

12th Annual Midwest First-Year Conference



Strategic Steps for First-Year Students

Friday, September 27, 2019

Hosted by



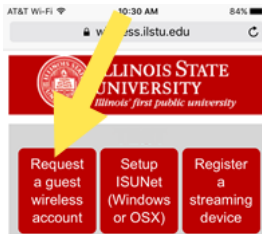
2019 Conference Schedule

- 8:00 a.m. Conference Registration
Outside Circus Room
- 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. *Continental Breakfast / Sponsor & Poster Presentation*
Pre-Function Space
- 8:30 a.m. – 8:40 a.m. Welcome & Opening Remarks
Larry H. Dietz, Ph.D.
President, Illinois State University
Ballroom III
- 8:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Keynote Address
John N. Gardner & Betsy O. Barefoot
Ballroom III
- 10:10 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Educational Session I
Various Locations
- 11:10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Educational Session II
Various Locations
- 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Awards Luncheon
Ballroom III
- 1:10 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Educational Session III
Various Locations
- 2:00 p.m. – 2:20 p.m. Sponsor & Poster Presentation
Showcase
Pre-Function Space
- 2:20 p.m. – 3:10 p.m. Educational Session IV
Various Locations
- 3:15 p.m. Closing & Announcements
Ballroom III

Gaining Internet Access

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Fill in your name and your cell phone number. Accept the Terms of Use, and click the “Register” button.

- 4) Upon clicking the Register button, your username and password will be sent to your cell phone via text message. Select the “click here to go to the login page” link to enter your username and password, or browse to <http://guest.ilstu.edu>. Upon log in, you will be able to access the internet while connected to the isunet-StartHere network.



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“The Mid-West First-Year Experience: Focusing Institutions on What Matters Most” *Ballroom III*

John N. Gardner, Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Gardner Institute



John is an educator, university professor and administrator, non-profit organization chief executive officer, author, editor, public speaker, consultant, change agent, student retention specialist, first-year, sophomore, transfer, and senior year students' advocate, and initiator and scholar of the American first-year and senior-year reform movements. He

serves as Chair and Chief Executive Officer of the Gardner Institute, which was founded by John and his wife, Betsy O. Barefoot, in October 1999 as the Policy Center on the First Year of College. John is also the Founding Director and Senior Fellow of the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (1986), and Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina. Gardner “retired” in 1999 after 32 1/2 years of service to the people of South Carolina, but continues to serve them in a reduced and more focused way in his role of Senior Fellow (in addition to his full-time appointment with the Gardner Institute). He served as Executive Director of both the first-year seminar course, University 101, from 1974-1999, and the National Center from 1986-99. From 1983-96, he also served as Vice Chancellor/Associate Vice Provost for Regional Campuses and Continuing Education. Gardner is the recipient of numerous local and national professional awards and has authored/co-authored numerous articles and books.

“The Mid-West First-Year Experience: Focusing Institutions on What Matters Most” *Ballroom III*

Betsy Barefoot, Senior Scholar, Gardner Institute



Betsy is a native of North Carolina. She holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Music Education from Duke University and Master’s and Doctoral Degrees in Higher Education from the College of William and Mary. Currently, she serves as Senior Scholar for the Gardner Institute. The Institute, originally named the Policy Center on the First Year of College, was founded in 1999 with a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts. The Gardner

Institute has also received grants from The Atlantic Philanthropies, Lumina Foundation for Education, USA Funds, the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, and the Gates Foundation. In her work at the Institute, Betsy is directly involved in the development of instruments and strategies to evaluate and improve the first college year and collegiate transfer. In addition, she conducts seminars on the first-year experience across the United States and in other countries and assists other colleges and universities in implementing and evaluating first-year programs.

Betsy served for 11 years as Co-Director for Research and Publications in the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition at the University of South Carolina. In this position, she engaged in ongoing research on first-year programming in American higher education and co-edited a number of publications including the Journal of The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition and a series of single-topic monographs. While at the University of South Carolina, she also served as a clinical faculty member in the University of South Carolina’s College of Education and taught graduate courses in Principles of College Teaching, Contemporary Trends and Issues in Higher Education, a special topics

seminar on The First-Year Experience, as well as the University 101 first-year seminar. She was also involved in acquiring grant funds, designing, and implementing a campus-wide program to provide training in methods of college teaching for graduate teaching assistants at the University of South Carolina.

Betsy has also authored and co-authored a number of publications including the 2005 Jossey-Bass books, *Achieving and Sustaining Institutional Excellence for the First Year of College*, and *Challenging and Supporting the First-Year Student: A Handbook for the First Year of College*, and most recently (in 2016) *The Undergraduate Experience: Focusing Institutions on What Matters Most*. She has also edited *The First Year and Beyond: Rethinking the Challenge of Collegiate Transition*, a 2008 volume of *New Directions for Higher Education*. She currently serves as co-editor of the *New Directions for Higher Education* series. She continues her interest in music as an occasional vocal performer, pianist, and church organist. She is married to another scholar of the first-year experience, John N. Gardner. The “BGs,” as they are known in their neighborhood, reside in Pisgah Forest, North Carolina.

Poster Presentations

“The Library was my Favorite Part”: A Strengths-Based Approach to Library Instruction in Summer Programs

Melissa Harden, MSLS, First Year Experience Librarian, University of Notre Dame

Anna Michelle Martinez-Montavon, MLIS, M.A., Instructional Design Librarian, University of Notre Dame

Using an academic library can feel overwhelming to first-year students. We make the case for including the libraries in summer programs to help students overcome library anxiety and become familiar with resources and services that are key to their academic success. This poster highlights our philosophy of using a strengths-based approach - one in which students build on their strengths and previous experiences - to introduce students to the academic library and the research process. We demonstrate how this fits in with summer programs and how these approaches can be adapted to multiple contexts.

You're On First: Creating Accountability Partners Inside the Classroom

Tamekia Bailey, First Year Seminar Instructor, Illinois State University

Robert Allen, Peer Educator, Illinois State University

Have you ever wondered why some students come to class prepared and other students just miss the mark? You are not alone. This Poster Presentation will address how instructors can create accountability partners among students inside the classroom to ensure that students are well-prepared and engaged for class, meetings, and life!

Stepping into the Library for the First Time: Self-Guided Tour of Library Spaces and Services

Christopher Worland, Instruction Librarian, Milner Library, Illinois State University

Library tours helps students learn about the library as a place in order to feel more comfortable utilizing library services and the building. A self-guided video tour of the library helps to accomplish that goal while also allowing instructors to assign it outside of the classroom. The poster will introduce and briefly review the technology and process involved in creating the iTour, the connection to and inclusion of the tour with first-year courses, as well as overall engagement with the tour according to broad level statistics.

Reimagining First-Year Registration – Implementing Block Scheduling to Improve Retention and Community

Erin O'Neill, M.Ed., Associate Director of Experiential Learning, Roosevelt University

Kaelyn Schulz, Academic Advisor, Roosevelt University

In Fall 2018, Roosevelt launched the use of learning communities and pre-selected registration for all first-year students. Come hear how our institution went from pitch to pilot to improve retention and foster community among freshmen, with a population of over 80% commuter students and 30% first-generation students.

Sponsors



Educational Session I 10:10 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Following Up with John Gardner: Conversation, Discussion and Pursuit of Points of Interest *Ballroom I*

John N. Gardner, Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Gardner Institute

You are cordially invited to come to this interactive session to pursue anything you would like John to respond to and/or anything he did not address in his remarks on which you might want his perspective. You will challenge him, which is what he wants and enjoys, and he will try to do the same for you. One thing he would like to talk to you about is what you are doing with respect to “the REAL First-Year Experience!”

Peer Language Support for Multilingual International Students: Creating an Academic English Lab *Old Main*

Lynn Ishikawa, Associate Professor of English and Director of English for Academic Purposes, DePauw University

This session outlines the creation of an academic language lab for first-year multilingual international students and argues in favor of such programs as a strategic step for targeted student populations. The lab involves weekly one-on-one meetings with the same peer tutor who provides language support as well as connection, conversation, and affirmation. Session participants will learn about the rationale for and structure of the lab as well as its successes and challenges. In addition, participants will be invited to consider other circumstances in which the lab model could be a strategic step for students at their institutions

Connections Matter; Retention Focused Data Utilization of First-Year Students *Ballroom II*

Justin Schuch, Director, Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Retention Initiatives, Western Illinois University

John Biernbaum, Associate Vice President for Student Services, Western Illinois University

Drew Donahoo, Associate Director of Admissions and Orientation, Western Illinois University

With retention and student success a central focus for campuses, this session will explore Western Illinois University’s utilization of data to focus on retention efforts of first-year students. By focusing on the decisions students make from the first time they step on campus, WIU has focused on data utilization for decision making. This focus allows staff to identify students who may be

struggling earlier in the semester and focus programmatic and follow up efforts. This session will highlight the process for development and implementation of WIU's Connections Mapping and assist participants in identifying how to use data to focus efforts.

Moonwalking Toward Success: Using Backwards Design to Deepen Student Learning *Circus Room*

Casey Thayer, Academic Advisor, UIC College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Hilary Ozog, Academic Advisor, UIC College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Advising as teaching and learning has been well established as a core competency of effective academic advising. However, much of the scholarship focuses on teaching, failing to fully address how student support staff can foster active student learning. Two former teachers-turned-advisors share strategies drawn from curriculum design and constructivism, specifically backward design and problem-based learning, to strengthen the effectiveness of advising sessions. During this collaborative discussion - that advisors, student support staff, and faculty will find equally enriching - participants will be guided through the process of using backward design to create a lesson plan they can use to better serve students.

Succeed at CLC: New Student Program Initiatives *Founder's Suite*

Nicole Herion, Ed.D., Academic Advisor, College of Lake County

In this workshop, participants will get a comprehensive introduction to norms and practices of CLC's FYE program. The FYE Program offers extensive academic improvement services with full-time professional academic advisors, as well as specially trained faculty advisors, to assist students. Come learn about the services the Academic Advising Office offers beyond Academic Advising.

Using Iterative Writing to Promote Student Mentorship in First-Year Seminars *Spotlight Room*

Elizabeth McDermott, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of English, Foundations II Coordinator, University of St. Francis

How can faculty promote student mentorship in a first-year seminar through a process of drafting and revision? At the University of St. Francis, the second semester FYE Course called "Foundations II" is also College Writing II. Learn how USF Foundations II faculty achieve best practices of First-Year Seminars and meet College Writing II outcomes through iterative writing that connects students to the college-writing culture.

Great Start Boot Camp: A 1-Day Conference-Like Jump-Start in Career Readiness for First-Year Students *Circus Room*

Christy Gunderson, Director of Academic Services for Student Success, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College

Mannah Mace, Student, Saint Mary-of-the Woods College

Ashley Jezik, Student, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College

This session will explore the development and implementation of a 1-day conference-like program that focuses on professionalism, networking, and career readiness for first-year students. Presenters will discuss the day's events which includes the major/minor fair, dining etiquette lunch, and break-out sessions. Special attention will be given to the selection of break-out session topics based on 1st-year student needs and overall student feedback of the event and change needed to take place. Additionally, student presenters will discuss the value of student input in the Great Start Boot Camp and how the event connected to curricular coursework, allowing for greater experiential learning.

Supporting Persistence and Completion Through Policy Change and Targeting Students for Support *Founder's Suite*

Chris Barry, Director, Student Transitions, Lincoln Land Community College

To increase persistence and completion at Lincoln Land Community College, we joined the Higher Learning Commission's Persistence and Completion Academy. We have designed a project and are currently implementing it in a phased-in way. The project is to eliminate late registration in its current form and increase the offerings of course lengths including flexible start courses. Also, a part of the project is to increase support (through interventions, peer mentors, and faculty connections) for students that register toward the end of the registration period.

Why Access does not Always Equal Inclusion: Lessons and Reminders from "The Privileged Poor" *Ballroom II*

Juanita C. Cross, M.A., Academic Advisor, Eastern Illinois University

Do some higher education policies/procedures inadvertently hinder students instead of help? Why do some students reach out for help while others do not? "The Privileged Poor: How Elite Colleges are Failing Disadvantaged Students" is an inside look at how access to an elite college does not always equal inclusion and/or campus acceptance. In his book, Anthony Jack reflects on his

experiences as a “privileged poor” student at an elite university and the experiences of dozens of other interviewed students. His findings reveal that university policies can inadvertently exacerbate inequalities and can adversely affect some students more than others.

Incorporating Experiential Learning into the First-Year Experience

Spotlight Room

Erin O'Neill, M.Ed., Associate Director of Experiential Learning, Roosevelt University

For years, colleges and universities have utilized shared experiences to help first-year students immerse themselves in their new atmosphere and build community. One specific way to make these shared experiences more impactful is to infuse them with Experiential Learning pedagogy. Experiential Learning ideals revolve around hands-on learning, with meaningful reflection, and connection to the student’s future. During this presentation, we will explore the theory and impact of Experiential Learning, discuss components and examples of these types of programs and courses, and brainstorm ways you can bring these ideas back to your campus!

Capturing First-Year Student Campus-Wide Engagement for Improved Insight, Retention, and Completion

Old Main

Mandy Shaffer, Director of Institutional Initiatives, Macmillan Learning

The EdSurge study, “Measuring Up: How Community Colleges Define, Measure and Support Student Success,” revealed important trends in student success initiatives, current practices for institutional analytics, and early indicators of student success. Highlights from the study will be presented alongside methods by which student attendance, engagement, and feedback can be efficiently tracked to deliver better learning outcomes and improve retention. From tracking attendance (in class; at campus events) to gauging students’ understanding, this session explores and demonstrates analytics tools that enable first-year experience instructors and coordinators to understand how to use student engagement tools across campus for real-time insights.

“Ready, Set, CONNECT”...Intentionally Helping First-Year Students Connect to Their New Environment and How to be the CONNECTOR that They Need

Ballroom I

Tona Ambrose, M.Ed., Director of College Access/Adjunct Instructor, Lincoln Trail College

As Higher Education Leaders, we need to encourage first-year students to broaden their horizons through meaningful, engaging and sometimes simple

connections to the world around them - BUT HOW? This collaborative session will focus on sharing and applying best practices that will provide us with opportunities to connect effectively with and contribute to the growth and self-expression of our students. These connections can assist students with developing important skills, finding a career path, cultivating relationships, and many other positive outcomes. By implementing intentional strategies both in and out of the classroom, we can become our students' most valuable CONNECTOR.

Educational Session III 1:10 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

“Building a Comprehensive Strategy for Student Success” *Ballroom I*
Dr. Betsy Barefoot, Senior Scholar, Gardner Institute

How would you define your institution's strategy for enabling student success? What is your focus - the first or second year, student transfer? Is your strategy the result of systematic thought and planning, or is it an “everything but the kitchen sink” approach? And most importantly, is it working? In this session we will share our successes and challenges in building a clear and cogent strategy that generates buy-in from faculty and staff while meeting the needs of students.

Establishing Familiarity with Rural Students through Socio-Academic Integrative Experiences *Circus Room*

Marci Rockey, Ph.D., Project Coordinator, Office of Community College Research and Leadership, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Rural students are the least likely to enroll in college immediately following high school graduation (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2016). A case study of one rural, Midwestern class of graduating high seniors identifies socio-academic integrative experiences described by Deil-Amen (2011) as critical to establishing familiarity and building confidence for rural students transitioning into college. Absent this connection and familiarity, institutions are easily dismissed with the community college particularly valued as a familiar place where individuals perceived that they could be successful.

Multicultural Academic Support: Applying Motivational Interviewing in Higher Education *Ballroom II*

Oliver Camacho, M.A., LPC, PEL:SC, Academic Counselor - CHANCE Program, Northern Illinois University

Karla Vilchez Neal, Ed.D., Program/Student Advisor, Center for Latino and Latin American Studies, Northern Illinois University

This session will present an overview of Motivational Interviewing (MI), a student counseling framework that can be applied to support multicultural student academic success. MI is an ideal technique to implement with first-year college students who may be struggling socially and/or academically. This workshop is ideal for administrators, instructors, student support personnel, and academic advisors who are interested in developing their soft skills to contribute to student academic success and retention.

Promoting Community Engagement and Student Reflection in First-Year Experience Courses Using “Big History” *Old Main*

Lirim Neziroski, Ph.D., MBA, Dean of Teaching & Learning Outcomes, University of St. Francis

Learn how the University of St. Francis has been using “Big History” course content for its first-year Foundations program to promote community engagement and student reflection. In the Foundations course, students read about Big History (from the big bang to the present), they write reflection essays, and they perform a service-learning project. The USF Foundations program is in its fifth year, and it has maintained a first-semester persistence rate around 90%.

Forming Strategic Alliances to Foster Persistence, Encourage Retention, and Support the Undecided First-Year Student *Founder’s Suite*

Andrea Polites, Assistant Professor, Human Services, College of DuPage

The first year can be a precarious time for college students. Immediately upon their entry, colleges present students with an overwhelming number of academic options from which they must select an area of concentration. Barriers and lack of suitable resources can result in anxiety and emotional distress, and most likely interfere with many of the choices made by first-year college students. In order to mitigate career indecision that may result, colleges need to implement appropriate interventions that provide support and assist with exploration of academic pathways and career objectives. Several studies emphasize the importance of the collaborative efforts of academic/career counselors, faculty and parents in addressing the needs of students as they navigate the career decision-making process. In this presentation, participants will explore some of the dynamics of the undecided student. Participants will discuss the underlying philosophies of Guided Pathways, fostering critical thinking skills and building information literacy in an effort to examine their relationship to the benefits of a structured first semester. Finally, participants will identify strategies to implement at their institutions.

Designing Information Literacy Skills Taught in Summer Bridge to Step into FYE Information Literacy Sessions *Spotlight Room*

Kelley Plass, Research and Instruction Librarian, Lewis University

Andrew Lenaghan, Library Director, Head of Library Instruction and Research Services, Lewis University

The Instruction and Research librarians at Lewis University teach foundational information literacy skills in our Summer Bridge Program, which step into the threshold concepts taught in the subsequent first-year experience class taken by all freshmen. During this session, attendees will receive an overview of the project, assessing the impact of repeated information literacy instruction and improved learning outcomes, and learn how both classes incorporated identical assessment elements with different content. Attendees will take away ideas of how to design information literacy classes with assessment goals embedded and be able to view the class sessions presented to students.

Educational Session IV 2:20 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.

Cross-Institutional Partnership: Exploring a New Approach to Bridge Programs *Old Main*

Erin Smith-Gaken, Associate Director, Office of Student Success, Central Michigan University

Kira Castle, Mid Mentor, Mid Michigan College

In 2017, Mid Michigan College and Central Michigan University began the Chippewa Achieve Program, a collaboration which provides an alternate pathway to CMU for students not meeting traditional admission requirements. These first-year students live at CMU and attend their first-year classes at Mid, combining the student life experience of their top-choice university with the smaller classes and structured support of a community college. The coordinators will share a program overview, outcomes from the first two years, future planning, and lessons learned.

Cultural Competency Outcomes of a First-Year Learning Community for Science Majors *Ballroom II*

Laura Starr, Ph.D., Director for Experiential Learning & Student Success, College of Science, Purdue University

Katherine Yngve, Intercultural Learning Specialist, Office of Institutional Assessment, Purdue University

Living-learning communities seem to offer rich settings for the development of cultural competencies; yet seldom do they measure intercultural learning

outcomes. Drawing on Bennett’s developmental model of intercultural sensitivity and Sanford’s theory of challenge and support, this study uses mixed assessment methods to analyze learning outcomes for six cohorts of students in a first-year “global science” learning community for international and domestic students. Data suggest that focusing exclusively on dealing with difference may be counter-productive; attention to developing self-awareness and empathy can significantly increase the competence outcomes for members of both groups.

Early Discussions: Improving First-Year Student Skills in Seminar Discussion *Circus Room*

Douglas Long, Director of the First-Year Program, DePaul University

Seminar discussion skills are something many students pick up as upperclassmen, but learning those skills in a student’s first year can benefit them throughout their college career. At DePaul University, that is one of the learning outcomes for the Focal Point Seminars which are required of first-year students. We will share best practices and strategies for helping students prepare for and participate in lively, meaningful class discussions.

The Struggle of Managing Implicit Bias *Ballroom I*

Jessica Monu, Ph.D., Assistant Professor Recreation & Sport Management, University of St. Francis

Allison Heard, Director of Institutional Diversity & Title IX Coordinator, University of St. Francis

Psychologists estimate that the human brain is capable of processing roughly 11 million bits of information every second. How much of that information are you aware of? Miller (1956) determined that the majority of our cognitive processing occurs outside of our conscious awareness. Everyone has their own experiences, stories, beliefs, etc. leading to one’s bias. This study had first-year students take the Race Implicit Association Test (IAT). Prior to taking the test, every student reflected on their current explicit racial beliefs and bias. Following the test every student reflected on the results, and whether they were surprised or not.

Improving Student Success: Leveraging Data Analytics and Faculty Engagement in an Entry-Level Computer Literacy Course *Founder's Suite*

Kathleen Embry, Ph.D., Online Program Chair, General Education, American InterContinental University

Mukul Bhalla, Ph.D., University Dean, General Education, American InterContinental University

How does your institution measure "student success" - improved engagement, persistence, student satisfaction? Regardless, our goal is one and the same, to guide students to graduation. Presenters will guide a discussion grounded in CAEL's "Ten Principles for Effectively Serving Adults" for developing a strategy to improve student success through agility in course curriculum and sequencing, engaging multiple communication modalities, and data-driven faculty coaching and development.

Helping you Support your Students: Connecting First-Year General Education Instructors to the Library *Spotlight Room*

Christopher Worland, Instruction Librarian, Milner Library, Illinois State University

Jennifer Sharkey, Head of Information Use & Fluency, Milner Library, Illinois State University

This presentation is a case study in the transition from a traditional "one shot library session" to a model that prepares instructors to utilize and incorporate library resources into their curriculum. With this approach instructors are able to integrate library-focused learning objects and activities into course sessions and assignments, creating a more direct connection to student learning. The presenters will discuss how to accommodate unique curriculum, time and general resources needed, as well as potential challenges. Participants will learn of alternative methods of incorporating the library and research practices into foundational courses apart from the typical one-shot session.

2019 Midwest First-Year Conference Committee

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