Transfer Experiences: Creating Transition Pathways for All Students

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At Queens University of Charlotte, we recently implemented a required Transfer Roadmap course designed to improve the success of an increasingly diverse student population who come from a range of backgrounds and span a broad age spectrum. This Transfer Roadmap is an intentionally adapted version of a First-Year Experience; this high impact practice provides new students with the opportunity to become connected to campus and to each other while strengthening metacognitive and integrative thinking skills needed for success in general education and major coursework. This process is accomplished through pedagogical approaches that intentionally leverage students’ prior experiences, encouraging them to recognize their multiple identities and utilize those to identify personal and academic goals. Students work not only with their faculty instructors but also peer mentors, themselves from post-traditional backgrounds. Since instituting this requirement, we have found evidence of increased student success and satisfaction from both quantitative and qualitative measures.

General education learning outcomes
1. Evaluate information and approaches to complex problems
2. Integrate learning from multiple contexts
3. Demonstrate communication fluency using multiple modes of expression
4. Reflect critically on the relationship between global and local contexts
5. Evaluate the consequences personal choices have on the well-being of communities

QMP 200: Transfer Roadmap—Welcome to Queens Course description
This course introduces transfer and post-traditional students to the unique educational experience provided by The Queens Advantage Program, the general education curriculum. There are two key purposes of this course: 1) to introduce you to the kind of reflective and integrative thinking that will be expected of you in progressively challenging ways throughout the general education program and your academic career here and 2) assist you in navigating your transition to returning to college including introducing you to the Queens community and its resources for your development and success.

Metacognition
Learning Journal: Semester-long assignment that provides students with a set of prompts that facilitate the development of critical reflection skills
Examples:
- Describe your previous learning experiences. What do you think it takes to be successful in college based on these experiences?
- What personal insights have you gained as a result of taking the MBTI? How might you use the knowledge and insight you have gained in your academic life?
- What is your relationship to associating, serving, giving, and leading? How does civic engagement matter to you?

Campus Connections
Resources: In class
Presentations from internship & career office, international education, office for student success, academic advising
Resources: Out of class
Peer Mentor
Adult/transfer students who succeeded in course in Fall of 2015 served as mentors in class in Fall 2016
Co-curricular event requirements

What is our evidence of success?
Student responses
- I believe that I have learned so much about myself and who I am in a learning environment through the course of this semester. I have felt so much positive growth within myself in all aspects. I definitely did not do my best, but I know I have learned and will try even harder next semester.
- I was very surprised to see that there were so many other transfer students. I was also surprised to hear all of the different reasons that people decided to transfer.
- This course has changed how I view higher education. I think part of it might have been being in a class with all transfer students. As transfers, I believe we all have a better sense of what we want out of higher education. Taking this course with students who have already done the first year of college thing I think has allowed us as a class to see the value of academics more. I have enjoyed having discussions with just transfer students because we all share a connection.

Re-enrollment data

Figure 1: Average age of QMP 200 students
Figure 2: Race/ethnicity of QMP 200 students
Figure 3: Persistence to following semester among transfer and post-traditional students. Use indicates launch of transfer Roadmap seminar.

- I truly appreciated the advising session last Wednesday. In class, I found it to be very informative. As mentioned before, I have received my first failing grade and knowing the deadline to withdraw from a course with a “W” will help me make certain decisions. Also, I am thankful for now having a plan for Spring 2016.
- The truth is that I have learned about myself, Queens and my peers, as a result from this course. The first thing I learned about Queens is that it is a school that strives to have students succeed. It is a university that not only focuses on the student community but on the surrounding community as well. A great reflection of that is the school’s motto, "Not to be served, but to serve.” In regards to my peers, I have learned that traditional students are actually pretty supportive of non-traditional students. I also learned that non-traditional students are a great support group.