



FSUSEMINAR

First-Year Initiative Survey Report
Fall 2008



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First-Year Initiative Survey Report

Fall 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Ferris State University Seminar (FSUS) continues to be successful in achieving its purpose and goals. The 2008-2009 First-Year Initiative survey shows that the majority of first-year students believe FSUS has been instrumental in their social and academic transition to Ferris.
- The overall compliance rate for student enrollment in FSU Seminar courses was 99.3%; two of the six undergraduate colleges achieved 100% compliance.
- FSUS has had significant impact in improving out-of-class engagement.
 - Instructors have collaborated with the campus community in adopting a common theme “Electing Success” in support of the University’s participation in the American Democracy and Political Engagement projects.
 - Students are often required to attend campus activities, cultural events, and in some cases participate in campus-sponsored organizations. Many students have indicated that they would not have done so otherwise.
- Introduction to campus resources (especially FLITE), academic advising and registration procedures, as well as encouragement to be active participants in campus and community activities, stand out as the FSUS course objectives that are most helpful to students.
- While it appears that there has been a “flattening” of overall survey scores, FSUS has remained instrumental in positively affecting students’ knowledge of wellness issues (alcohol & personal choices), academic services, time management, connections with faculty, and University rules regarding academic honesty.
 - There has been a dramatic decrease (-7%) in the number of students reporting that they are drinking frequently throughout the week; first-year Ferris students are no longer drinking more, or more often, than their peers in the aggregate survey population.
 - Students are reporting a higher level of interaction with professors outside the classroom.
- Overall, this report presents evidence that FSUS has been successful in its mission of “providing first-year students with personal connections, knowledge, and resources that will enhance their potential for learning, satisfaction and graduation.”
- We cannot, however, rest on our laurels. Several recommendations are being made as a result of data analysis from the 2008 FYI survey, university-wide initiatives, and in support of the core values that sustain the mission, vision, and future growth of Ferris State University. Those pertaining to the FYI survey are included here. Additional recommendations may be found on page 10 of the attached report.
 1. Develop an in-house course evaluation tool as a replacement for the current FYI survey to assess the effectiveness of FSU Seminar courses and identify areas in need of improvement.
 2. Continue to advocate for alcohol awareness and personal responsibility through the FSU Seminar courses by bringing professional speakers to campus for presentations on alcohol and sexual responsibility. Instructors will be encouraged to send their students to such presentations.
 3. Introduce stress management as an additional topic that may be covered as part of the wellness objective. Stress management resources will be collected by the FSUS Coordinator and shared with instructors in support of this suggestion.

4. Incorporate the theme “Opportunity” into the FSUS curriculum in support of the campus-wide initiative to promote the University’s core values of “Collaboration” and “Opportunity” as well as in celebration of the University’s 125th anniversary.
5. Continue promoting out-of-class engagement through classroom activities and participation in campus and community events, as well as civic engagement activities, to work toward creating an engaged campus.
6. Include Ferris Connect as one of the campus technologies introduced in seminar courses to ensure that FTIACs receive basic instruction for using the University’s newly adopted on-line learning platform
7. Identify additional guest speakers and activities to supplement the FSUS diversity objective and emphasize this objective in training sessions for new and returning instructors.

2007-2008 First-Year Initiative Survey Report

INTRODUCTION

For the past seven years, Ferris State University students have participated in the First Year Initiative Survey conducted by Educational Benchmarking (EBI). The purpose of the national study was to survey students to understand their perceptions of first-year experience courses. The results obtained from participating in EBI's study are used to assess the effectiveness of the FSUS course at Ferris State University and to assist in the planning and development of future course content and delivery methods.

Enrollment in FSUS100 became mandatory for all new-to-college Ferris students as of fall, 2002. Compliance in maintaining the FSUS mandate has been excellent with virtually 100% of all first-time students enrolling in an FSU Seminar course in fall 2008. (see Appendix A.)

In the following report, FSUS or FSU Seminar is the all-inclusive term used to describe courses that meet the program objectives, including "embedded courses" in the College of Business, Technology, University College and the Honors program. (See Appendix B for a list of embedded courses.)

A random sampling of one-quarter of the FSU Seminar courses (representing all undergraduate colleges as well as the Honors population) were invited to complete the First-Year Initiative (FYI) survey during the 14th week of the 2008 fall semester. Of the 2097 students enrolled in a seminar course, 525 (25%) were invited to participate and 405 responded to the survey. This number represents a response rate of 77% which is nine percentage points higher than the aggregate response rate on the FYI survey (68%).

Survey questions were grouped into fifteen factor areas for analysis and reporting purposes. Eight of the fifteen factor areas analyzed for this study related directly to FSUS course objectives. Those factors included:

- Course Improved Study Strategies
- Course Improved Connections with Faculty
- Course Increased Out-of-Class Engagement
- Course Improved Knowledge of Campus Policies
- Course Improved Knowledge of Academic Services
- Course Improved Managing Time and Priorities
- Course Improved Knowledge of Wellness
- Overall Course Effectiveness



2008 FINDINGS

Information obtained from the 2008 FYI survey indicates that there has been relatively no change in the degree to which we are achieving the FSUS course objectives. Overall, Ferris students continued to report that their college experience was a positive, high-quality learning experience and they would recommend Ferris to a friend. The majority of students indicated that FSUS was helpful in all areas of the survey.

Nine out of ten students indicated that the FSU Seminar course improved their understanding of

- available library resources (92%, objective 1),
- University rules regarding academic honesty (91%, objective 9),
- the role of the academic advisor and registration process (89%, 90%, objective 7),
- how to obtain academic assistance (90%, objective 1), and
- the impact of establishing personal goals (89%, objective 4)

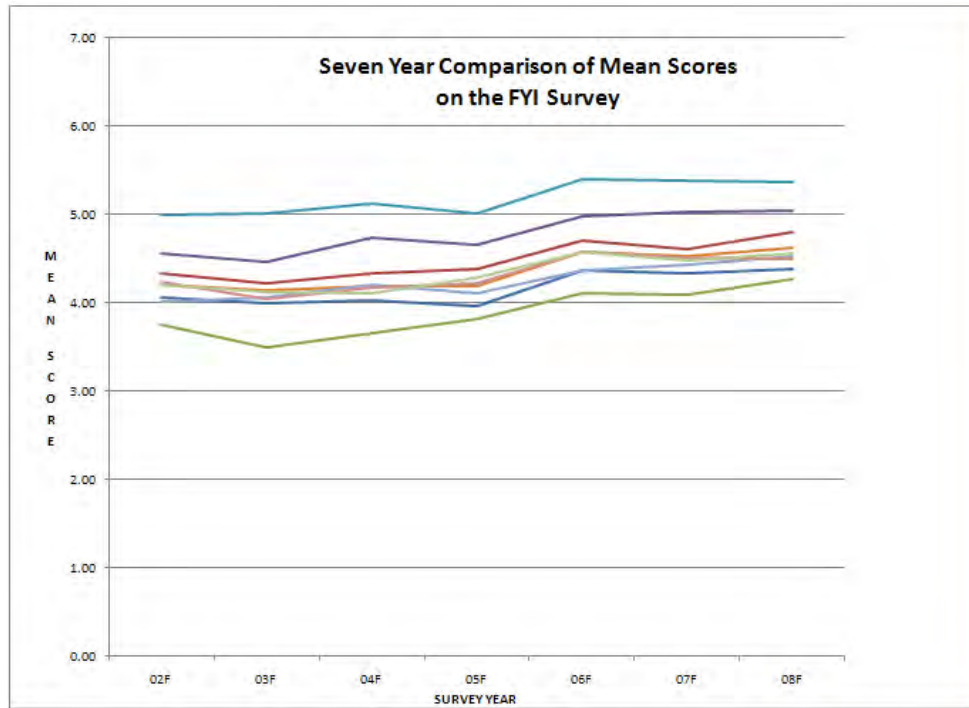
In addition, **Four out of five students** report that the FSU Seminar course:

- included meaningful class discussions (86%)
- improved the degree to which they understood faculty expectations of students (85%, “purpose”)
- Improved their understanding of
 - their academic strengths (84%),
 - the grading system (84%),
 - how to obtain a tutor (84%, objective 1),
 - academic probation policies (82%), and
- contributed to their ability to adjust to the college social environment (82%, “purpose”) (see Appendices C and D)

Slightly higher mean scores were observed in 2008 for

- increased out-of-class engagement,
- improved “connections with faculty,
- knowledge of wellness, and
- managing time and priorities.

The only statistically significant improvement, however, was for “improved connections with faculty.” All other factor areas remained about the same as those reported in 2007. (see Appendix E)



- Factor 1 - Course Improved Study Strategies
- Factor 4 - Course Improved Connections w/ Faculty
- Factor 6 - Course Increased Out-of-Class Engagement
- Factor 7 - Course Improved Knowledge of Campus Policies
- Factor 8 - Course Improved Knowledge of Academic Services
- Factor 9 - Course Improved Managing Time and Priorities
- Factor 10 - Course Improved Knowledge of Wellness
- Factor 14 - Course Included Engaging Pedagogy
- Factor 15 - Overall Course Effectiveness

One of the goals of the FSUS class is for students to “develop a relationship with FSUS faculty members that will serve as an internal model for interactions with future teachers.” The FSUS curriculum includes a discussion of faculty expectations and student-teacher interactions; students are often encouraged to meet with faculty during established office hours. This knowledge and encouragement may serve to increase students’ comfort levels and give them a greater sense of confidence in initiating interactions with their professors and making those contacts more productive and successful.

Highest Scoring Means

Four FSUS objectives were identified in the “highest scoring means” questions on the survey:

- “knowledge of campus resources (library, personal and academic support services),”
- “the impact of establishing personal goals (time management),”
- “advising and registration procedures,” and
- “understanding “rules regarding academic honesty.”

(See Appendix E)

Almost all (98%) of the first-year seminar courses toured the FLITE library in the fall. Several FSUS instructors also had their students complete the library’s web-based PILOT tutorial prior to visiting FLITE to assist students in not only knowing where to find materials in the library but also how to access those activities.

Providing students with information on where to find and how to access the University’s academic support services is a priority of the FSUS program. All first-year students are given FSUS Information Packets during the first week of classes containing a variety of information regarding campus resources and activities. Many instructors require students to bring their FSUS Folder to class and frequently refer to the packet materials in addition to classroom discussions, web links on the University and FSUS websites, and required visits to the tutoring/writing center, Academic Success Fair and/or Academic Support Center Speaker Series.

Since the initial FYI survey, the understanding of advising and registration procedures has always been identified as one of the most beneficial aspects of FSUS. This is also evidenced in the University’s fall 2008 Academic Advising Outcomes Survey in which a third (35%) of the students reported that they learned how to register for classes in their FSUS course. In the same survey, one-quarter (27%) of the students indicated that they knew who their academic advisor was because he or she taught their FSUS class. It is not surprising that questions concerning this objective once again received high scores on the survey.

Dr. William Potter, Dean of University College, has been a valuable resource for promoting the understanding of academic honesty. He has shared his academic honesty presentation as part of the Academic Support Center Seminar series as well as 24 individual classroom presentations.

Greatest Statistically Significant Differences

Questions which had the greatest positive statistically significant difference when compared to the 2007-08 survey include:



- Increased participation in campus-sponsored organizations ($p < .001$)
- Establishing personal goals ($p < .01$)
- Communications with instructors outside of class ($p < .01$)
- Completing homework assignments on time ($p < .05$)
- Encouragement for students to work together ($p < .05$)
- meaningful class discussions ($p < .05$)

(See Appendix E)

One of the FSUS course objectives is to encourage students to be “active participants and contributors in campus and community activities.” The fact that there is statistically significant improvement in this area since last year is a good indication that this objective is being met. Adoption of the campus-wide theme “Electing Success” and collaboration with several campus-wide organizations, including required attendance at activities made available through the American Democracy and Political Engagement Projects, may have contributed to the positive change. Many students have indicated that they would not have attended those events had they not been required to do so.

Effective time management, one of the top predictors for successful seminar courses, was an area targeted as being in need of improvement based on previous survey scores. Discussions have taken place to determine the optimal time to introduce time management to first-year students. Many instructors are now promoting the topic multiple times throughout the semester by introduce the creation of study plans in the first or second week and spending more time focusing on self (time) management and goal setting during the fourth or fifth week of the semester after students have had a chance to settle into their college routine. The significantly improved scores for improving students’ ability to establish personal goals may be a result of this emphasis.

As mentioned previously, the FSUS curriculum includes a discussion of faculty expectations and student-teacher interactions; students are often encouraged to meet with faculty during established office hours. This knowledge and encouragement may serve to increase students’ comfort levels and give them a greater sense of confidence in initiating interactions with their professors and making those contacts more productive and successful.

Although increased commitment to completing homework assignments on time, encouragement to work together, and meaningful class discussions are not explicit course objectives, they are all indications that FSUS is helping to contribute to facilitate students’ “transition to university life and by so doing improve student academic performance and retention” which is also one of the FSUS course goals.

Lowest Scoring Means

Although none of the factor areas pertaining to the FSUS objectives were identified in the lowest scoring mean questions, one area in which is remotely connected to our wellness objective is in improving students’ “ability to deal with stress.” While this is not a specific course objective, it may be an area which should be considered for inclusion in the future.

There were no questions with a negative statistically significant difference in comparison to the 2007-08 survey. It is interesting, however, to note that the inclusion of “challenging assignments” and “meaningful homework” were ranked among the lowest scoring questions. As a one-credit seminar course, FSUS should be one of students’ easiest courses to “ace.” The fact remains, however, that it is an academic university level course and students in which students want to be challenged.

Student Comments

In 2008, 409 students provided written responses to ten institution-specific questions using their own words for three open-ended questions:

- “*What was the most helpful part of your FSUS course?*”
- “*What was the least helpful part of your FSUS course?*”
- “*What additional topics should be included in FSUS?*”

While most students chose not to provide written comments, several identified more than one topic in their responses. Clearly, many more students volunteered positive information in response to FSUS than those who shared negative views.

Grouped by FSUS objective, responses to these questions indicate that the most helpful course objectives for the 2008 first-year cohort were campus resource (Library) information, advising and registration, and, encouragement for active participation in campus activities. In addition to these objectives, students reported that homework assignments and classroom activities were helpful (even though they weren't always challenging) as well as seminars, guest speakers, and major-specific information.



The least helpful objectives were reported to be wellness information and introduction to campus resources. Even though these areas were reported to be least helpful, survey scores revealed that FSUS is effective in increasing students' knowledge or understanding in both areas. Four times as many students indicated that the introduction to campus resources was helpful than those who said it was not. Although many students reported that the homework assignments and class activities were helpful, twice as many (about one-in-five) indicated they did not like having assignments – especially writing assignments.

(See Appendix F)

Population Comparison

In comparison to the other FSU undergraduate colleges and Honors program, University College had the highest mean scores in four of the eight factors areas:

- improved study strategies
- connections with faculty
- knowledge of academic services
- managing time and priorities

University College's scores, which were 9-14% above the institutional means, were not surprising for a variety of reasons:

- FSUS has been part of the curriculum for University College programs for more than ten years.
- University College's courses were taught by instructors with many years of first-year seminar experience who also served as the academic advisors for students.
- The FSUS program is housed under the University College umbrella, therefore, it would be natural for the college's faculty and staff to be especially cognizant of accomplishing the course objectives.

The Honors population had the lowest overall scores in all but two factor areas – “Out-of-Class Engagement” (which has historically been the case) and “Overall Course Effectiveness.” Since moving from a large group lecture format housed in an auditorium to several smaller seminars grouped by college with an average of 20 students, mean scores have greatly improved in all areas for the Honors population. They have moved from having the lowest overall effectiveness score to having the third highest score coming in just behind the College of Education and University College.



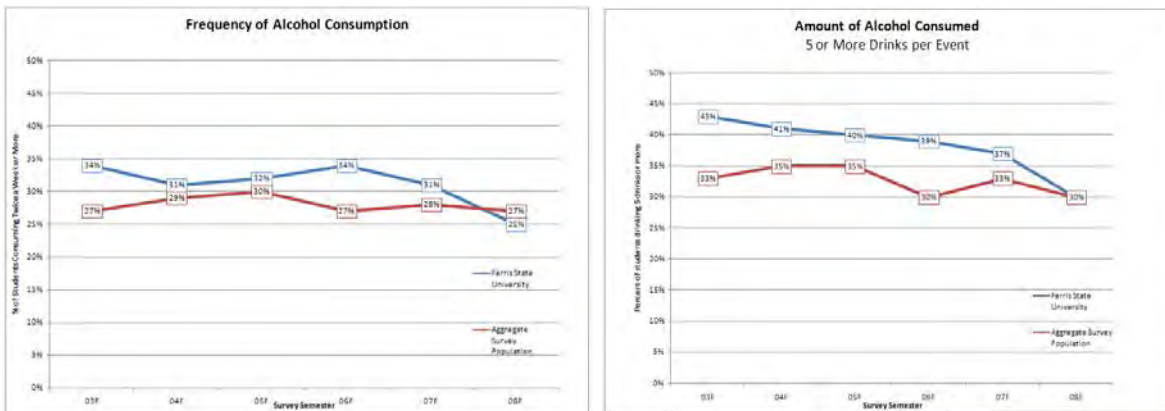
Comparison with Other Institutions

Overall, Ferris students perceived FSUS to be about as effective as first-year seminars at other institutions in the comparison group; Ferris' scores were higher than the aggregate group for "Improved Knowledge of Academic Services," and there was no difference for "Managing Time and Priorities," "Knowledge of Wellness," "Improved Connections with Faculty," and "Knowledge of Campus Policies."

At the same time, however, Ferris' scores were below average for "Improved Study Strategies," and "Overall Course Effectiveness." Although these should be areas of concern, one needs to bear in mind that the overall survey population was comprised of several different seminar types, including many which were three credit hour classes. Attempting to make an accurate comparison between FSUS and the variety of seminars represented would be like trying to compare apples and oranges.

Demographics

A longitudinal comparison of demographic information from the FYI survey revealed exciting information relating to the FSUS wellness objective: Drinking levels among the 2008 First-year Ferris cohort were considerably lower than those reported in previous survey years.



In the past, first-year Ferris students reported that they were drinking more, and more often, than their peers in the aggregate survey population. Findings from the 2008-09 indicate that this trend has changed. The percentage of students reporting that they consumed alcohol "twice a week or more" has decreased considerably over time while that of the aggregate population basically remained the same. In addition, FSU students reporting that they drank heavily (five drinks or more per event) has declined seven percentage points since last year and now matches that of the aggregate survey. Educational seminars such as "Beer, Booze & Books," (hosted by the FSUS program), as well as several social norms presentations given in the FSUS classrooms (made available through the Social Norms Committee's "Good Choices" grant) may have been a factor in contributing to the decline in heavy alcohol use. Whether it is the major factor remains unknown. What is clear, however, is that something is working and first-year Ferris students are not drinking as heavily as they had in the past. (See Appendix I)

SUMMARY

Ferris State University's longitudinal data obtained from the FYI survey indicates that FSUS continues to be successful in achieving the course objectives. In spite of an apparent leveling-off of scores for the past two years, higher percentages of students are reporting that FSUS was beneficial in all areas. Overall survey scores have revealed that students believe FSUS is helpful in making the transition to college. That, coupled with continual improvement in the fall-to-fall retention rates for the University, is evidence that FSUS has been successful in its mission – "providing first-year students with personal connections, knowledge, and resources that will enhance their potential for learning, safety, satisfaction and graduation."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Even though most students have reported that FSUS has helped them to adapt to college both academically and socially, we must aggressively continue to fulfill the purpose of the course - to provide first year students with personal connections, knowledge, and resources that will enhance their potential for learning, safety, satisfaction & graduation. Several recommendations are being made as a result of data analysis from the 2008 FYI survey, university-wide initiatives, and in support of the core values that sustain the mission, vision, and future growth Ferris State University.

Collaboration

- The newly established FSUS Advisory Board will continue to meet regularly to provide feedback on the curriculum and structure of the program.
- FSUS course objective #1 will be modified to include Ferris Connect as one of the campus technologies introduced in seminar courses to ensure that FTIACs receive basic instruction for using the University's newly adopted on-line learning platform.

Diversity

- The FSUS Coordinator will identify additional guest speakers and activities to supplement the FSUS diversity objective and emphasize this objective in training sessions for new and returning instructors.

Ethical Community

- Academic integrity and classroom etiquette skills that foster appropriate conduct in the post secondary institutional setting, as well as the University's Core Values, Student Handbook, and Code of Conduct, will continue to be discussed in FSUS courses.

Excellence

- The FSUS Coordinator, in collaboration with the FSUS Advisory Board, will develop an in-house survey to assess the effectiveness of FSU Seminar courses and seek areas in need of improvement. This new assessment tool will replace the current FYI survey resulting in a cost-savings to the University as well as providing an opportunity to assess all of the FSUS objectives as opposed to general first-year experience programs.
- Faculty training will continue to focus on a learning-centered approach for improving the top two predictors that have been identified by EBI as having a high impact on overall course effectiveness: "Managing Time and Priorities" and "Engaging Pedagogy"

Learning

- FSUS Instructors will continue to advocate for alcohol awareness and personal responsibility through the FSU Seminar courses. Even though fewer first-year students report excessive drinking patterns, survey data indicates that wellness information is most valued when professional speakers are invited to campus for large-group presentations. To that end, it is recommended that professional speakers continue to be invited to campus for presentations on alcohol and sexual responsibility and instructors send their students to such presentations.
- FSUS instructors will be encouraged to assign meaningful homework and assignments that relate to the course objectives and promote critical thinking.
- The topic of stress management will be introduced as an additional topic that may be covered as part of the wellness objective. Stress management resources will be collected by the FSUS Coordinator and shared with instructors in support of this suggestion.

Opportunity

- The theme "Opportunity" will be incorporated into the FSUS curriculum in support of the campus-wide initiative to promote the University's core values of collaboration and opportunity as well as in celebration of the University's 125th anniversary.
- FSUS faculty will be encouraged to continue promoting out-of-class engagement through classroom activities and promoting participation in campus and community events as well as civic engagement activities to work toward creating an engaged campus.

APPENDIX A:

FSUS 100 Compliance Fall 2008

College	# FSUS First-Year Students* reported	# Reported Not in FSU Seminar Course	# Students Not Req'd **	Net # Not in FSUS	Never Enrolled in FSUS or Equiv	Dropped by Student	Other	% in FSUS
AHS	257	6	3	3	1	2		98.8%
A&S	403	7	4	3			3	99.2%
BUS	373	6	3	3	2	1		99.2%
EDU	206	3	3	0				100.0%
TEC	317	10	6	4	2	2		98.7%
UNI	352	7	7	0				100.0%
Total	1908	39	26	13	3	0	0	99.3%

FSUS 100 Compliance Spring 2008

College	# FSUS First-Year Students* reported	# Reported Not in FSU Seminar Course	# Students Not Req'd **	Net # Not in FSUS	Never Enrolled in FSUS or Equiv	Dropped by Student	Other	% in FSUS
AHS	10	7	3	4	4			43%
A&S	13	4	2	2	2			82%
BUS	18	5	4	1	1			93%
EDU	15	6	6	0				100%
TEC	12	6	4	2	2			75%
UNI	30	2	2	0				100%
Total	98	33	20	9	9			88%

*From WebFocus Report SG0026RB: FSUS Compliancy; includes FTIACS and transfer students with fewer than 12 credits.

**Students not required to take FSUS because 1) students appear to have more than 12 cum hrs on screen 211 that do not yet appear as transfer credits, 2) previous degree, 3) have been granted special consideration to excuse them from FSUS, OR 4) will be taking an embedded class in the fall (two BU students will be in RFIM101) (n = 12).

APPENDIX B:

Embedded Seminar Courses

College of Business:	
BUSN122	Introduction to Business (3 cr)
PGMG101	Introduction to Professional Golf Management (1 cr)
PTMG101	Introduction to Professional Tennis Management (1 cr)
MIMG101	Introduction to Music Industry Management (1 cr)
PREL101	Contemporary Public Relations (1 cr)
RFIM101	Orientation to Hospitality Industry (1 cr)
Technology:	
CONM100	Introduction to Construction Technology Management (1cr)
University College:	
UNCP100	University College Transition Seminar (3 cr)
DIST100	Directed Studies Seminar (1 cr)
Honors Program	
HNRS100	Orientation to Honors (1 cr)

**APPENDIX C Percentage of Students Reporting That FSUS Was *Significantly* Helpful
(FYI Survey, Fall 2008)**

FSUS Significantly Increased Students' Understanding of...

	% Responding Significantly (7)	% Responding 6 or 7 (Combined)
Available library resources (objective 2)	34	62
Registration procedures (objective 7)	27	54
The role of the academic advisor (objective 7)	30	56
How to obtain academic assistance (objective 1&2)	25	56
How to obtain a tutor (objective 2)	25	50
The impact of establishing personal goals (objective 4)	27	55
College/University rules regarding academic honesty (obj. 9)	27	51
This course improved my ability to find what I need through the library (objective 2)	27	50

Response Key:

Significantly Somewhat Not at All
 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

APPENDIX D: Percentage of Students Reporting That FSUS Was Helpful
(FYI Survey, Fall 2008)

Percentages include students answering “somewhat” – “significantly” on the FYI survey.

Question by Factor Area:	% of Students Reporting That FSUS Was Helpful							
	02F	03F	04F	05F	06F	07F	08F	Chng 07-08
Factor 1 - Course Improved Study Strategies								
1 Understanding of my academic strengths	62	72	75	74	81	79	84	5
2 test preparation skills*	62	59	61	59	68	67	66	-1
3 ability to find what I need through the library	69	84	79	75	88	87	89	2
13 reviewing class notes before the next class meeting*	53	53	55	56	64	64	64	0
14 completing homework assignments on time	67	67	68	69	76	74	80	6
15 studying with other students*	51	50	51	53	62	61	63	2
16 taking effective notes in class*	60	61	62	62	71	68	71	3
17 coping with test anxiety*	54	56	56	56	65	67	65	-2
Factor 4 - Course Improved Connections w/ Faculty								
21 understanding faculty expectation of students	73	77	75	79	84	82	85	3
22 feedback sought from instructors	67	68	70	70	77	76	80	4
23 communications with instructors outside of class	66	64	67	68	72	73	76	3
Factor 6 - Course Increased Out-of-Class Engagement								
53 Participation in campus-sponsored organizations	62	56	58	62	70	69	76	7
54 contributing to the success of campus-sponsored organizations*	56	50	51	56	64	62	68	6
55 Volunteering time for worthwhile causes	52	45	49	53	56	56	58	2
56 attending campus cultural events	58	54	56	63	66	68	74	6
Factor 7 - Course Improved Knowledge of Campus Policies								
24 college/University rules regarding academic honesty	74	78	83	83	78	89	91	2
25 The grading system	73	73	78	76	84	84	84	0
26 Academic Probation Policies	65	70	74	71	82	82	82	0
27 Registration Procedures	85	79	84	84	88	87	90	3
28 Financial aid procedures*	66	60	66	67	73	75	72	-3
Factor 8 - Course Improved Knowledge of Academic Services								
29 The role of the academic advisor	80	80	81	83	88	87	89	2
30 How to obtain academic assistance	79	81	86	83	89	89	90	1
31 How to obtain a tutor	75	79	82	79	86	87	84	-3
32 Available library resources	78	87	88	82	90	91	92	1

APPENDIX D: (continued)

Question by Factor Area:	% of Students Reporting That FSUS Was Helpful							Chng 07-08
	02F	03F	04F	05F	06F	07F	08F	
Factor 9 - Course Improved Managing Time and Priorities								
37 The Impact of Establishing Personal Goals	74	78	79	80	84	73	89	16
49 Preparation for tests well in advance	57	57	60	58	70	68	69	1
50 Establishing an effective study schedule	59	59	61	63	71	70	72	2
51 Setting priorities to accomplish what is most important	65	68	68	69	76	76	78	2
52 Organizing time to meet responsibilities	66	69	70	69	79	77	80	3
Factor 10 - Course Improved Knowledge of Wellness								
12 Ability to deal with stress*	59	61	63	60	70	70	66	-4
33 College students' sexual issues	55	60	63	64	64	68	71	3
34 The impact of alcohol consumption	67	73	74	69	78	77	77	0
35 The impact of drug use*	63	66	69	66	73	74	75	1
36 The impact of exercising regularly*	58	61	64	60	70	69	73	4
Factor 15 - Overall Course Effectiveness								
65 Included Interesting Subject matter	70	70	71	74	79	78	77	-1
66 contributed to the ability to succeed academically	66	66	69	68	79	78	74	-4
67 contributed to the ability to adjust to the college social environment	71	68	72	75	79	80	82	2
68 covered topics important to student	66	66	68	70	76	76	75	-1
69 student would recommend this course to other first-year students	54	52	57	58	66	63	63	0
Factor 14 - Course Included Engaging Pedagogy								
38 included a variety of teaching methods	68	70	73	73	78	77	82	5
39 included meaningful class discussions	72	74	72	79	84	82	86	4
40 included challenging assignments	49	48	49	51	57	57	56	-1
41 productive use of classroom time	66	70	69	74	78	78	78	0
42 included encouragement to speak in class	71	76	74	77	84	81	84	3
43 included encouragement for students to work together	66	71	71	77	80	77	80	3
44 included meaningful homework	53	55	57	71	68	67	64	-3
48 increased participation in classroom discussions	-	-	60	65	72	71	73	2

*not individually addressed in the FSUS course objectives

APPENDIX E:

Mean Scores for Questions on the Fall 2007 FYI Survey

Question by Factor Area:	02F	03F	04F	05F	06F	07F	08F	% Chng 07-08	Statist. Signif
Factor 1 - Course Improved Study Strategies	4.05	3.98	4.02	3.95	4.37	4.33	4.38	1.14%	ND
1 Understanding of my academic strengths	4.35	4.21	4.32	4.31	4.63	4.62	4.70	1.70%	ND
2 test preparation skills ⁺	3.45	3.73	3.81	3.74	4.11	4.08	4.07	-0.25%	ND
3 ability to find what I need through the library	4.67	4.85	4.98	4.61	5.30	5.30	5.23	-1.34%	ND
13 reviewing class notes before the next class meeting ⁺	3.56	3.51	3.53	3.54	3.90	3.88	3.96	2.02%	ND
14 completing homework assignments on time	4.36	4.20	4.31	4.28	4.62	4.56	4.79	4.80%	*
15 studying with other students ⁺	3.53	3.47	3.53	3.52	3.91	3.83	3.92	2.30%	ND
16 taking effective notes in class ⁺	3.80	3.90	3.93	3.94	4.37	4.22	4.30	1.86%	ND
17 coping with test anxiety ⁺	3.35	3.61	3.63	3.59	3.99	4.03	4.03	0.00%	ND
Factor 4 - Course Improved Connections w/ Faculty	4.32	4.21	4.32	4.37	4.69	4.60	4.79	3.97%	*
21 understanding faculty expectation of students	4.47	4.48	4.56	4.66	4.97	4.89	4.96	1.41%	ND
22 feedback sought from instructors	4.24	4.07	4.21	4.21	4.57	4.49	4.65	3.44%	ND
23 communications with instructors outside of class	4.24	4.05	4.20	4.24	4.50	4.42	4.71	6.16%	**
Factor 6 - Course Increased Out-of-Class Engagement	3.75	3.49	3.65	3.81	4.10	4.09	4.27	4.22%	ND
53 Participation in campus-sponsored organizations	4.02	3.70	3.87	4.00	4.32	4.30	4.65	7.53%	***
54 contributing to the success of campus-sponsored organizations ⁺	3.67	3.35	3.48	3.67	4.02	3.98	4.10	2.93%	ND
55 Volunteering time for worthwhile causes	3.38	3.21	3.36	3.52	3.77	3.70	3.81	2.89%	ND
56 attending campus cultural events	3.76	3.59	3.70	3.99	4.22	4.32	4.48	3.57%	ND
Factor 7 - Course Improved Knowledge of Campus Policies	4.55	4.45	4.73	4.64	4.98	5.03	5.04	0.20%	ND
24 college/University rules regarding academic honesty	4.51	4.68	5.06	4.96	5.20	5.32	5.31	-0.19%	ND
25 The grading system	4.47	4.39	4.64	4.53	4.93	4.95	5.04	1.79%	ND
26 Academic Probation Policies	3.53	4.31	4.59	4.47	4.89	4.91	4.88	-0.61%	ND
27 Registration Procedures	4.19	4.87	5.10	5.07	5.37	5.32	5.36	0.75%	ND
28 Financial aid procedures ⁺	4.26	3.92	4.22	4.14	4.52	4.64	4.59	-1.09%	ND
Factor 8 - Course Improved Knowledge of Academic Services	4.99	5.00	5.11	5.01	5.39	5.38	5.36	-0.37%	ND
29 The role of the academic advisor	5.06	4.87	4.95	5.08	5.37	5.36	5.36	0.00%	ND
30 How to obtain academic assistance	5.00	4.96	5.17	5.04	5.37	5.34	5.35	0.19%	ND
31 How to obtain a tutor	4.80	4.89	5.02	4.85	5.25	5.22	5.13	-1.75%	ND
32 Available library resources	5.00	5.32	5.29	5.08	5.58	5.60	5.61	0.18%	ND

APPENDIX E (Continued)

Question by Factor Area:	02F	03F	04F	05F	06F	07F	08F	% Chng 07-08	Statist. Signif
Factor 9 - Course Improved Managing Time and Priorities	4.20	4.14	4.19	4.19	4.57	4.52	4.62	2.16%	ND
37 The Impact of Establishing Personal Goals	4.69	4.74	4.80	4.86	5.10	5.07	5.37	5.59%	**
49 Preparation for tests well in advance	3.82	3.92	3.76	3.75	4.20	4.13	4.12	-0.24%	ND
50 Establishing an effective study schedule	3.92	3.85	3.87	3.86	4.31	4.23	4.30	1.63%	ND
51 Setting priorities to accomplish what is most important	4.22	4.18	4.19	4.23	4.57	4.56	4.59	0.65%	ND
52 Organizing time to meet responsibilities	4.24	4.19	4.27	4.23	4.65	4.60	4.70	2.13%	ND
Factor 10 - Course Improved Knowledge of Wellness	4.00	4.05	4.20	4.09	4.35	4.42	4.52	2.21%	ND
12 Ability to deal with stress ⁺	3.90	3.84	3.94	3.88	4.22	4.27	4.21	-1.43%	ND
33 College students' sexual issues	3.77	3.82	3.96	4.09	4.00	4.24	4.45	4.72%	ND
34 The impact of alcohol consumption	4.27	4.46	4.59	4.39	4.73	4.71	4.77	1.26%	ND
35 The impact of drug use ⁺	4.11	4.17	4.32	4.21	4.46	4.55	4.63	1.73%	ND
36 The impact of exercising regularly ⁺	3.82	3.94	4.10	3.94	4.33	4.37	4.54	3.74%	ND
Factor 15 - Overall Course Effectiveness	4.24	4.04	4.17	4.21	4.57	4.51	4.49	-0.45%	ND
65 Included Interesting Subject matter	4.29	4.18	4.23	4.32	4.62	4.55	4.52	-0.66%	ND
66 contributed to the ability to succeed academically	4.26	4.05	4.20	4.19	4.58	4.54	4.50	-0.89%	ND
67 contributed to the ability to adjust to the college social environment	4.41	4.19	4.37	4.43	4.73	4.72	4.76	0.84%	ND
68 covered topics important to student	4.28	4.13	4.19	4.21	4.54	4.55	4.40	-3.41%	ND
69 student would recommend this course to other first-year students	3.92	3.66	3.84	3.91	4.36	4.18	4.23	1.18%	ND
Factor 14 - Course Included Engaging Pedagogy	4.21	4.13	4.11	4.29	4.57	4.48	4.56	1.75%	ND
38 included a variety of teaching methods	4.25	4.22	4.29	4.35	4.55	4.56	4.73	3.59%	ND
39 included meaningful class discussions	4.61	4.52	4.49	4.71	4.98	4.88	5.07	3.75%	*
40 included challenging assignments	3.52	3.40	3.34	3.46	3.78	3.71	3.69	-0.54%	ND
41 productive use of classroom time	4.35	4.33	4.30	4.48	4.81	4.67	4.73	1.27%	ND
42 included encouragement to speak in class	4.61	4.60	4.48	4.76	5.00	4.92	5.01	1.80%	*
43 included encouragement for students to work together	4.44	4.42	4.34	4.61	4.83	4.69	4.89	4.09%	ND
44 included meaningful homework	3.79	3.69	3.63	3.91	4.23	4.14	4.11	-0.73%	ND
48 increased participation in classroom discussions	3.95	3.76	3.84	3.97	4.33	4.28	4.29	0.23%	ND

⁺not included in the FSUS course objectives

NOTE: A T-Test was performed between 2008 and 2007 to determine if the differences in means are statistical.

***denotes p < .001, ** denotes p < .01, * denotes p < .05

APPENDIX F

2009 Student Comments Grouped By FSUS Objective

#	Objective (abbreviated)	Most Helpful		Least Helpful		Additional Topics	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1&2	Campus Resources / Services / Library	73	17.9%	17	4.2%	16	3.9%
	Library (included above)	40	9.8%*	12*	2.9%*		
7	Registration / Advisor / Scheduling Information	60	14.7%	3	0.7%	15	3.7%
8	Active Participation – learning about/attending campus activities	29	7.1%	6	1.5%	20	4.9%
4	Time Management	24	5.9%	13	3.2%	4	1.0%
5	Study Skills Info	25	6.1%	8	2.0%	18	4.4%
m/g	Instructor	16	3.9%	-	-	-	-
m/g	Helped adapt to college / college life	11	2.7%	2	0.5%	5	1.2%
3	Wellness – alcohol, sexual responsibility	9	2.2%	20	4.9%	5	1.2%
10	History of FSU	7	1.7%	2	0.5%	5	1.2%
6	Diversity	9	2.2%	8	2.0%	1	0.2%
	Homework/ Assignments / Activities	32	7.8%	72	17.6%	16	3.9%
	writing/journals			22	5.4%*		
	Major/college Specific Information	21	5.1%	1	0.2%	11	2.7%
	Career Information	-	-	8	2.0%	14	3.4%
	Seminars / Guest Speakers	33	8.1%	31	7.6%	3	0.7%
	No response	373	26.3%	95	23.3%	222	54.4%
	Positive - general (not included above) course good as is / all helpful	12	2.9%	17	4.2%	30	7.4%
	Negative comments – “nothing helpful”	12	2.9%	8	2.0%	-	-
	Negative - general (not included above)	-	-	8	2.0%	9	2.2%

Percentages are based on the total number of students who responded to the institutional specific questions distributed with the FYI survey N = 408

APPENDIX G:

**First-Year Initiative (FYI) Survey
Comparison of Factor Means by Population – Fall 2008
Shown as Percentages Above or Below the Institutional Mean**

Factor 1 Study Strategies				Factor 4 Connections w Faculty				Factor 6 Out of Class Engagement				Factor 7 Campus Policies			
	Mean	Inst Mn	% +/-		Mean	Inst Mn	% +/-		Mean	Inst Mean	% +/-		Mean	Inst Mean	% +/-
UNI	4.99	4.38	13.93%	UNI	5.22	4.79	8.98%	HNRS	4.81	4.27	12.65%	TEC	5.48	5.04	8.73%
TEC	4.57	4.38	4.34%	TEC	5.06	4.79	5.64%	EDU	4.79	4.27	12.18%	UNI	5.46	5.04	8.33%
AHS	4.55	4.38	3.88%	A&S	4.89	4.79	2.09%	UNI	4.65	4.27	8.90%	EDU	5.31	5.04	5.36%
A&S	4.48	4.38	2.28%	AHS	4.66	4.79	-2.71%	A&S	4.37	4.27	2.34%	AHS	5.15	5.04	2.18%
EDU	4.44	4.38	1.37%	EDU	4.66	4.79	-2.71%	TEC	4.03	4.27	-5.62%	A&S	4.95	5.04	-1.79%
BUS	4.01	4.38	-8.45%	BUS	4.56	4.79	-4.80%	BUS	3.97	4.27	-7.03%	BUS	4.57	5.04	-9.33%
HNRS	3.44	4.38	-21.46%	HNRS	4.29	4.79	-10.44%	AHS	3.67	4.27	-14.05%	HNRS	4.44	5.04	-11.90%

Factor 8 Academic Services				Factor 9 Time Mgt				Factor 10 Wellness				Factor 15 Overall Effectiveness			
	Mean	Inst Mn	% +/-		Mean	Inst Mn	% +/-		Mean	Inst Mean	% +/-		Mean	Inst Mean	% +/-
UNI	5.87	5.36	9.51%	UNI	5.08	4.62	9.96%	A&S	5.02	4.52	11.06%	EDU	5.01	4.49	11.58%
EDU	5.74	5.36	7.09%	EDU	4.82	4.62	4.33%	TEC	4.71	4.52	4.20%	UNI	4.91	4.49	9.35%
TEC	5.71	5.36	6.53%	A&S	4.79	4.62	3.68%	EDU	4.68	4.52	3.54%	HNRS	4.80	4.49	6.90%
A&S	5.50	5.36	2.61%	TEC	4.76	4.62	3.03%	UNI	4.68	4.52	3.54%	A&S	4.49	4.49	0.00%
AHS	5.06	5.36	-5.60%	AHS	4.47	4.62	-3.25%	AHS	4.36	4.52	-3.54%	TEC	4.33	4.49	-3.56%
HNRS	5.04	5.36	-5.97%	BUS	4.34	4.62	-6.06%	BUS	4.26	4.52	-5.75%	BUS	4.26	4.49	-5.12%
BUS	4.86	5.36	-9.33%	HNRS	4.07	4.62	-11.90%	HNRS	3.91	4.52	-13.50%	AHS	4.08	4.49	-9.13%

Note: Mean scores for the Honors student population is included in this chart for informational purposes but is not considered as an FSU college for comparative purposes.

APPENDIX H: Demographic Comparison of FYI Survey Respondents, Fall 2008

Demographic Category	Ferris State University	Aggregate Survey Population
% Males responding to survey	47%	43%
ACT score 21 or below; SAT 890-970 or below	48%	20%
% Minorities responding to survey	17%	25%
Age - students 18-21 years of age	98%	97%
High school grades = mostly A or A-B range	60%	70%
Campus Sponsored Events = 4 activities or more	34%	20%
Study = average of 1-5 hours per week spent studying	32%	31%
Work = student who do not work	70%	62%
Living in Campus residence hall	82%	66%
Non-Commuters	77%	66%
Frequency of Home Visits = about every other weekend & every/most weekends	31%	21%
Frequency of Alcohol consumption per week = twice a week or more	25%	27%
Amount of Alcohol consumed per event = 5 drinks or more	30%	30%

Table 1: Notable demographic comparisons between Ferris State University students and the aggregate FYI study population.

APPENDIX I: Longitudinal Comparison of Reported Alcohol Usage by First-Year Students

Frequency of Alcohol consumption per week = twice a week or more	03F	04F	05F	06F	07F	08F
Ferris State University	34%	31%	32%	34%	31%	25%
Aggregate Survey Population	27%	29%	30%	27%	28%	27%

Amount of Alcohol consumed per event = 5 drinks or more	03F	04F	05F	06F	07F	08F
Ferris State University	43%	41%	40%	39%	37%	30%
Aggregate Survey Population	33%	35%	35%	30%	33%	30%