

## FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

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*Students enter institutions of higher education with many questions. In an effort to address these questions, a quality first year experience for students is essential. This comprehensive experience should consistently expose all new and transfer students to the university. Thus, there is a need to expand our current curriculum to include a first year experience course that meets this goal as we strive to enhance the student experience at the university.*

### **The Charge**

- Instill pride and a deep appreciation of the university's history through a first year seminar course.
- Develop comprehensive and consistent first year experience courses that encompass the values of the university, and the students who comprise it.
- Reshape the academic and student life experience by exposing students to the many academic and social options available at the university.

### **Goal I**

*Create the curriculum for a common first year experience course for all students based on best practices and feedback from current students and faculty members.*

### **Strategies**

- A. Develop a name for the first year experience that reflects the values that we hold true as a university.
- B. Engage faculty members who currently teach the first year seminar course to explore the common elements of the course in an effort to identify the salient learning outcomes for students.
- C. Develop a student focus group to elicit feedback on their first year experience along with recommendations on how to enhance the course.
- D. Utilize the feedback from students and faculty members to create a first year seminar handbook for the university.

### **Goal II**

*Develop a structure for the first year experience course that promotes student success in the classroom and beyond.*

### **Strategies**

- A. Expand the duration of the first year experience course to provide additional time for instruction and exploration.
- B. Limit the enrollment of each section of first year experience courses to no more than 30 students and provide peer mentors/teaching assistants for each section.
- C. Require students to take a first year experience course their first semester at the university.

- D. Provide training and professional development for faculty members who teach first year experience courses.
- E. Provide comprehensive information related to the financing of higher education in an effort to help students reduce the cost of attending college.
- F. Provide support for career pathway development through career services.

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