Concurrent Session I

Session #1: Title: They're Here, They're Queer, They're First-Year College Students
Presenter: Brian Edwards, Coordinator, LGBTQ Center
Institution: Montclair State University

Abstract: There is an urgent need for action to create safe and affirming spaces for LGBTQ students at college campuses. For many LGBTQ first year college students, transitioning can be challenging, especially if the student had difficult identity-related experiences in their middle and/or high schools. This session focuses on the unique issues facing LGBTQ+ first-year students and will provide participants with strategies to create intentional, inclusive spaces at the individual, departmental, and institutional levels for students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning. Learn how you can create a more welcoming and supportive environment on campus, and increase student success!

Location: Tivoli

Session #2: Empowering Developmental Writers through a Non-Traditional Approach to Academic Assistance: An Inter-Institutional Collaborative
Presenters: Veronica Guevara-Lovgren, Coordinator of the Writing Center, OCC
Lynn Kraemer-Siracusa, Assistant Professor of English, OCC
Neva Lozada, Assistant Director, Writing Services and Supplemental Instruction, MU
Erica Carboy, Lecturer II of English, OCC
Heidi Sheridan, Assistant Professor of English, OCC
Institutions: Ocean County College (OCC) and Monmouth University (MU)

Abstract: This presentation will also discuss the collaborative partnership between a four-year, private university and a two-year community college in regard to the successful implementation of a Supplemental Instruction (SI) program to support developmental writers. Further, this presentation will highlight how utilizing a de-stigmatized approach to academic assistance can benefit this unique student population and provide reinforcement of essential writing skills through independent study and development of a collaborative learning community outside of the classroom led by a peer Supplemental Instruction leader. In addition to providing an overview of the guiding pedagogical principles behind SI and its implications for student success, the presentation will also reflect on the adaptation of a non-traditional academic assistance program to fit the needs of an individual campus, as well as faculty, staff, and student experiences, benefits, and testimonials.

Location: Monticello
Concurrent Session I

Session #3: Capitalizing on Parent and Family Involvement in the First Year of College
Presenters: Jennifer Radwanski, Associate Director, Event Services and New Student Programs
Jhane Cummings, Senior Student
Institution: Stockton University

Abstract: In this session we will share the trials and tribulations we experienced while starting a Parent and Family Association at Stockton University. From University Weekend to communication through technology, we will share our success stories from our quick growing organization and how it relates to our new student success at Stockton.

Location: Berskshire

Session #4: Achieving Common Goals for First-Year Transfer Students: The Transfer Seminar
Presenters: Thomas J. Grites, Assistant Provost, Academic Support
  Jorge Garcia, Student
  Catherine Sehl, Student
  Jean Abbott, Assistant Professor of Business Studies
Institution: Stockton University

Abstract: This session will review the importance of recognizing the transfer student as a first-year student and offer the seminar concept as a means to enhance their success. Two instructors who have used this approach and two of their students will examine the conditions that enable this approach.

Location: Imperial

Session #5: First-Year Faculty Advising Structure and Processes: A Factor to Student’s Retention and Success
Presenters: Mercy Azeke, Associate Vice Provost for Student Success
  Danielle Schrama, Director, Academic Advising
  Jean-Marie Delao, Student Development Counselor
Institution: Monmouth University

Abstract: According to (Nutt, 2003), “Academic advising is the very core of successful institutional efforts to educate and retain students.” Consequently, appropriate advising structure and processes tailored to meet the unique needs of student populations must be implemented. This interactive PowerPoint presentation will discuss Monmouth University’s academic advising structure and comprehensive faculty advising processes for first-year students. Focus will be given to Five-Year Retention Data, Deans List, and other success indicators for first-year students.

Location: Longwood
Concurrent Session I

Session #6: Students with Disabilities in the First Year: Supporting Students, Faculty and Staff in Community College Settings through Universal Design.
Presenter: Gina Zippo-Mazur, Coordinator, Disability Services
Institution: Ocean County College

Abstract: Universal design strategies can benefit diverse learners along with students with disabilities. Participants will learn best practices including universal design strategies that can benefit diverse learners, community campus integration recommendations, outreach approaches and accessibility standards in the classroom and service departments.

Location: Central

Session #7: The Collegiate Citizenship, Civic Engagement in a College Setting
Presenter: Kelly Freeman, Mentor and Academic Advisor, Department of Freshman Studies
Institution: Seton Hall University

Abstract: “As a citizen, you need to know how to be a part of it. How to express yourself - and not just by voting”, Sandra Day O’Connor. While universities and colleges are not nations, and students don’t vote for their leaders or professors, students are citizens of the greater organization that is a university. We will explore how students’ citizenship allows them to be more engaged, better students, receive more from post-secondary experiences and achieve completion.

Location: Lincoln

Session #8: Building an Effective Study Skills Curriculum for Struggling First-Year Students
Presenters: Monica Burnette, Director, Academic Resource Center
Jessica Proano, Assistant Director, First-Year Experience in Housing & Residence Life
Institution: Seton Hall University

Abstract: How can teaching college study skills impact first-year student performance and success? Three campus departments (Freshman Studies, Housing and Residence Life, and the Academic Resource Center) collaborated to redesign the curriculum and delivery method of a College Study Skills course intended for first-year students on academic probation. Student evaluations indicated a high level of engagement and satisfaction regarding the enhanced course. Successes, challenges, and practical applications will be discussed.

Location: Fairmount
Concurrent Session II

Session #9: Don't Let the Degree Define You
Presenters: Amanda Carcione, Assistant Director of the Center for Advising & Student Transitions, Adam Mayer, Director of Career Development
Institution: Montclair State University

Abstract: More often than not, advisors and career counselors help transitional students work through the anxiety that surrounds selecting a major or career, or avoiding that choice all together. In this session, presenters will discuss methods for helping students understand the nature of the major/career connection and provide concrete methods to help student understand the fluidity of selecting a major or career, with the understanding that his decision is not a life sentence.

Location: Tivoli

Session #10: Apple and FYE: An Examination of Implementing iPads as Learning Tools in a First-Year Experience Program
Presenters: Jacob Turner, Assistant Professor of Communications
Allison Gill, Associate Dean of Campus and Dean of First-Year Students
Institution: Merrimack College

Abstract: This session aims to use Merrimack College as a case study to understand how iPads and other tablets can serve as teaching and learning tools in first-year experience courses. In addition to rolling out a newly revised First-Year Experience course this fall, the First-Year Experience Program at Merrimack College also issued iPads to all first-year students for the first time. As part of the “Mobile Merrimack” initiative at the College, the First-Year Experience Program has fully integrated the iPad into the FYE curriculum. This session will detail some of the ways we use the iPad as a learning tool in the FYE course and will also cover the struggles, complexities and benefits of implementing a new technology like this one in a first-year program. Finally, in this session we will also share some survey data about our students’ attitudes towards iPads and the FYE program, which we collected in their first FYE class meeting this semester.

Location: Monticello

Session #11: The Impact of Student Success Communities on Adult Student Engagement and Persistence
Presenters: Darryl Jones, Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs
Antonia Sheel, Director, Student Success Communities
Institution: The College of New Rochelle

Abstract: The School of New Resources fulfills the mission of The College of New Rochelle as its specialists in higher education for adults. This presentation will discuss how the implementation of a Student Success Community Model can positively impact retention and satisfaction for adult learners. The resulting information and findings should serve as a best practice for other institutions.

Location: Berkshire
Concurrent Session II

Session #12: The Students Demanded It, So We Built It: What We’ve Learned Building the ODLC Peer Mentoring Program
Presenter: George J. Hill, Academic Advisor
Institution: Kingsborough Community College, CUNY

Abstract: This workshop will discuss the steps that were taken to add a Peer Mentoring program to the already existing and well established first semester Opening Doors Learning Community program. The ODLC Peer Mentoring program was founded because a Kingsborough student met some peer mentors from another community college, and demanded to know why Kingsborough’s learning communities did not have peer mentors. We will discuss the ways that, through conversation with students, faculty, student affairs staff, and administration, we worked to define the roles that peer mentors would play in Kingsborough’s Learning Communities. We will talk about the challenges and rewards of starting this program with a budget of $0. We will discuss the ways that the mentorship program evolved as we attempted a “shakedown cruise” over the course of a year with one mentor in the program, and the challenges of scaling the program up from one to six mentors. We will discuss the differences in learning outcomes for the first-year students, comparing students in a Learning Community that used a peer mentor to one that did not use a mentor. We will conclude by having an open discussion to brainstorm ways the power of Peer Mentoring can be used to make a more successful first-year Learning Community program.

Location: Imperial

Session #13: Recruiting, Training, & Evaluating Dynamic Peer Leaders
Presenters: Adam Yellen, Coordinator of Peer Leadership
Yosayra Eusebio, Academic Advisor
Institution: Montclair State University

Abstract: The purpose of this presentation is to provide best practices for creating recruitment and training programs that empower students to take on leadership roles as a way to support their social and academic transition. Not only is it important to provide these students resources for study skills but it equally as it important to highlight the impact their leadership involvement will have on their overall co-curricular experience. Creating a successful training program will help students compete for other leadership opportunities.

Location: Longwood
Concurrent Session II

Session #14: Selective Service: Campus Committees Choosing a Common Reader
Presenters: Dewar MacLeod, Associate Professor, History
          Cara Berg, Reference Librarian/Co-Coordinator of User Education, Cheng Library
          Mark Ellis, Associate Professor, Sociology and Coordinator of First-Year Seminar
          Nancy Weiner, Assistant Director, Access & Information Services, Cheng Library
Institution: William Patterson University

Abstract: The Common Reader has become increasingly popular for First-Year Seminar experiences on university campuses. The goal of the Common Reader is to provide and facilitate a common intellectual dialogue among first-year students while building community and bringing together diverse academic majors.

This panel will explore the challenges and opportunities in the process of choosing a Common Reader for a First-Year Seminar. Faculty, Librarians and Staff at William Paterson University gather yearly to choose the Common Reader for the upcoming year. This panel will examine that process and focus on the differing perspectives and needs of the various stakeholders including students, faculty, librarians, staff and administration. A number of issues, such as the appropriateness of the text, integrating material into the course, planning of campus activities and overcoming the challenges of advocates for a personal narrative versus a book on an academic or social issue will be shared. The panel will also discuss efforts assessing the efficacy of the Common Reader selected.

Location: Central

Session #15: Are You Positive? Using Positive Psychology to Promote Student Success
Presenter: Malcolm Kahn, Professor Emeritus, University of Miami
          Sue Kahn, Professor, Miami Dade College
Vendor: Larson Texts, Inc.

Abstract: Rather than focusing on individuals' weaknesses and difficulties, positive psychology emphasizes their personal strengths and virtues. This session examines how the application of the principles of positive psychology in FYE classes can contribute to the success of new students. Participants will be actively engaged in recognizing the importance and relevance of several key positive psychology constructs. Examples of practical applications of positive psychology will be provided.

Location: Lincoln
Concurrent Session III

Session #16: Increasing Academic Rigor the First-Year Experience Course
Presenter: Christine Harrington, Professor of Student Success and Psychology and Director, Center for the Enrichment of Learning and Teaching
Institution: Middlesex County College

Abstract: During this interactive session, we’ll explore the research on what skills students need in their very first semester and the importance of establishing strong work ethic and study habits from the moment that students step onto campus. Strategies to teach critical thinking, information literacy, and other high level academic skills in the first-year experience course will be discussed and a model for increasing the academic rigor will be shared.

Location: Tivoli

Session #17: Why Can't I Sleep?: A Developmental Approach to Working With and Understanding First-Year College Students
Presenter: Joe Falco, Academic Advisor
Institution: New Jersey City University

Abstract: Advisors care. Advisors care more about their students than their students care about themselves. Advisors care so much that often times they find themselves ever alert, tossing and turning, ruminating; or perhaps, obsessing, over their advisees and their academic, emotional, personal, and psychological success. But why do advisors care more about their students than their students care about themselves? Through a developmental approach, attendees will watch a two-minute teaser on the different types of college students and then explore the emotional, psychological, financial, psychosocial, biological, and transitional factors contributing to advisors’ sleepless nights and students’ lack of self-advocacy, self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-empowerment. Attendees will be encouraged to share their innovative, professional experiences and insight, engage in enthusiastic and energetic discourse, and will walk away with best practices reflecting self-care and student advocacy in a roundtable discussion format, with the ultimate goal of helping students succeed.

Location: Monticello
Concurrent Session III

Session #18: First-Year Initiatives and Beyond
Presenters: April J. Johnson, Assistant Director of Academic Advising
Angelo Abreu, Assistant Director of the New Brunswick Center
Institution: Middlesex County College

Abstract: There are a number of comprehensive programs and initiatives that are aimed to support first-year students at colleges across the country. How do we know what initiatives are truly effective as administrators? This presentation will focus on recruitment and retention initiatives, academic advising, and orientation. There will be an opportunity for an interactive discussion on the best practices, challenges and successes of first-year student programs.

Location: Berkshire

Session #19: Engaging High Achieving First-Year Students Through Scholastic Honor Societies
Presenter: Andre White, Academic Advisor
Institution: Montclair State University

Abstract: Scholastic honor societies can be used to engage high achieving first-year students and foster leadership development skills that assist with their transition to higher education. This presentation will examine the role that Alpha Lambda Delta (ALD) First-Year Honor Society plays in providing leadership opportunities to first-year honor students at Montclair State University. It will examine how the Montclair State University chapter of ALD is used to build community among first-year honor students and the role this organization has in the retention of these students.

Location: Longwood

Session #20: What Employers & Students Want: Education Tied to 21st Century Skills
Presenter: Ron Parisi, Director of University Partnerships
Vendor: Seelio

Abstract: According to multiple sources, students’ main motivation for pursuing a degree is to increase their ability to find a good job. To help today’s learner fully engage with your program, career preparation activities need to be a part of academic programs from day one. This session will share best practices and real examples for orientation/first-year experience programs that want to create connections between academic programs and the 21st century skills that employers want.

Location: Central
Concurrent Session III

Session #21: They Don’t Know What They Don’t Know: Training Teachers to Put Metacognition into Practice

Presenters: June Pomann, Professor of ESL
            Debbie Kemp-Jackson, Professor of ESL

Institution: Union County College

Abstract: The presenters will discuss and demonstrate examples of how they have utilized metacognitive activities and meta-language to help students become aware of how they behave in class and to encourage critical thinking skills which will enable them to become lifelong learners. Workshop attendees will have an opportunity to participate in a few student-centered activities which can later be adapted for their own courses/institutions.

Location: Lincoln

Session #22: B.U.I.L.D.: Brookdale United in Leadership Development

Presenter: Sarah McElroy Director of Career Services

Institution: Brookdale Community College

Abstract: B.U.I.L.D. (Brookdale United in Leadership Development) is a leadership certificate program designed to develop personal and professional skills in our students. It is modeled after the national award-winning GOLD Program at SUNY Geneseo. Students in the program are able to use one-hour workshops to grow or enhance their own personal development. This presentation will focus on the concept and research, the creation of the program, the recruitment of students, the implementation process, and the results. Participants will be able to use the research, methods and program structure at their own institutions to promote leadership amongst their students, and to create a structured leadership program that can be replicated at other institutions. Our presentation will include a PowerPoint describing the process for the creation of this new leadership program. Our presentation also includes two interactive activities that we have used with our student group during our leadership workshops. At the conclusion of our presentation we will discuss the results of our pre- and post-assessments of the students' leadership awareness as well as share some of their journal submissions to show this program's impact.

Location: Fairmount