



# Sustaining High-Stakes Change

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# Your Stories

- In your experience, what factors drive change in the first year of a program?



# Our Story: Exposition

- Fall 2003—Conversations begin to select a topic for the QEP as part of SACS
- 2004-2005—Developing Ideas, Writing the QEP, and SACS Approves Plan



# Our Story: Series of Climaxes

- 2005-2006—Year One: Designing Courses and Hiring Directors
- 2006-2007—Year Two: Implementing Courses and Responding to Problems
- 2007-2008—Year Three: Redesign, Rename, Reinvigorate the Program



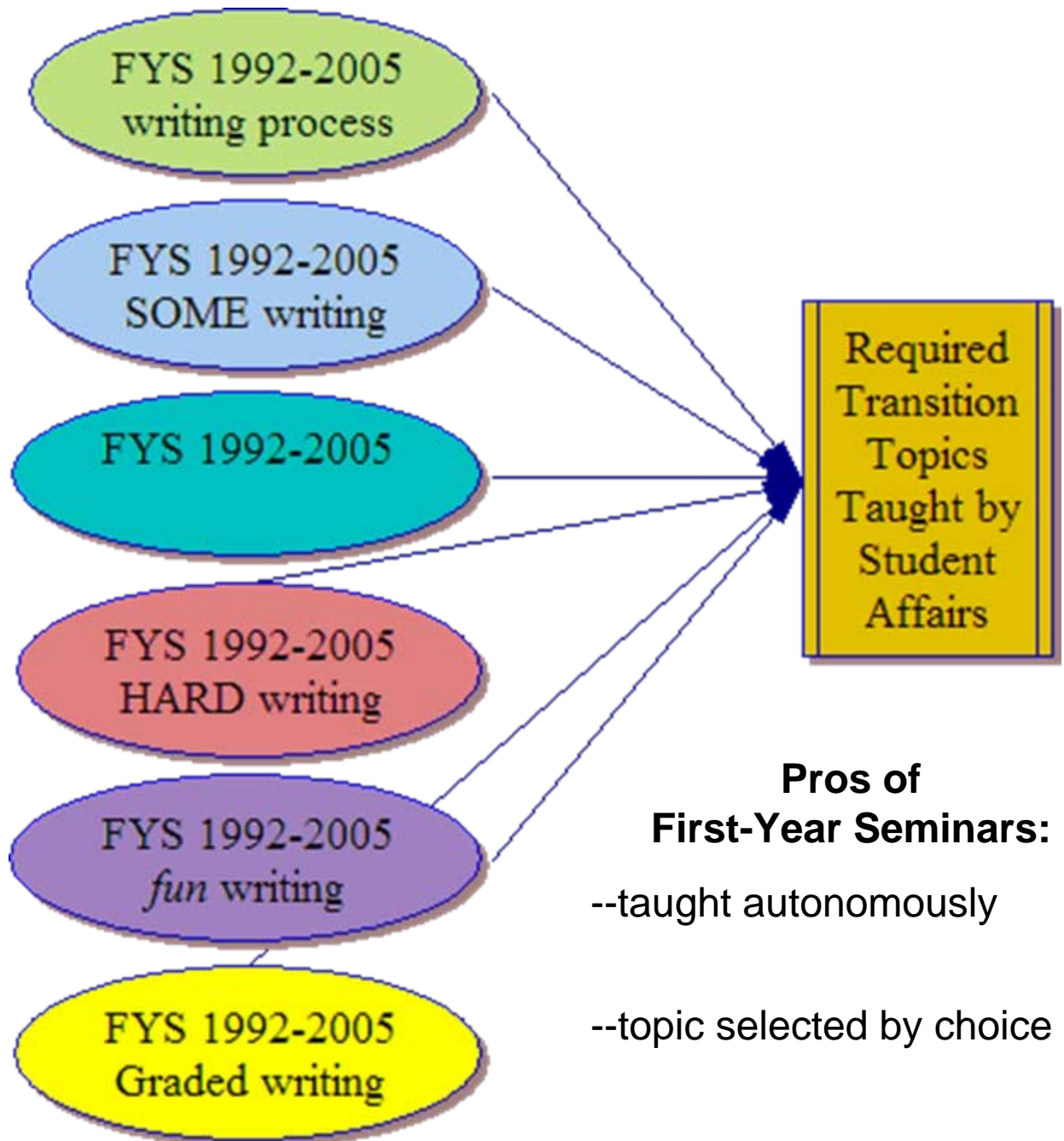
# High Stakes

- **Recruitment & Retention:** Prospective Students to Orientation to Sophomore Year
- **Incorporates Many Departments:** FYS, Student Development (FYE), ENG 101, Academic Center, Career Development, Library, Technology
- **Involves Many People:** 30% of the faculty, 80% of Student Affairs Professionals, and 2 VPs
- **Significant, On-going Investment of Resources**
- **Assessment & Accreditation**



## Cons of First-Year Seminars:

- only for traditional students
- taught autonomously
- no consistent writing emphasis
- no consistent support for transition
- no motivation to take transition seriously





Special Topics  
Seminar

First-Year  
Composition

Univ 101



# WISe Courses provide:

- a focus on self-exploration (a) in relationship to Wesleyan College's mission as a liberal arts women's college as well as (b) in relationship to career possibilities;
- consistent instruction and evaluation of writing;
- an intensive, developmental approach to advising; and
- exposure to campus resources including academic computing, library research, the Academic Center, and services offered by Student Affairs professionals.



# Two Skills Sets in WISE 101 and CSS 101

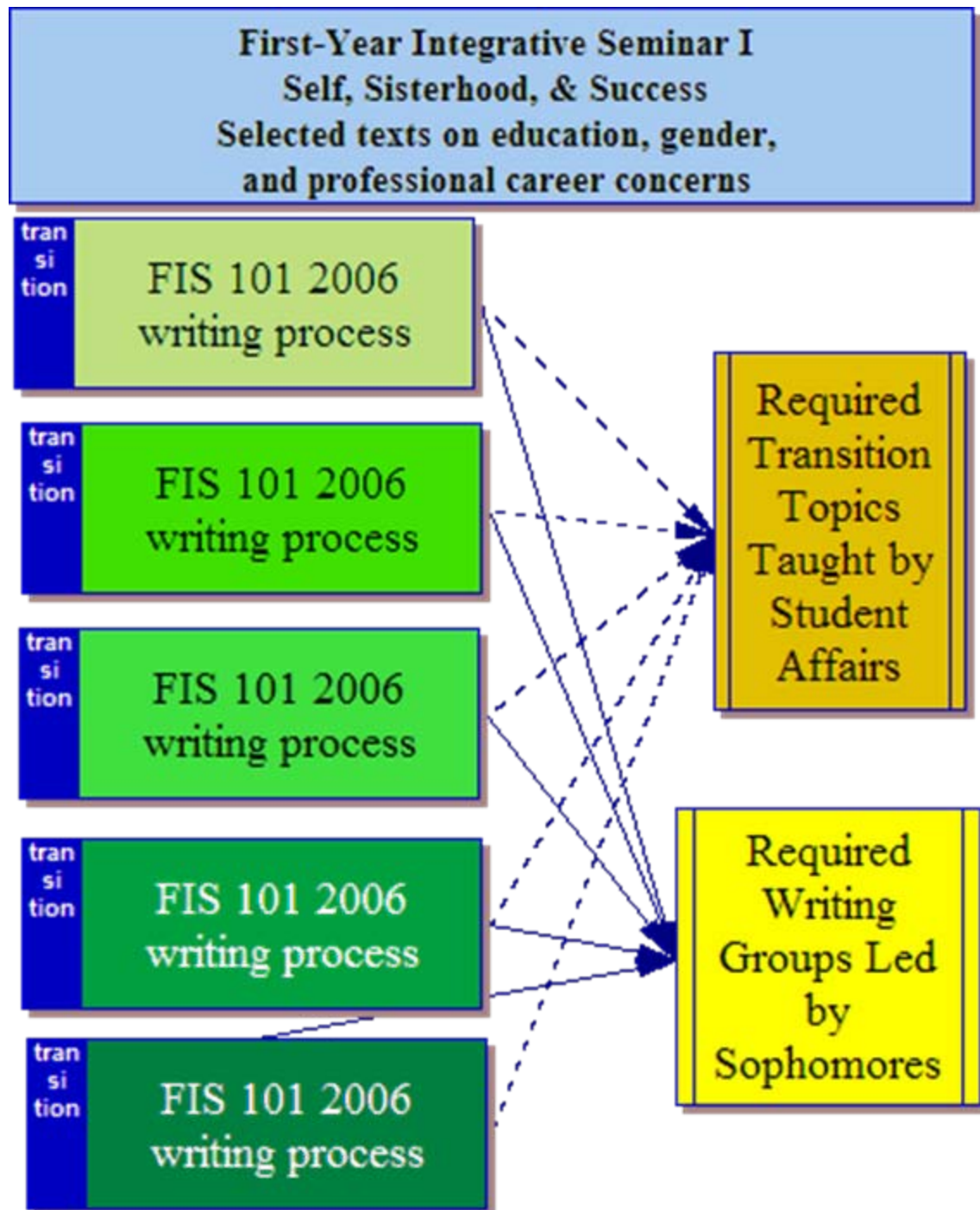
- working with academic texts to promote self-reflection and to improve critical thinking, writing, and speaking, and
- working with personal transition skills to promote self-efficacy and to improve academic performance in the first-year.



Pros of FIS 101:  
--consistent writing instruction and grading  
--common experiences  
--better coverage of Wesleyan's history, mission, and vision

Cons of FIS 101:  
--transfer students  
--One speaker  
--groupthink  
--too much work  
--inconsistent participation by professors

**Fall Out: 19% withdrew**





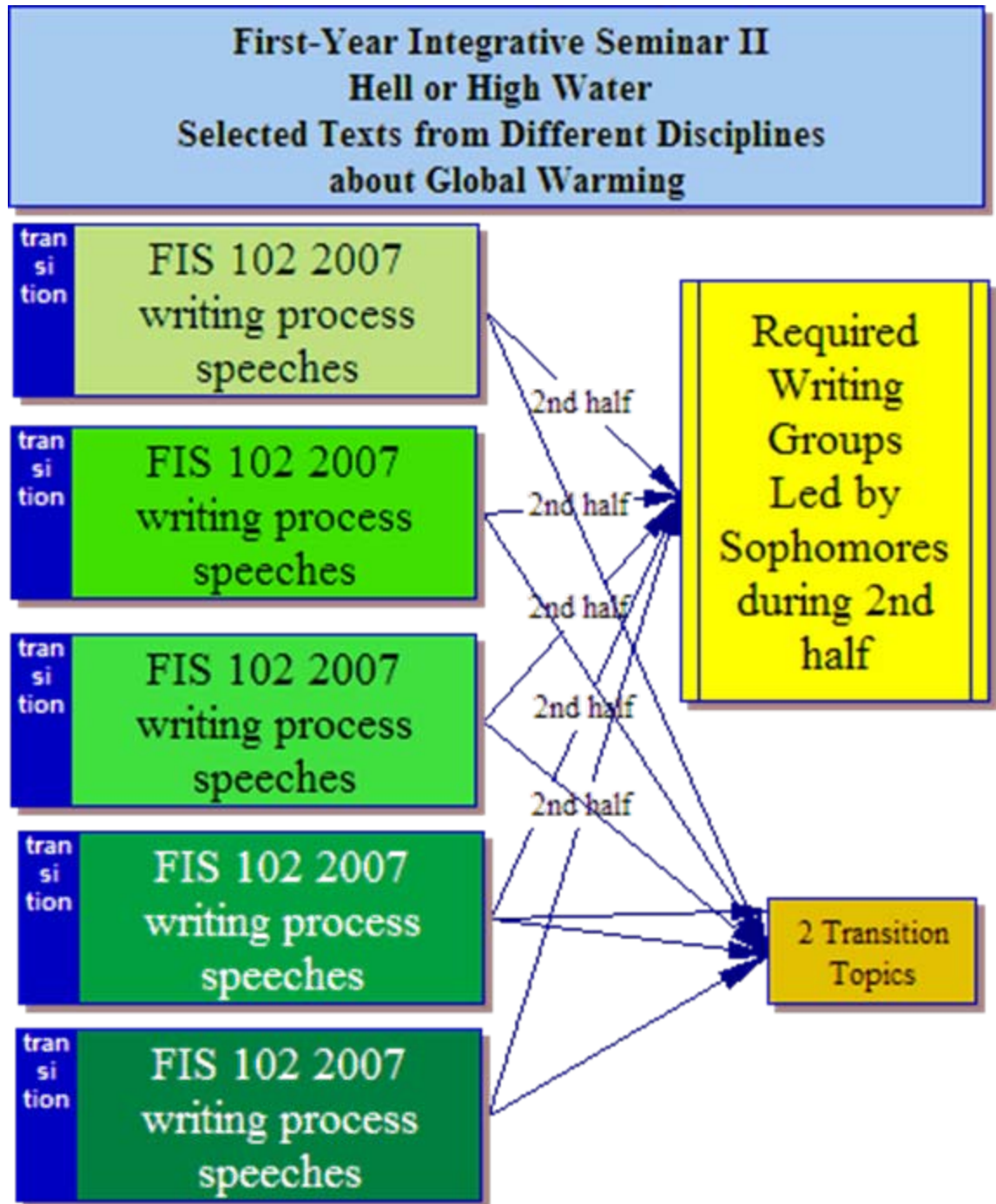
Pros of FIS 102:

- consistent writing instruction and grading
- common experiences
- relatively less angst about the topic of global warming

Cons of FIS 102:

- transfer students
- inconsistent difficulty of texts and assignments
- inconsistent participation by professors

**Fall Out: 13% Withdrew**



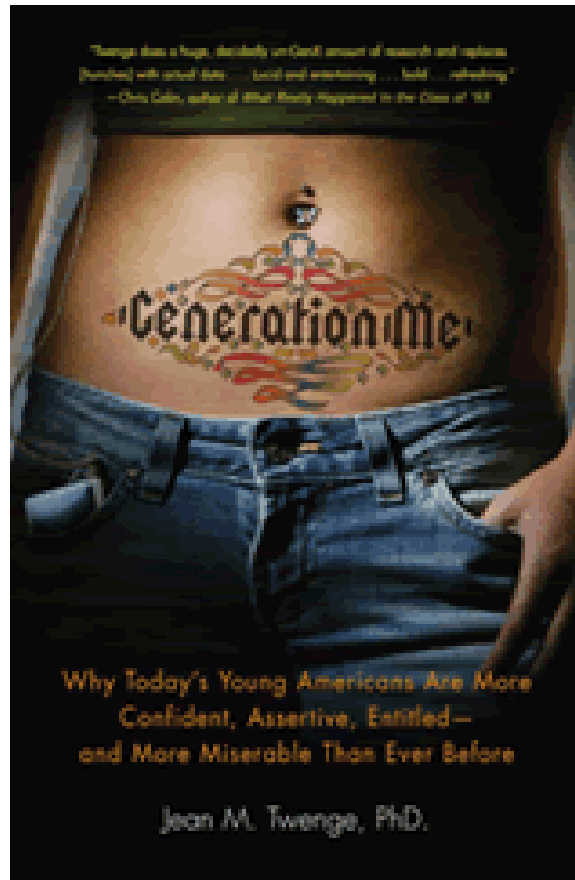


# Our Story: Resolutions

- Rewrote the Prospective Student and Orientation Spiels
- Renamed the Program and the courses
- Created a different course for transfer students
- Selected books and supplemented with articles
- Created a Lab taught by Student Affairs for WISE 101
- Had week of professional development using Bean's *Engaging Ideas*



# WISe 101: Self, Sisterhood & Success



Your WISe Guide  
Customized *Your Guide to College Success* by Santrock & Halonen



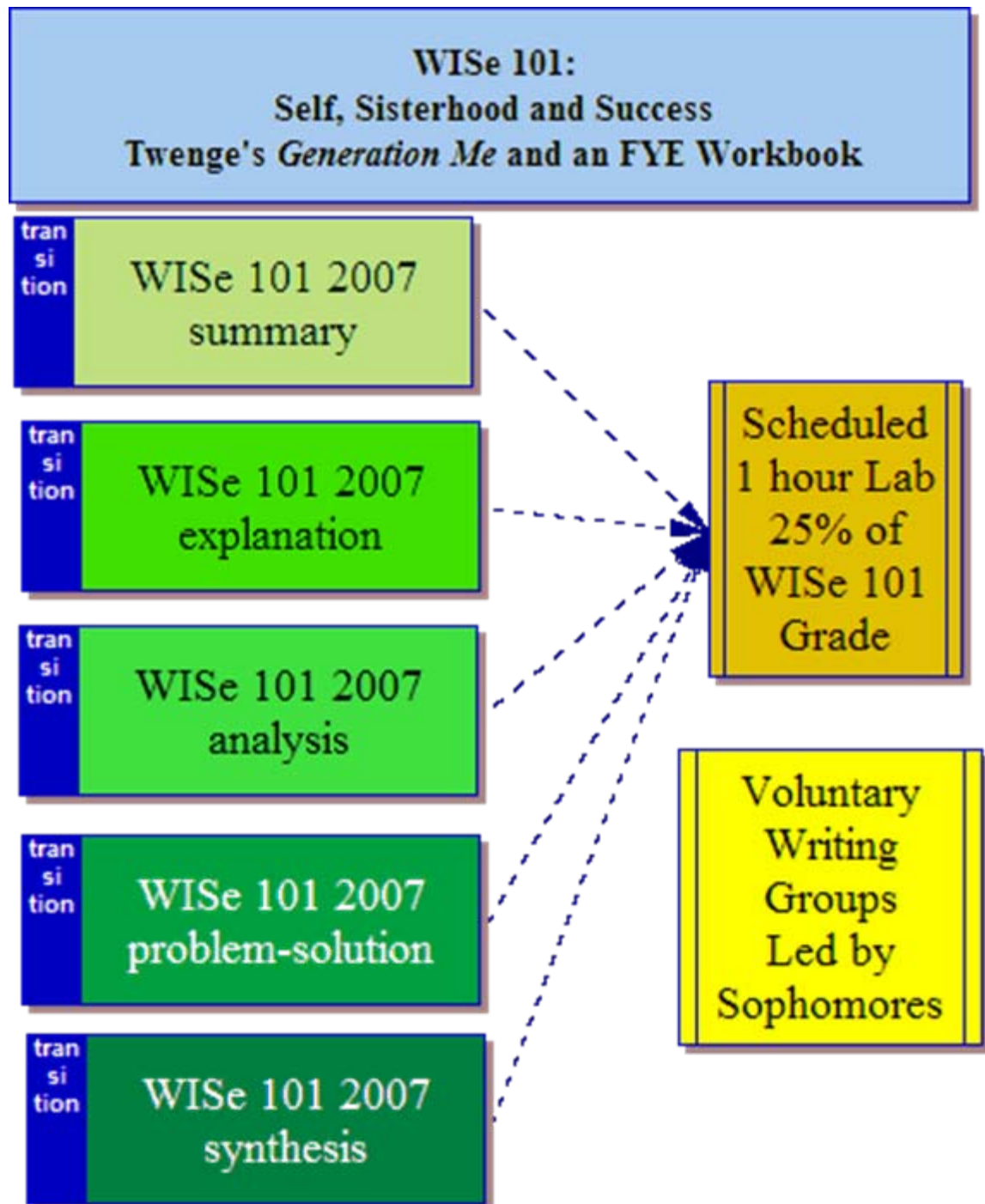


Pros of WISE 101:

- Twenge visited.
- Course had consistent writing instruction and grading.
- Students felt that the course helped them transition
- Students felt that they understood culture better

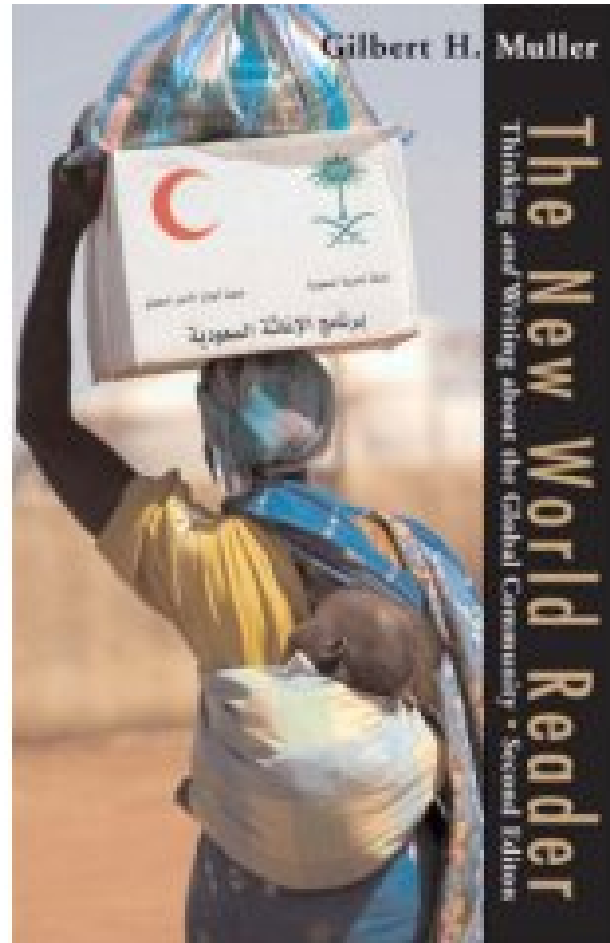
Cons of WISE 101:

- Professors felt that the writing was excessive and too hard. Some fell behind.
- Students hated the lab.





# WISe 102: Global Community, Global Change





So  
far,  
so  
good. . .

WISe 102:  
Globalization  
Mueller's *The New World Reader*

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WISe 102 2008  
inquiry

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research  
presentation

Voluntary  
Writing  
Groups  
Led by  
Sophomores

Voluntary  
Writing  
Circles for  
struggling  
students  
  
Led by  
Director



## Our Question:

- How can we help faculty, staff, and students find intellectual and emotional satisfaction in the daily grinds of no longer new program?



# What We've Learned

- Embrace the Vision
- Clarify Purpose
- State Clear Goals
- Develop Clear Evaluation and Assessment
- Communicate Outcomes
- Address staffing issues
  - Tenure and load for academics
  - Work load for staff
- Solve Sustainability