

First Year Experience

**Making a successful transition
into university study**

Themes from FYE conferences

First Year Experience
Access
Regenerate
Transition
Active Engage
Learner Future
Diversity
Higher Education Learning Experiment
Aspiration Student Success
Preparation
Achievement
Te Ao Hurihuri

Whose business is the first year experience?

Professor Sally Kift, Queensland University of Technology
Keynote address FYHE conference, 2008

“connecting students to somebody or something worthwhile is everyone’s business”

Kuh, George, D., (2007). How to Help Students Achieve, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Vol 53, Issue 41, pB12-B13. Retrieved 6 April, 2011, from <http://www.sjsu>.

- 1. What is your role at Victoria?*
- 2. What is something that you do or your team does that impacts positively on the transition of FY students into undergraduate study at Victoria?*
- 3. Describe one idea that you have about an improvement we could make at Victoria to enhance FY students' transition into undergraduate study.*

Victoria University context

2007: Ako Victoria - First year experience theme

2010: Student Experience Strategy

Objective 2.1: Review and develop strategies to improve the first year undergraduate student experience, recognising its importance for retention and achievement.

2011: Review of undergraduate education

Recommendation (consultation document, Nov 2011):

That Victoria adopts practices to support (research-based) principles for first year curricula to ease transitions and promote a successful start to the learning journey.

FYE approaches

- **1st generation FYE**

Co-curricular activities – outside of the classroom

- **2nd generation FYE**

Curriculum focus support, engage and build capability through the student learning experience via pedagogy, curriculum design & L&T practices

- **3rd generation FYE**

1st *and* 2nd generation – integrated, embedded, quality assured and seamless across institution (academic & professional partnerships)

Kift & Nelson (2005)

http://conference.herdsa.org.au/2005/pdf/refereed/paper_294.pdf

FYHE Conference 2011

THEME: Design for Student Success

The screenshot shows the website for the 14th Pacific Rim FYHE Conference 2011. At the top left is the QUT logo (Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane Australia). At the top right is the tagline "a university for the real world" and the text "First Year in Higher Education Conference". The main banner features a night view of a waterfront building with the text "14TH PACIFIC RIM FYHE CONFERENCE 2011 Design for student success" and "Sessions". Below the banner, there are navigation tabs for "Refereed Papers" and "Nuts & Bolts". A date navigation bar shows "Registration - 28/6/2011", "Day 1 - 29/6/2011", "Day 2 - 30/6/2011", and "Day 3 - 1/7/2011". The current view is for "Tuesday 28 June 2011", with a session schedule table below it. At the bottom of the page are three buttons: "Workshops", "Keynote Addresses", and "Sessions".

Full Program
Program content is subject to change.

Refereed Papers Nuts & Bolts

Registration - 28/6/2011 Day 1 - 29/6/2011 Day 2 - 30/6/2011 Day 3 - 1/7/2011

Tuesday 28 June 2011

1:30pm - 4:00pm	Registration Open
2:00pm - 3:30pm	Pre-Conference MasterClass Invitation only
2:00pm	Pre-Conference Workshop – Sally Rogan and Melissa Zaccagnini

Workshops Keynote Addresses Sessions

http://www.fyhe.com.au/past_papers/papers11/FYHE-2011/content/html/sessions.html#day1

Co-curricular presentations

TOPICS	UNIVERSITY
Student mentor programmes: What we know and don't know	Curtin University, Perth
A Pacific-based approach to supporting the participation of Pacific peoples in higher education	Unitec, Auckland
Supporting international students' transition: Have a chat	Victoria University, Melbourne
Supporting first year students through service learning in a leadership development programme	The University of Canterbury
Online interactive learning tutorials	The University of Queensland

The FYE Journey

Margaret Henley, University of Auckland

Faculty of Arts First Year Programme (pilot 2010)

- All students have a mentor, mentors responsible for a group of first year students
- Students contacted re missed classes or late assignments

Targeted curriculum support introduced this year

- Two large stage one courses
- ‘library fly bys’ – 400 students attended – tutors, academics, mentors, learning advisers, library staff all available

<http://www.arts.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/home/for/future-undergraduates-2/student-support-services-1/first-year-experience-programme/recent-fye-events>

Training tutors in a super-sized first year unit

Annette Watkins, Curtin University

‘The role of and engagement of tutors is particularly important when recognising the different backgrounds of first year scholars.’

- 3 training sessions in trimester
- First session is 7 hours: discuss who is our cohort, facilitation for engagement, content, assessment, roleplay (they do assessments), roles and expectations

Give tutors autonomy	Let them look at evaluations	Develop strategies together
Focus on tutors as part of the team	Provide peer mentoring	Team teach for first five weeks

Improving first year students' chance of swimming not sinking

Merrilyn Hooley, Lynn Morrison, Melinda Thomas & Elizabeth Marrs
Deakin University

Psychology course

- 1) Teaching and assessment of critical thinking in labs
- 2) Academic skills adviser & library liaison staff member are available as specialists on course Blackboard website
- 3) Orientation and academic skills module – complete in first 4 weeks, formative and summative assessment
 - Orientation to University website & resources
 - Assessment requirements, plagiarism info
 - Preparation for major essay assessment

Psychological distress in Law students

Rachael Field & Kathy Douglas, Queensland University of Technology

- Brain & Mind Institute (University of Sydney) – more than one third of law students suffer high to very high levels of psychological distress
- Law School adversarial, intimidating and competitive environment
- Curriculum-based strategy to address psychological distress experienced by law students
 - alternative disputes resolution
 - positive, collaborative lawyering
 - Experiential learning that contributes to student well-being
- Assists students to develop holistic, problem solving skills

Curriculum scholars

Peter Jones & Kate Galloway, James Cook University

- James Cook has curriculum scholars in each faculty (in addition to from Deans of Teaching and Learning)
- They aim to build capacity of academic staff to engage in best practice in teaching and curriculum development
- 3rd generation response
- There can be a tension between discipline-specific academic identity and the scholarship of teaching and learning
- A solution is for academics to undertake research related to their own teaching and learning

Highlighting FYE at Victoria

**The first year experience
is everyone's business**

So how can we work together to review and develop strategies to improve the first year undergraduate student experience at Victoria?

Discussion

- 1. Identify examples of good FYE practice at Victoria, both co-curricular and curricular, that could be shared to promote FYE to all staff.**
- 2. Discuss opportunities for enhancing the FYE for undergraduate students at Victoria.**
- 3. What methods of communication should be used to effectively disseminate information about FYE to Victoria staff and students?**