

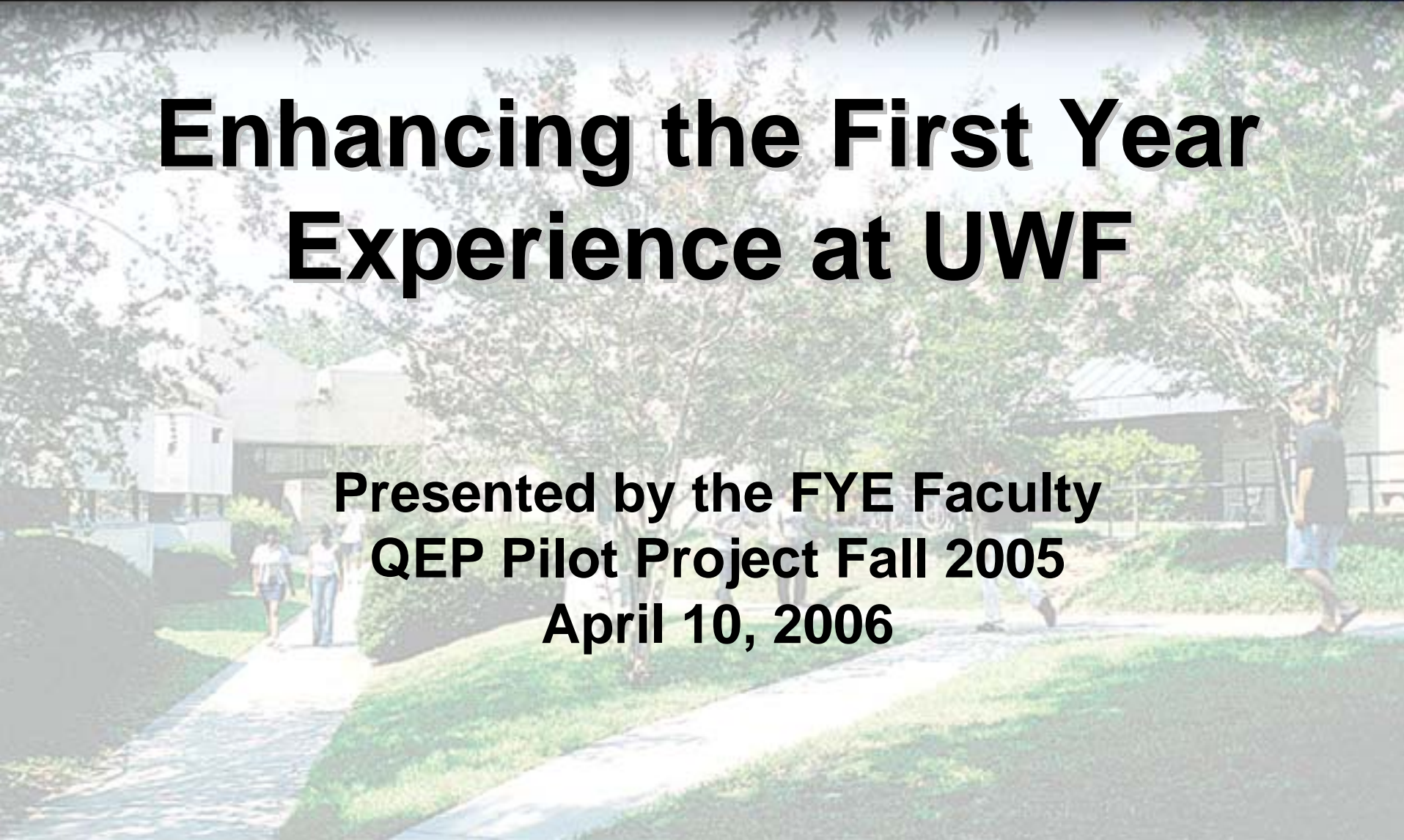


University of
West Florida



Enhancing the First Year Experience at UWF

**Presented by the FYE Faculty
QEP Pilot Project Fall 2005
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Facts about the Freshmen Year Experience Course

- The course serves as a “Gateway to General Education” and is being renamed to Academic Foundations Seminar for Fall 2006
- 300 first time in college students enroll in FYE each year
- Professional staff members from University Advising Center, Student Success Programs and Student Affairs serve as the faculty for the course
- Faculty are supported by a co-instructor from the College Student Personnel Masters program
- The purpose of the course is to assist first time in college students with the transition to university life at UWF



Action Plan of the Project



- **Modify the current UWF workbook/manual or website so that content and activities are centered around the domains for learning outcomes.**
- **Create a common syllabus centered around the domains for learning outcomes**
- **Incorporate Service Learning as a required component of all sections of FYE**
- **Conduct faculty development with FYE course faculty to introduce domains for learning outcomes and common student learning outcomes**
- **Collect and review data related to academic achievement and retention of students who enroll in the FYE course. The data will be used to improve the course and as a foundation for further study.**
- **Evaluate the learning outcomes with the course faculty and students via survey instruments**



Student Learning Outcomes



	Critical Thinking	Communication	Values/Integrity	Project Management
Skill	Analysis/Evaluation	Writing	Academic Integrity	Project Skills
Definition	Exhibit discipline-based higher order thinking skills	Communicate effectively & persuasively in multiple writing modes	Practice appropriate standards related to respect for intellectual property	Apply disciplined-based knowledge to design a problem-solving strategy. Completion of project proposal by group
Measure	4 yr academic plan		Paper on academic integrity	
Skill	Problem Solving	Speaking	Personal Values	Self-regulation
Definition	Solve disciplined-based problems using conventional strategies	Communicate effectively & persuasively in multiple speaking modes	Articulate own values & describe how they influence personal decisions	Exhibit disciplined work habits as an individual
Measure				Group report with deadlines & how met
Skill	Creativity	Quantitative Reasoning	Ethical Reasoning	Teamwork skills
Definition	Produce novel approaches in disciplinary contexts	Use mathematics to assist solving problems	Develop & maintain defensible ethical positions in moral challenges	Exhibit effective collaboration skills
Measure		Calculate & apply semester & cumulative GPA		Self-assessment of extent to which team player
Skill	Info Literacy	Tech Literacy	Diversity Skills	Service Learning/ Civic Engagement
Definition	Select credible evidence to support arguments	Use technology effectively for a variety of purposes	Interact effectively with individuals who do not share your heritage	Make a difference in a concern related to the broader context
Measure	Library tutorial & on-line orientation	Argus tutorial & on-line registration		Real world project completed & evaluated

Research: Summary Statistics

Academic Foundations Seminar (AFS): 2005-06 Cohort

Table 1: Comparison of Mean High School Academic Indicators for AFS and non-AFS freshmen

Indicator	AFS Students	Non-AFS Students	Difference
HS GPA	3.46	3.67	0.21*
ACT Composite Score	22.06	23.72	1.66*
SAT Combined Score	1001.53	1078.02	76.49*
Incoming Credits	3.25	5.51	2.26*

* $p < .001$

Table 2: Comparison of Mean Fall Semester UWF GPA and Fall to Spring Retention Rate for AFS and non-AFS Freshmen

Variable	AFS Students	Non-AFS students	Difference
Fall GPA	2.90	2.78	0.12 *
Retention Rate	91.16%	88.30%	2.86% **

* $p = .067$ (non-significant)

** Non-significant





Faculty Development

“Leadership and Learning are indispensable to one another.” - John F. Kennedy

- o Framed around the five practices from The Leadership Challenge by Kouzes and Posner
 - o Enabling Others to Act
 - o Inspiring a Shared Vision
 - o Modeling the Way
 - o Challenging the Process
 - o Encouraging the Heart



Faculty Development

- **Student Success and Motivation by Dr. Peter Wilkin**
- **Your Guide to College Success by Dr. Jane Halonen**
- **Maximizing Course Materials by Dr. Cynthia Jenkins**
- **On-line Faculty Training with Dr. John Gardner**
- **Getting to know the Faculty via MBTI by Dr. Kelly Meek**
- **Creativity: The Essence of Success by Mr. Lenny Dave**



Curriculum Resources

o Best Practices

- Student Autobiography
- Critical Thinking activity
- Journaling
- Guest Lectures
- Reflection on what was learned during the course
- Group presentations on selected topics
- Field trips or presentations on campus resources

o Text

o E-Learning

o Service Learning

Includes agencies such as: Covenant Hospice, Ronald McDonald House, Rebuild Northwest Florida, Boys and Girls Club of Escambia County, Pensacola Parks and Recreation, High School High Tech, American Red Cross, American Diabetes Association, Pensacola Habitat for Humanity & Navy Marine Corps Relief Society

o Common Syllabi

Future: Faculty Development

- **Completing Best Practices list of activities**
- **Conducting workshop on “Understanding the Millennial Generation”**
- **Learning about Grading Rubrics**
- **Developing and implementing effective collaboration methods with co-instructors**
- **Continuing bi-weekly meetings**
- **Integrating Goalquest into course materials**

Future: Research

- Alignment with university assessment
- NSSE
- Future Research



Future: Teaching Assistants

- Continued recruitment of graduate students and undergraduates to serve as teaching assistants
- Development of position description and learning outcomes for teaching assistants
- Implementation of regular meetings with instructors and co-instructors



“Un-measurables”



As their final journal entry, FYE students were to describe what they learned during the course. These are their words:

- **“There have been so many different ideas and values that I have learned and will take with me throughout the rest of my life. Some of these values include time and money management, how to use the appropriate resources in order to be successful in life, and most importantly, I have learned how to be more “flexible” in life.”**
- **“I learned that it’s really easy to talk to new people. Never in a million years did I think that I would be talking to people and that they would know my name.”**
- **“FYE has taught me that getting involved in campus is really a lot of fun. Things like fraternities, SGA, IFC, and even volunteer efforts are great ways to meet new people and help out when something is going on. It showed me that getting involved is really more interesting than I thought and that would suite me best.”**