Addressing College Readiness through Summer Transition Programs

Mathew Estrada, M.Ed.  Maria Martin, M.A.  Chrystale Stewart, M.Ed.
Takeaways

We will share how we…

1. connect with and support various transition efforts.

2. implement methods, materials, and curriculum to have a successful program.

3. help first-generation students transition from high school to college.
Context

A brief overview of our program
A summer transition program is a short introduction to college designed to assist underprepared first-year students (McCurrie, 2009).

Shared characteristics (Sablan, 2013):
• 4 to 6 weeks
• Residential experience
• Academic course(s)
• Operated through Student Affairs
Who We Work With

- First-generation college students
- Low-income
- Academically motivated
- Admitted to our public in-state universities
Issues Identified

Students are academically unprepared for college level courses

• In Arizona 23% of students who took the ACT met all 4 College Readiness Benchmarks Scores, which represents a 50% chance of earning a B or higher in key college courses (ACT, 2016).

• “36% of first-generation students in their first or second year of undergraduate education reported taking a remedial class after high school…” (PNPI, 2016)
“Only 11% of low-income, first-generation college students will have a college degree within six years of enrolling in school, compared to about 55% of their more advantaged peers who were not low-income or first-generation students.”

According to a Pell Institute study of students who first enrolled in fall 2003. (PNPI, 2016)
Summer Transition Goals

- Improve retention
- Bridge the cognitive & affective gaps
- Build a community of scholars
- Help students develop self-awareness
- Deliver a program that is measurably beneficial
Experience
An overview of our efforts and takeaways
History with Summer Transition

1. Provide scholarships for scholars to participate in home universities’ summer transition programs

2. Provide a grant to a university to create a summer transition program where none exists

3. Operate a summer transition program at one university for scholars from various universities
Group Discussion

What challenges & opportunities do you see in these options?

1. Providing for students to participate in existing programs
2. Providing a grant to create a program
3. Independently creating and operating a program
## Benefits & Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articulation &amp; transferring credits across various institutions</td>
<td>Integrating program values &amp; goals</td>
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<td>Enrolling students at an additional institution</td>
<td>Continuity from year to year &amp; across the students’ four-year experience</td>
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<td>Connecting students to the resources at their home campus</td>
<td>Improved student outcomes (especially academics)</td>
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DSP Summer Transition

An overview of the methods, materials, and curriculum
Components

Academic Experience

Non-Academic Experience

Supplemental Support

Academic Experience
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
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<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>Tutoring</td>
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<td>Tutoring</td>
<td>Dinner Out Cultural Event</td>
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<td>6:00 PM</td>
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## Academic Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Math</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consistent experience for all scholars regardless of placement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Individualized placement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Writing &amp; reading across the disciplines</td>
<td>- Alignment with their degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Vocabulary (Greek &amp; Latin roots)</td>
<td>- Based on math placement score, SAT or ACT score, &amp; courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fluency (grammar &amp; punctuation)</td>
<td>completed in HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Audience (language registers)</td>
<td><strong>Courses offered</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Editing &amp; peer review strategies</td>
<td>- Remedial math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Focus on analysis (Blooms Taxonomy)</td>
<td>- College algebra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Courses offered</strong></td>
<td>- Quantitative reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- English composition</td>
<td>- Pre-calculus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- English special topics</td>
<td>- Calculus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15+ hours of tutoring per week • Low teacher to student ratio • Credit-bearing
### Individual Advising
- Career & academic goal setting
- Mentoring & support
- Addressing causes of summer attrition:
  - Registration
  - Housing
  - Financial aid
  - Textbooks & supplies
  - Etc.

### University 101
- **Topics covered:**
  - Mindsets & academic resilience
  - Time management & study skills
  - Campus resources
  - Financial literacy
  - Personal boundaries & self-awareness
  - College culture
  - Scholarship requirements
  - Etc.

### Faculty Lecture Series
- **Exposure to a variety of majors, disciplines, careers & faculty**
- **Emphasis on cognitive strategies**
- **Topics covered:**
  - History in the Modern Era
  - Design & Creativity in Higher Ed.
  - Innovation & Engagement of Passion
  - Everyday Conservation
  - Classics in the 21st Century
## Non-Academic Experience

### Peer Interactions

- Living on-campus
- Etiquette dinner
- Ropes course
- Cultural outings
- Fitness classes
- Weekend excursions
- Volunteer projects

Exposure to alumni & older scholars
Group Discussion

• What resonates with you?
• What additional support or experiences would you, or do you currently, provide in a summer transition program?
Effectiveness
Assessing student & program outcomes
How We Assess

- PEEKS (Perceptions, Expectations, Emotions, and Knowledge about College)
- LASSI (Learning and Study Strategies Inventory)
- University math placement
- Student evaluations
- First semester GPA
- Retention
- Graduation
I received As on my first two ENG 102 essays. The instructor complimented my ability to write an academic essay and compose a strong thesis. I just did exactly what I was taught in Summer Bridge!

Summer Bridge is like learning how to ride a bike for the first time. It is strange and difficult, but once you get the hang of it, no one can stop you.

I really do have an edge on the other incoming freshman because I know what to expect out of university life, and already have a group of peers...

Summer Bridge acts as that older sibling telling you all the little college success secrets that will make college that much easier.
Open Discussion
What would you like to discuss about summer transition programs?
Contact Us

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References


Generally, transitions programs have been found to...

• aid in retention,
• have positive results for self-efficacy and,
• increase the likelihood of passing college-level courses in the fall (Sablan, 2013).

Due to the variations among summer transition programs and issues related to selection bias, there exists little empirical research (Sablan, 2013).