.**

**Sleep-deprived people have 19 percent less memory than those who sleep well.**

**Students who have university goals that relate to who they are, their values, beliefs and interest are more likely to be engaged and motivated.**

---

**“No one will do it for you. It's up to you and you just have to do it!” (Jamie)**

**“University has taught me to manage my time and my priorities. Things will take longer than you realise.” (Cameron)**

**“Take time out every day—don’t wait till you feel bogged down.” (Hollie)**

**“I just wanted to do something I really love and I know it will steer me.” (Kayla)**

**“You learn a lot when you ask—so don’t be afraid to ask.” (Sri)**
Set up your study routine now!

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/modules/routine/

start: 26/09/2015
due: 15/10/2015

you have 19 days to finish

Good. I have a few weeks. Just need to plan well and stay focused!

Step 1: Analyse your assignment task

- Analyse the task according to the strategy in "Working Out How to Start".
- Make sure you work out what you need to research and how to structure your assignment.

Step 2: Find your information

- Start with the resources in "Assignment Research".
- Read broader general resources (textbooks) before resources on specific topics (journal articles).
- If you cannot find what you need, Ask a Librarian.

Step 3: Organise your notes

- Follow the strategy in "Organising Your Notes".
- Develop a plan according to the task words in your assignment.

By Saturday 26 Sep, 2015

By Thursday 1 Oct, 2015

By Sunday 4 Oct, 2015

“...distance and online courses are not for everyone. It is important to understand fully what distance learning is like, and how it fits with your own learning preferences.”


Before students arrive...
On commencement

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/publications/myvic-it-guide.pdf


Current Student Website

Student services

Key messages

Key university dates and events

GO TO CLASS.

Seriously.

It's hard to do well at uni without showing up to your classes.

Why? Because our research indicates that for CSU's internal students,

It's the single best predictor of your grade.
Weekly email to discipline cohort with just-in-time info: eg –
- where to go and who to contact for [discipline] information;
- Information literacy skills; [Law] Library and general study skills resources & workshops; academic honesty requirements;
- employment opportunities; counselling services;
- ADTL drop-in tutorial details;
- tips for success in discipline assessment (eg how to go about your tutorial presentation in [the first semester subject]);
- acknowledging that it is normal to “hit-the-wall” in about weeks 5-7;
- a weekly study hint; etc.

Student responses to emails:

• **Motivational** and kept time-poor students “bubbling along”
• Helped **make explicit** what aided learning success: “extra support...in this often confusing and stressful first Semester”
• Were sensible and helped **put things in perspective**
• Created a **sense of belonging** and showed that someone cared about student progress: “adds a personal touch to what seems such an impersonal process... I find them a bit of a pep talk”
• The **sense of isolation** was reduced
• Gratitude that someone “high-up” **took the time to care**
• **Normalising** the stressful experience was useful
• Made them **feel like a “real student”** not a “cyberspace number”

Diversity

Discussion Question

How are students with diverse backgrounds and capabilities supported *in the curriculum* to engage with their new learning in higher education and the discipline of study?
Access without Support is not Opportunity
(Tinto, 2008, 9)

‘To be serious about student success, institutions would recognize that the roots of student attrition lie not only in their students and the situations they face, but also in the very character of the educational settings in which they ask low-income students to learn . . . .It is simply not enough to provide low-income students access to our universities . . . .and claim that we are providing opportunity if we do not construct environments that support their efforts to learn and succeed beyond access. Simply put access without support is not opportunity.’
Educational conditions that promote success amongst low-income students (Tinto, 2008)

1. **Institutional commitment** – all actors, esp teachers

2. Hold uniformly high **expectations** of all students
   - *Equitable* formal and informal advising (of expectations)

3. Normalise and facilitate **access to support** – academic & social

4. **Link classroom** activities to support services
   - 3rd generation FYE to **push proactive** support

5. Assure **engagement** for academic & social belonging – an institutional culture where all students are valued
   - Esp via curriculum/classroom – the **only** place many (esp time-poor equity) groups will come together
   - Intentional, facilitated interaction between different ‘cultural’ groups
Report: Post entry language assessment in Australian higher education

Identifying students requiring English language support: What role can a PELA play?

Anne Harris

Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia
Email: a.harris@ecu.edu.au

Published online 28 November, 2013

The number of higher education providers implementing a post-entry English Language Assessment (PELA) has increased exponentially in the past six years. This uptake has been driven largely by the “Good Practice on Principles”, the TEQSA Act 2011, and TEQSA’s Quality Assessment on Principles. Evidence suggests that at least 50% of English Language Proficiency. Evidence suggests that at least 50% of English Language Proficiency. Evidence suggests that at least 50% of English Language Proficiency. Evidence suggests that at least 50% of English Language Proficiency. Evidence suggests that at least 50% of English Language Proficiency. Evidence suggests that at least 50% of English Language Proficiency.

Key Words: PELA, TEQSA, English language proficiency.

1. Background

The number of higher education providers implementing a Post-entry English Language Assessment (PELA) has increased exponentially in the past six years. This uptake has been driven largely by rapid growth in the enrolment of international students, many of whom require additional language support to succeed in their studies. PELA assessments are designed to identify students who may need additional language support to meet the academic demands of tertiary study.

### Feedback Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUNCTUATION (comma, full stop, capital)</th>
<th>SPREADING</th>
<th>APOSTROPHES (missing, incorrect use, it’s/its)</th>
<th>NUMBER (no paragraphs, cohesion, transition links)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOUN/VERB AGREEMENT (he was, they is are)</td>
<td>TENSES (walked, have walked, has been walking)</td>
<td>MODELS (can, could, may might)</td>
<td>WORD FORM (plural, noun or verb form, -ing form)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENTENCE STRUCTURE (incomplete, run on, word order)</td>
<td>SENTENCE SIMPLICITY (simple, rambling)</td>
<td>CONJUNCTIONS (and, but, yet, so, because, although)</td>
<td>PREPOSITIONS (in, on, by, from)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ARTICLES (a, an, the)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Focus on the topic

- Strong focus on the topic
- Satisfactory focus on the topic
- Poor focus on the topic

Content

- Appropriate and relevant
- Mostly relevant but could be further developed
- Irrelevant material included

Development of topic

- Clear and complex sentences used appropriately
- Logical and sustained connections throughout essay
- Sentences lack complexity.
- Ideas are disorganised and/or weakly connected across paragraphs.
- Overly simple sentences that contain inaccuracies.
- Uses language that impedes meaning.

Based on the feedback, the following actions are recommended:

1. No English language support required
   - You have applied and demonstrated your knowledge of writing skills consistently, cohesively and effectively.
2. May require English language support
   - Speak with your Faculty Learning Advisor to find out what English language support is available this semester.
3. English language support strongly recommended
   - Early help can make your time at University much easier. Speak to your Faculty Learning Advisor to find out what English language support is available and how you can work together to increase your skills.
4. Unable to mark
   - Limited sample
   - Unable to read writing

At JCU, all students are entitled to the best possible learning experience.

Through the JCU Learning Centre, students have access to study groups and
space, learning and career advice, and an annual program of study and research
skills workshops and seminars.

The JCU Learning Centre is resourced and managed by Learning, Teaching and
Student Engagement within the Division of Academic and Student
Achievement.

Refresh and improve your maths skills!

The following resources contain easy-to-understand examples and exercises for each topic.

**Basic statistics**

- Collecting data
- Representing data - graphing
- Describing data - measures of central tendency
- Describing data - measures of spread
- Normal distributions
- Sample vs. population distributions
- Probability and confidence intervals
- Hypothesis testing

**Maths refreshers**

**Maths modules**

**Discipline specific maths**

- Maths for Introductory Chemistry

[https://www.jcu.edu.au/students/learning-centre](https://www.jcu.edu.au/students/learning-centre)
What strategies and activities should be deployed in the first year curriculum to motivate new learners and engage them in productive learning, both in and outside the classroom?
Engagement

With striking consistency, studies show that innovative, active, collaborative, and constructivist instructional approaches shape learning more powerfully, in some forms by substantial margins, than do conventional lecture-discussion and text-based approaches.

Pascarella & Terenzini (2005, 646)
Australasian Survey of Student Engagement

AUSSE: 6 scales

- Academic challenge
- Active learning
- Student–staff interactions
- Enriching Educational Experiences
- Supportive Learning Environment
- Work integrated learning

4. Teach Explicitly

An explicit approach to teaching recognises that learning in the tertiary domain is culturally based and multi-dimensional: from the initial transitions into Western academic literacies through to workplace and research skills.

Understanding specialised language, concepts and the underpinning cultural values used across disciplines helps students to participate in unfamiliar environments. This can be achieved when you:

- Build upon the prior knowledge and experiences of students.
- ‘Scaffold’ learning by unpacking the academic, discipline and cultural knowledge necessary for students to participate; move from simple to more complex tasks; speak and write in accessible language.
- Explain to students what is required of them to be successful at each stage of their studies, both in learning activities and assessment tasks.
- Encourage help-seeking behaviour and provide information on how to access academic support.
Harnessing Peer-to-Peer Interactions


http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/slss/whatweoffer/pass.aspx

Claire’s Little Secrets to Surviving University

...your very first day... is going to be both exciting and horrifying. I remember stepping into a room of over 500 students, totally overwhelmed... [Then]... my lecturer said: “The class may seem crowded at the moment, but at least 50 students will leave after a month, and only half of you will graduate after four years.”... So to get you started, I ..share.. tips (I wish someone had told me!) on how to survive your first year at university.

1. Sit next to the best looking person in the room.
Course and Career information: Six Career Development Modules at QUT

• Developed to underpin current curriculum and assist students to:
  – make sound course and career choices;
  – make successful transitions to life as a student; life at University; and post University
  – make connections between their course of study and where that might lead; and
  – further develop career pathways.

You can complete any module you are interested in.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Preparation</th>
<th>Career Preparation</th>
<th>Work Placement Preparation</th>
<th>Career Management</th>
<th>Graduate Careers</th>
<th>Workplace Resilience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Understanding 1</td>
<td>Self-Understanding 2</td>
<td>Seeking Work Placement Opportunities</td>
<td>Defining My Opportunities</td>
<td>Resume &amp; Cover Letters</td>
<td>Managing Stress and Pressures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Understanding 2</td>
<td>Self-Understanding 3</td>
<td>Applications for Work Placements</td>
<td>Career Decision-Making</td>
<td>Selection Criteria</td>
<td>Life Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Understanding 3</td>
<td>Defining my Opportunities</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Seeking Graduate Opportunities</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Managing your Finances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Exploration &amp; Decision-Making</td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>Thriving in a Workplace</td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>Seeking Graduate Opportunities</td>
<td>Thriving in a Workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing Readiness for Study</td>
<td>Effective Workplace Communication</td>
<td>ePortfolio Basics</td>
<td>Marketing Myself</td>
<td>Marketing Myself</td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thriving at University</td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>Maximising an ePortfolio</td>
<td>Thriving in a Workplace</td>
<td>Life Balance</td>
<td>Effective workplace Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing your Finances</td>
<td>ePortfolio Basics</td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>Maximising an ePortfolio</td>
<td>Maximising an ePortfolio</td>
<td>Self-Understanding 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Suite of **online career modules** to assist with career development & transition into professional employment.
- Each module takes approximately 1 hour to complete & has an associated activity book.

Flexible curriculum aligned to student ability – Providing choice for engagement

Even in first year, choice can be offered to students in terms of topic, timing, method, weighting, or assessment criteria: for example, online learning tasks enable students to study in their own time, encouraging independent learning engagement (Brown, 2009).

Example: An Education program allows students in many subjects to select from a range of possibilities for expressing their learning outcomes. In one subject, students demonstrate a micro learning-teaching segment and choose their delivery method: they can produce a poster, perform micro-teaching to their peers; create a video of performance with a class group; or prepare a PowerPoint presentation to inform parents of the classroom focus (Healy, 2008).
Flexibility in learning support

GoSoapBox
http://www.gosoapbox.com/tour

Know Who's Confused
GoSoapBox's intuitive Confusion Barometer lets students indicate whether or not they are getting it.

Social Q&A
- What is the atomic weight of Cobalt?
- How many electrons are in NaCl?
- View Saved Questions (1)
- Clear All Open Questions

No More Wasted Q&A Time
Time is scarce during class. With GoSoapBox's Social Q&A, students can easily submit and vote for questions, allowing the best question to rise to the top. At any given moment, you know what's on your students' minds.

Make Class Lively with Real-Time Polls
GoSoapBox offers dead-simple, customizable polling. It's better than clickers.

Create Quizzes for Easy Formative Assessment
Create a Quiz in GoSoapBox and download a grade report.

About Instant Messaging (IM)
Sometimes known as chat IM is a method of real-time communication by typed text. More from Wikipedia...

Chat

Are you...
NEEDING HELP MANAGING YOUR TIME?
HAVING TROUBLE WITH AN ASSIGNMENT QUESTION?
STRUGGLING WITH REFERENCING?

Then you need...
CSU'S ACADEMIC SUPPORT LIVE CHAT
Quick answers when you need them most. Visit: student.csu.edu.au/study/chat
How do we harness and integrate assessment and feedback practices in the first year to assist students make the successful transition to assessment in higher education?
FOR A FAIR SELECTION EVERYBODY HAS TO TAKE THE SAME EXAM: PLEASE CLIMB THAT TREE
For first year students to become independent and self-managing learners, both teachers and students need to be supported to aid the early development and acquisition of tertiary assessment literacies (Kift, 2009, p. 2)

There is a ‘lack of clarity regarding expectations in the first year, low levels of teacher feedback and poor motivation’ (Nicol, 2007, p. 5)

‘[R]elevant, consistent and integrated assessment... [with] prompt and constructive feedback’ matter to retention (Scott, 2006, pp. xii, xvi)
Understanding academic languages & conventions

Example: A *Psychology* degree program uses the *same assessment definitions and criteria* throughout the entire program. A written assessment guide formally articulates these to students and staff (Gibbs, 2009)

Example: In a FY *Education* subject, small student groups are given a copy of the same written excerpt and each group is asked to respond in a specific way: reflectively, analytically, critically, etc. Responses are shared with the class to highlight the differences between cognitive levels (*Healy*, 2008)
Assessment expectations...

6 steps to successful learning

Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives (1956)

When you give value to an idea or claim based on a set of standards, you are evaluating, e.g. the degree to which something is effective; the extent to which something meets set standards.

When you link similar ideas offered by one writer or artist with another writer or artist, you are synthesising ideas; e.g. Smith (2004) and Jones (2005) both suggest that…; however Jones further argues that…

When you categorise or organise ideas e.g. into a system or framework, you are analysing.

When you give an example or illustrate an idea, you are applying knowledge.

Surface approach

Understanding

Knowing

Applying

Analysing

Synthesising

Evaluating

Deep approach = critical approach

Learning Links
Quick Tips / 6 steps to successful learning

http://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/1_StudySkills/study_pdf/Blooms%20taxonomy.pdf
Helping students to make use of feedback

1. Prepare students to receive feedback (eg align staff & student expectations to agree purpose)

2. Reduce emphasis on written feedback – supplement with dialogue

3. Provide timely feedback (eg generic feedback ASAP)

http://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/documents/Make%20FeedbackWork.pdf
Help students to make use of feedback

What is feedback?
- Feedback is information about your work that is used to make improvements.
- Feedback comes from tutors, from fellow students, from others – and from yourself.
- It might involve written comments, a discussion or your own analysis of your work.
- Effective learners seek out feedback from many sources.
- How useful feedback is depends on what you do with it.

Why is feedback important?
- Feedback from the tutor helps you to identify strengths and weaknesses in your work and to make improvements.
- Generating feedback on your own work enables you to develop as an independent learner.
- Feedback from peers can enrich the information you receive about your work.
- Giving feedback to others develops your skills in making professional judgements.
- Being able to evaluate the quality of your own work, and the work of others, is an essential skill for all graduates.

Make feedback work for you

FIND OUT what is required before you begin an assignment
EXCHANGE ideas with peers about criteria and approach
VALUATE your own work before handing it in
DISCUSS the feedback you receive with others
BE PROACTIVE in giving and seeking feedback
ASK FOR the feedback you want when you hand in your work
CREATE study groups for regular feedback conversations
KEEP a note of feedback, reflect and act on it
Starter Question

What strategies are proactively utilised to monitor, identify and respond to students who may be at risk of not succeeding or fully achieving desired learning outcomes?

How are course quality and student achievement of learning outcomes assured?
Evidence-Base : Cohort Maps

- Provide semester to semester tracking of student retention, graduation, transfers at the course level.
- Available on request to statistics@jcu.edu.au
Dear Ed and SU team
Like most of the off-campus mature-aged students at times I have found uni very challenging. And I don’t like to ask for help bec I always assume that ‘everyone else is coping just fine’, the problem must lie in my court.
Thank you for putting this together and making 2011 one of the most promising starts that I can remember. From the Study Planner to the YouTube Diary and ASO updates plus the updates here, it’s felt a lot more like I’m part of a community, not just a number. 😊
Regards Mel
Analytics

“Learning analytics is the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of data about learners and their contexts, for purposes of understanding and optimising learning and the environments in which it occurs.”

LEARNING ANALYTICS 101

When you hear “analytics,” you might think of webmasters tracking visits to their site (whether it’s e-commerce, a personal blog or otherwise). But learning analytics combines this sort of data analysis with student interaction in online education tools, aiming to create a more integrated and customized learning experience. It uses intelligent data, student performance and analysis models to find out how students learn and improve on their experience. Find out more about this educational revolution.

What can it do?

- Predict future student performance (based on past patterns of learning across diverse student bodies)
- Intervene when students are struggling to provide unique feedback tailored to their answers
- Personalize the learning process for each and every student, playing to their strengths and encouraging improvement
- Adapt teaching and learning styles via socialization, pedagogy and technology

What can it be used for?

- Detecting performance difficulties
- Frustrated language (i.e. in message boards)
- Lower than average time spent on site
- Long time between logins
- Inattention vs. lack of understanding
- Could even distinguish guessing vs. knowing multiple choice answers

Challenging the "efficient learner hypothesis" (ELF)--that all students begin at equal levels and progress similarly
Shaping new processes for effective learning in the future--based on past performance

How can Learning Analytics assist me in my role as a 'Student Support Officer'?
JCU uses Blackboard Analytics for Learn to inform its continuous improvement strategy in learning, teaching and the student experience.

- What is Blackboard Analytics for Learn?
- Why is JCU using Blackboard Analytics for Learn?
- What do I need to know about setting up my LearnJCU site?
- What do I need to know about understanding the reports?
- How do I access Blackboard Analytics?
- Privacy
- What information will students receive?
- FAQ
- Who can I contact for further information and assistance?
Course Signals

A number of large courses in FHSS are trialing the Early Alerts (Course Signals) System this trimester. The system aims to help students to be successful in their study at Victoria and is designed to help students assess their progress in their study, so that they can adjust their work effort or seek support early in the semester, to help them succeed.

Whenever the course coordinator runs a signal (based on performance on selected assessment tasks) all students in the course receive a traffic light signal through the course Blackboard page:

- **Green tick** means high likelihood of succeeding in the course (if your progress does not decline).

- **Yellow triangle** means potential problem with succeeding in the course (if your progress does not improve); and

- **Red cross** means high likelihood of failing the course (if your progress does not improve);
What does this mean for you and your programs – for example…

- Consistency in expectations (School, Faculty, University) communicated to students
- Orientation as a staged process over the first year
  - Starting when (e.g., letter of offer)?
  - Just-in-time and just-for-me information delivery
- Intentional management of curricular and co-curricular experience
- Attention to quality and management of staff-student and student-student interactions
- Access to coherent data and systematic monitoring
- Integration vs adaptation
Some ideas in closing …

• Much of what we know and practice for improving the experience of first year students is immediately transferable to later years and contexts.

• Real impact requires institutional level commitment and institution-wide academic and professional partnerships.

• Good practice in the classroom will enhance the learning experience of all students.
Use with caution:
Strategies for supporting priority learners may also enhance the experience and results of others.
Your power to influence…

What three (3) messages would your group like me to take to the meeting I have tomorrow with senior management?

Write them down and leave them for me at the door.
Thank you

Professor Sally Kift
ALTC Senior Fellow; OLT Discipline Scholar: Law
DVC (Academic), James Cook University, Australia

First Year Workshop
Victoria University of Wellington
21 January 2016