

First Year Experience
Update Fall 2006

The Red Team's vision of having a college-wide program for new students was realized this fall. While many of the components of FYE already existed at the College, others were added to make the orientation to college a more integrated and identifiable program. Increased marketing and program branding also contributed to higher enrollment in the primary FYE course, DS 107, and there has been strong participation in FYE related activities.

The leaders of the FYE Program are the counselor/coordinators at each campus-- Tyra Goodgain, Germantown; Laurie White and Marcus Peanort, Rockville; and Jay Marciano, Takoma Park/Silver Spring. They are enthusiastically supported by their deans of student development, chairs of counseling, and their campus "red teams."

The highlights of FYE include:

- Thanks to Anita Crawley and team, the **FYE website** provides new students with a way to "connect," stay informed, and access programs and services. www.montgomerycollege.edu/fye Please take a look at the website.
- **Enrollment in DS 107** increased dramatically at all three campuses. It has moved up to the third largest course at Germantown; eighth largest course at Rockville, and second largest course at Takoma Park/Silver Spring. It is estimated that 60% of new students enrolled in DS 107 or another FYE course.
- Takoma Park/Silver Spring produced the second edition of the "Insiders Guide" and Germantown produced a similar **FYE workbook**. Rockville has generously contributed time and resources for a college-wide version which will be complete for the spring 07 semester. The workbook replaces the Student Handbook and provides students with a template for an education plan, listing of college resources, and a calendar.
- **Marketing** for the program included FYE red pens, letters from the deans' office to students who had not yet enrolled in a DS course, the development of a formal and informal brochure, and visits by FYE counselors to selected courses.
- Beyond the core components of FYE, each campus has their own **signature program**. Germantown has selected and trained peer mentors in an Ambassador Program. Student Ambassadors are paired with a DS 107 instructor to provide a peer role model for new students. Rockville has focused on a program of academic support for student athletes. Takoma Park/Silver Spring has a more individualized approach, using course modules. They are in the process of developing a multi-disciplinary student project that looks very interesting.

- While DS 107 is currently the FYE course with the highest enrollment, other FYE courses are being developed. Rockville's **BA 101** has taken the lead, thanks for Charlotte Jacobson, Kathy Wessman, and the Rockville counselors. Training was completed this summer and each section of BA 101 now has an FYE component. A resource guide was prepared to support this endeavor.

Next Steps:

- Continue the **marketing** of FYE in order to increase student participation; increase sections of DS courses as needed. Since FYE is not mandatory, marketing is extremely important in order to encourage attendance.
- Instructional faculty participation- Prepare a general resource guide for instructors of other introductory courses. Encourage CTL to provide a forum for other interested instructors to explore how they could integrate FYE objectives into their course, thus making it a designated FYE course
- Complete the **college-wide FYE Guide** for spring; update one for fall. Evaluate its usefulness before continuing.
- Find a way to send the FYE counselor/coordinators to the national and/or international **First Year Experience Conference**.
- A **listserv** is being developed for first year students. It will help provide information, announcements, and reminders of important dates. Student e-mail will be vital to its success.
- Hire an **FYE coordinator** so that the college-wide coordination can be done by staff person which would let the FYE counselors get back to counseling (via FYE). Much of the work they did this year could now be maintained by a specialist/coordinator.

Submitted by Karen Roseberry
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