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Biographical Sketch

John N. Gardner is currently Executive Director of the Policy Center on the First Year of College (a center he founded in 1999) and Distinguished Professor of Educational Leadership at Brevard College. From 1986 to 1999 Gardner was Executive Director of the National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition, which he founded at the University of South Carolina and in which he is now a Senior Fellow. At USC he served in various faculty and administrative positions from 1967 to the present, including Distinguished Professor of Library and Information Science. He was on the faculty of Winthrop College from 1968 to 1970. Gardner is best known for his pioneering, influential work on what he calls "the freshman experience." The topic has assumed great importance as access to higher education has expanded and as students with mixed academic preparation, many of whom are first-generation and many minority students, transition into colleges and universities. Gardner received his B.A. in Social Sciences from Marietta College in 1965 and his M.A. in American Studies from Purdue University in 1966. He has received seven Honorary Doctorates and numerous awards for his influential work on the first year experience. He has served on numerous boards, including the Board of Directors for AAHE and advisory boards for ACE and AAC&U. In 1998 he was named as one of the "top ten professionals who have most influenced student affairs practitioners." Also in 1998, a study in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* named him as one of eighty "past, present, and future leaders of higher education" and as one of eleven "agenda-setters." Gardner has been a consultant to more than 400 colleges and universities in six nations. He is the author of numerous monographs, textbooks, and articles.

INFORMATION PACKET FOR

JOHN GARDNER

Introductory Comments

by Brian L. Foster
May 28, 2002

The attached information packet is submitted in support of my nomination of John Gardner for the Brock International Prize in Education. In this brief essay, I would like to lay out the rationale for the nomination, particularly the importance of what John Gardner has done. The attached materials provide detailed information on John's accomplishments.

It seems to me that the most important observation that can be made about higher education today is that it serves an altogether different population than it was designed to serve. Several years ago I was deeply struck by a conversation I had with Dan Fallon, a past provost at the University of Maryland and now head of the Education Programs at the Carnegie Corporation. Dan argued that at least some post-secondary education is now a reality for a majority of Americans, and higher education is becoming an entitlement, much as did secondary education early in the twentieth century.

The implications of Dan's observation are profound. No longer can higher education be conceived as the road to leadership in our society; it is increasingly the prerequisite for a good life. We have seen dramatic credential inflation with, for example, numerous retail positions that formerly required at most secondary education now requiring a degree—or, if not requiring a degree, recognizing a strong competitive advantage for applicants who do have degrees over those who don't. The credential inflation is seen over the entire spectrum of higher education, including masters and doctoral levels. More than ten years ago, a study of "professional masters degrees" identified more than 600 distinct professional masters degrees—not majors, but distinct degrees—including such unlikely areas as a Master of Physical Education and a Master of Applied Anthropology. The Ph.D. also has been impacted in important ways, even to the extent that in many disciplines it has become an intermediate degree much like the master's degree was a few decades ago; the real terminal credential in such fields is now a "good" post-doctoral experience. This difference has now fed back on the nature of Ph.D. training; for example, about fifteen years ago, a study of the dissertation by the Council of Graduate Schools showed no agreement at leading graduate schools that the dissertation should be an original contribution to knowledge.

It is important to keep our attention on the implications of these facts for the way higher education is delivered today and, at least as important, for the ways we prepare secondary students for higher education. Our higher education system was designed

a good sense of what “college” is all about. They are taught by a faculty that was prepared to work with the well-off white guys—a faculty who generally teach the way they were taught. Since World War II, preparation of faculty has been done almost entirely in research universities, where graduate students are socialized to see research as the highest career for which an academic can aspire. Indeed, graduate students are generally given to understand that virtually anything else one might do is a failure. In research universities themselves, teaching often is a stigmatized activity afflicted on those who are not “research active.” This is a remarkable way to prepare faculty at a time when approximately 95% of faculty positions in post-secondary education are not in research universities. The two-year sector has grown greatly; one of the pieces in your packet indicates that over 50% of students in post-secondary education begin in community colleges. The for-profit sector is growing. Many undergraduate students work more than 30 hours per week and/or have families, significant elder care responsibilities, and so on. A very large number are first-generation students.

It would be hard to overestimate the importance of the large number of first-generation students. I say this having been a first-generation student myself. In general, such students have little or no understanding of what it means to go to college. We in higher education tend not to be of much help. When we talk to them and their parents, we tend to talk past them in a language that might as well be Greek. Many don’t know what a degree is, a major, general education, credit hours, and so on. Many know little or nothing about how students register or how they put their programs together. They have little sense that there is more to a good college education than going to class and maybe doing “home work.” Often their orientation is entirely vocational. I remember a presentation by a Utah legislator some years ago when I was a graduate dean. He said to the audience of graduate deans that they disastrously overestimated how much his constituents know about higher education. For instance, he said, most think graduate education is remedial, since most students complete college in four years, and graduate students take longer!

One final point about this population: many students are minority students, with significantly different cultural traditions than those well-off white students for whom our system was invented. It is hard enough for white, Midwestern, first-generation students like me to understand the context of “going to college.” Imagine not knowing much about college—and, not having aspirations that include high incomes, prestige professions, living in fancy neighborhoods. Imagine coming from a community in which life gets its meaning from human relationships, from community and family, from church. From this perspective imagine sending a child off to college, knowing that the experience will change him or her dramatically, may lead to the child’s leaving the community permanently, living far away with few opportunities to come home, and living in a place and a way that precludes exercising family and community responsibilities. For such students and their families, the university is not a place of opportunity and promise so much as a place that destroys families and communities. In fact we have a system that pretty much requires, say, Hispanic students to become Gringos to succeed.

The point of all of this is, of course, that we are facing a very different kind of college student population than the one the system was invented for. It is in this environment that I find John Gardner's work to be not just important, but essential for the future success of higher education. John's and others' research indicates that these "new" students' success depends on the way they transition from secondary school into college or university studies. John calls this the "freshman experience." I like to think of this experience as a very pale imitation of the kind of preparation—call it "privilege"—that the well-off, northeastern, white students had naturally. It's a running start on going to college—on appropriate aspirations, on how to prepare academically, how to study, how to pay for higher education. The Gardner kind of freshman year is a leveling period; it evens the playing field, giving students some of the tools that others were born and raised with. In all of these and many other areas, John has not just thought about and advocated measures for student success. His programs have shown dramatic achievements in engaging faculty and administrators in rethinking this all-important transition.

From this perspective, the materials in the information packet speak for themselves, giving detailed information on the astonishing number of students, faculty, and administrators who have been impacted by John Gardner's programs. The contents of the packet are as follows.

1. A brief bio on John Gardner.
2. A very recent article published by the Association of Governing Boards and sent to some 35,000 trustees; the title is "Focusing on the First-Year Student."
3. An article from a monograph entitled The Community College: Opportunity and Access for America's First Year Students, Joseph N. Hankin, editor, National Resource Center, Columbia, 1996. The article is entitled "The Freshman Experience: A Philosophy for Higher Education in the New Millennium."
4. A short piece about first-generation students, from About Campus, 1996. The title is "Helping America's First-Generation College Students."
5. An article on a newer initiative of John Gardner's, on the senior year experience. This is a 1999 article from About Campus, entitled "The Senior Year Experience."
6. A short piece on John Gardner's educational philosophy, written in 2001.
7. A short piece in which John expresses his sentiments looking back over his highly successful career. In 1999 John Gardner "retired" from the University of South Carolina, becoming immediately a Senior Fellow in the National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition, which he founded in 1986.

8. A short list of “Empirical Measures of the Impact of the Work of John N. Gardner”, along with a list of the more than 100 conferences on his work. I asked John to prepare a concise summary of outcomes to give a sense of the impact of his work.
9. Finally, a copy of John Gardner’s Curriculum Vitae is attached.

NOMINATION FOR BROCK AWARD

John W. Gardner
Center for the First Year Experience

Perhaps the most compelling fact about K-16 education today is the dramatic increase in the proportion of the total population that has at least some post-secondary education. Higher education is rapidly becoming an entitlement, a change that entails changes in credentialing, in admissions practice, in thinking about student success. It is also bringing into our colleges and universities a very large proportion of first-generation students--students from populations with little experience in higher education.

The transition from secondary to postsecondary education has become critically important as this new era of entitlement is realized. Students who are economically disadvantaged, are first generation students, are from cultures that do not adapt easily to American higher education, and who have highly variable academic preparation are now coming together in our freshman classes. John Gardner has focused the attention of higher education on the freshman experience—on its importance for academic success and on how colleges and universities can provide a productive freshman experience.

The Center for the Freshman Experience, founded by John Gardner, has produced an impressive array of influential conferences, monographs, newsletters, and other resources for people in higher education. Gardner has been honored in many ways and many times for these important contributions. He is a strong candidate for the Brock prize for work that has brought fundamental changes to thinking about the transition from secondary to higher education, a critical topic in today's environment.



*Biographical
Sketch
John N. Gardner*

John N. Gardner, 55, is Senior Fellow of the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition and Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Library and Information Science. Retired after 32 1/2 years of service to the people of South Carolina, effective July 1, 1999, John has been and is an educator, university professor, and administrator, author, editor, public speaker, consultant, change agent, student retention specialist, freshman advocate, initiator, and scholar of the American freshman and senior year reform movements; he resides in Lexington, South Carolina.

John Gardner previously served as Executive Director of University 101, the nationally acclaimed and widely replicated freshman seminar program and the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. University 101 was initiated in 1972 and was directed by Gardner from 1974-1999. The center, founded by Gardner in 1986, organizes the popular and influential Conferences on The Freshman Year Experience, Students in Transition, and also disseminates information through an extensive series of scholarly publications, videos, national and international conferences, workshops, seminars, and teleconferences.

Gardner began his faculty career at USC Columbia in 1970 and taught courses in American and South Carolina history, interpersonal communications for librarians, public speaking, higher education administration, and other special topics. He regularly taught the freshman seminar, University 101, and a graduate course he developed for the College of Education on "The Freshman Year Experience." Most recently, he developed and taught University 401, Senior Capstone Experience (as a sequel to University 101, only for departing students).

Gardner is the recipient of numerous local and national professional awards including USC's highest award for teaching excellence, the AMOCO Award for Outstanding Teaching (1975), and the Division of Student Affairs Faculty Award "for outstanding contributions..." (1976). The University of South Carolina Alumni Association conferred upon him its highest award for a non-alum, the "Honorary Life Membership," for "devoted service in behalf of the University" in 1997. He was also named the 1998 recipient of the University's Administrative Affirmative Action Award "for an outstanding job in promoting equal opportunities at the University." In 1999, the University of South Carolina's Department of Housing established the John N. Gardner Inspirational Faculty Award in order to "acknowledge contributions to enhance living and learning communities at the University of South Carolina."

Gardner is the recipient of four honorary doctoral degrees recognizing him for his contributions to American higher education (from his alma mater, Marietta College, 1985, Baldwin-Wallace College, 1990, Bridgewater State College, 1991, and Millikin University, 1999). In 1986 he was selected by the American Association for Higher Education as one of 20 faculty in the U. S. who "...have made outstanding leadership contributions to their institutions and/or American higher education." In 1996 he was recognized by the Council on Independent Colleges with its Academic Leadership Award "for exemplary contributions to American higher education."

He has served on the Board of Directors for AAHE and currently serves on boards of trustees for Marietta College and the International Partnership for Service Learning. In addition he currently serves on the College Advisory Board for special projects of *The New York Times*. He also has prior service on special advisory boards for the American Council on Education, and the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Gardner's work has been favorably reviewed in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The New York Times*, *The Times of London*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Money Magazine*, and numerous other publications.

In the January 1998 issue of *Change*, Gardner was cited in an article naming approximately 80 people as the "past, present, and future leaders of higher education." The authors of this study drew on the results of 11,000 questionnaires to name the leaders whom *The Chronicle of Higher Education* dubbed "the moves and shakers." Gardner was included in a special category of eleven so called "agenda-setters."

Also, in 1998 Gardner was named as one of the "top ten professionals who have most influenced student affairs practitioners." This was based on a random sample of practitioners throughout the country as part of a study entitled "The Professional Influence Project" sponsored by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Foundation and conducted by the University of Georgia.

Gardner is best known as the initiator (in 1982) of an international reform movement in higher education to call attention to and improve what he has coined "The Freshman Year Experience." Moreover, since 1990 he has developed a special focus on a second critical transition during the college years to improve and champion: "The Senior Year Experience." In 1995, he renamed the center he founded at USC to the National Center for The First-Year Experience and *Students in Transition*, to signify a broader and more generic focus on the need for institutions to focus more intentionally on "students in transition."

Gardner's special area of expertise in higher education is the creation of programs to enhance the learning, success, retention, and graduation of students in transition, especially first-year students for example through first-year seminar courses. He has served as a workshop leader or trainer in hundreds of faculty development events and has spoken on/consulted with approximately 400 campuses in the U. S., Puerto Rico, Canada, United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Denmark, and Norway on issues related to first year and senior students.

Gardner has authored/co-authored numerous articles and books including: *College is Only the Beginning* (1985 and 1989); *Step by Step to College Success* (1987); *Your College Experience* (1992, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2000, and 2001 in press) with A. Jerome Jewler; with M. Lee Upcraft, *The Freshman Year Experience* (1989); *Ready for The Real World* (1994) with William Hartel and Associates; and *The Senior Year Experience* (1997) with Gretchen Van der Veer.

In his new capacity with the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition since July 1, 1999, as Senior Fellow, John will continue to provide advice, counsel, and intellectual leadership and vision as called upon by his cherished colleagues at the center. He will be actively involved in hosting and presenting at center conferences, seminars, workshops, and teleconferences. He will also be actively involved, as always, in the center's scholarship and research activities as in our monograph series and our new national survey research on the status of senior capstone courses. One of the last innovations he contributed to the University of South Carolina before his retirement was the creation of University 401, Senior Capstone Experience seminar, to which he will continue to contribute by helping faculty develop their new seminar content. From his new home in Brevard, North Carolina, he will continue his national crusades on behalf of the first and senior year experiences and work collaboratively on joint projects with the center.

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AGB **P**riorities

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ A membership service of the Association of Governing Boards to help trustees and chief executives identify and address strategic policy issues.

Focusing on the First-Year Student

BY JOHN N. GARDNER
WITH MICHAEL J. SIEGEL
AND MARC CUTRIGHT



THE FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE is one of life's most crucial and memorable transitions. The degree to which students achieve success navigating this watershed year exerts an enormous influence on their academic progress, career pursuits, and social endeavors. What happens to first-year students on campus also directly affects an institution's fiscal vitality and its ability to achieve its primary academic mission.

The well-being of first-year students directly affects your institution's ability to achieve its academic mission and maintain fiscal vitality.

Yet rarely do boards of trustees commit significant time, energy, or interest to systematically investigating how the first year is designed and implemented—and to what ends—on their campuses. This seeming indifference persists despite the fact that nearly half of the 90 percent of freshmen who say they expect to graduate from college emerge from high school without having taken the college preparatory courses most likely to enable them to do so, according to a recent report by the National Commission on the High School Senior Year.

As a trustee of Marietta College in Ohio (where, by the way, I had a miserable first year), I am aware of the myriad issues that compete for trustee attention: recruiting top faculty; maintaining competitive sports programs, facilities, and student services; and raising funds to help the institution keep pace with changes in technology, to name a few. But among all these "first priorities," the inaugural experience of our students merits particular scrutiny and attention.

This issue of *Priorities* will explain why. It examines the problems and issues that affect the first year and reviews current institutional efforts to enhance the learning and retention of first-year students. It also offers a set of suggestions for trustees who seek greater understanding and more active engagement in campus decisions relating to the first year. At its core,

John N. Gardner is distinguished professor emeritus of library and information science and senior fellow of the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition at the University of South Carolina. He also is executive director of the Policy Center on the First Year of College, hosted by Brevard College and supported by the Atlantic Philanthropies and the Pew Charitable Trusts. Michael J. Siegel and Marc Cutright are research associates with the policy center.

Boards should understand how their institution organizes and delivers new student orientation, whether attendance is required, whether it includes an introduction to academic life, or whether it is merely “fun and games.”

this report grows out of my belief that our efforts as trustees and educators to foster, promote, and support communication about the first year of college must be purposeful and powerful.

My views are based on 32 years of frontline experience as a faculty member and on my work since 1981 as the leader of a national and international reform movement to improve the first-year experience. I have visited hundreds of campuses and convened thousands of college and university educators at major conferences to consider how best to design and deliver a range of academic experiences that might result in first-year student achievement, retention, satisfaction, and ultimately, graduation. The creativity and commitment of these educators are extraordinary, and we are making progress. Yet much remains to be done.

Exploring First-Year Problems. Although the freshman year is the baptism by fire in the undergraduate experience, it historically has commanded little in the way of respect, focus, or significant resources from higher education officials. Theodore J. Marchese, the managing director of the Academic Search Consultation Service who is a trustee at Eckerd College in Florida, speaks of an implicit bargain some institutions used to strike with first-year students: “Don’t expect too much of us, and we won’t expect too much of you.” Typically, no single individual or office was really “in charge” of the first year. Rather, ownership and responsibility, if present at all, were diffuse and difficult to identify.

Beginning in the mid-’80s, a number of concerns converged and brought about a greater willingness on the part of colleges and universities to assume responsibility for first-year

student learning and retention. By 1995, according to an American Council on Education survey, 82 percent of responding institutions reported a significant focus on the first-year experience, more than double the percentage reported eight years earlier.

Chief among the concerns driving first-year initiatives is the alarming attrition rate between the first and second years. Although the aggregate number of potential students currently is on the upswing, first-to-second-year attrition according to American College Testing (ACT) still hovers at 28 percent for public four-year schools and 25 percent at private four-year schools (and up to 50 percent at open-admissions institutions). This can create severe fiscal difficulties for institutions that rely primarily on tuition revenues.

Another hot-button issue surrounding the first year that has aroused widespread public criticism is the quality of undergraduate education generally and first-year education in particular. Complicating the equation is the increasing influx of college students for whom higher education was never expressly designed—among others, students whose second language is English, adult students who work, and students with learning and physical disabilities. (For more information on the range of experiences that shape undergraduate life, read “Understanding Today’s Students in a Changed World,” by Charles C. Schroeder, *Priorities* No. 15, Fall 2000.)

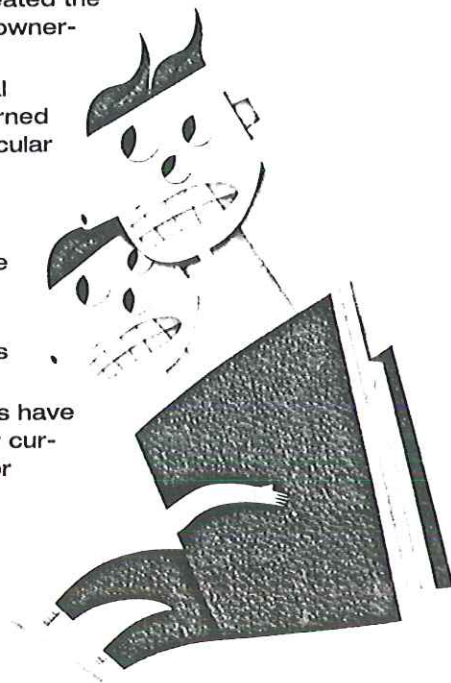
When I went to college in the early 1960s, the typical first-year student was 18 years old, enrolled full-time, lived in a dorm, did not work at a job off campus, and was supported financially by his or her parents. Those days are gone and demographically speaking, our student will continue to change. A large segment of the

Taking First-Year Efforts To the Next Level



Once a first-year program is in place, trustees should participate in evaluating progress. Here are some questions to pose a year or two into the program:

- Have campus administrators and academic leaders been able to reallocate resources, particularly money, to support first-year initiatives?
- Is there evidence of durability and consistency? Is there a reasonable track record to suggest commitment, or have these been "flash in the pan" efforts?
- Has the commitment to first-year success permeated the institution's culture and functions? Have faculty taken ownership of these issues?
- Has the campus been recognized by professional groups for its efforts? Have the first-year initiatives earned external financial support? Is there evidence that particular programs are considered "best practices" by other colleges or universities? Have these practices been emulated elsewhere?
- Has the campus gathered information to evaluate programs and used that information, on a continuous cycle, to improve efforts and raise goals?
- Have regional or disciplinary accrediting agencies taken positive note of the campus's efforts?
- Is there evidence that programs for new students have influenced innovations in other areas, such as broader curriculum revisions or creation of a transition program for seniors?



public believes high school students are inadequately prepared for postsecondary education, and many faculty and administrators believe too many high school students begin coasting academically once their plans for college are in place. Despite these concerns, there are few truly effective partnerships between colleges and high schools that address the issue of college preparation and effectively link high school and college courses.

Why Is the First Year Important? As educators have focused more intentionally on the various problems related to the freshman year, we have increasingly realized that students' experiences during this critical period lay the foundation, for better or worse, for the rest of

their college lives. As Frank Borkowski, chancellor of Appalachian State University, observes, "Our campus efforts to enhance the total commitment to our learning environment all start with freshmen."

The first months, weeks, and even days on campus are the time when students will make decisions about whether they seriously wish to pursue higher education and whether a particular college or university is the best place for them. During this period, they will experience increased personal independence, and they will form study habits and educational commitments

Case Study

Kennesaw State University— Building a Culture of Student Success

Just off the interstate along the corridor that separates Chattanooga, Tenn., and Atlanta lies Kennesaw State University. Chartered in 1963 by the University System of Georgia, Kennesaw State started as a junior college but has grown steadily into a master's-level institution. President Betty L. Siegel, now in her 20th year and the senior president in the state system, says: "I feel like I have been president of four different institutions. The institution has changed in name as well as function over the years, from Kennesaw Junior College to Kennesaw College to Kennesaw State College, and now Kennesaw State University. There is a great sense of renewal here."

In the midst of this change, and with an unprecedented

enrollment increase—1,219 percent from 1966-2000—one thing has remained constant: the institution's fundamental commitment to student success.

Kennesaw State launched the "Freshman Year Experience" program 18 years ago, the cornerstone of which is the Freshman Seminar course. The course is so popular that some 80 percent of entering students voluntarily register for it. This elective is taught by faculty from various disciplines, staff, and administrators and is worth three credits. Designed to introduce students to the available resources and programs of the university, it focuses on time management, career decisions, and developing interpersonal relationships with students and faculty.

The newest aspect of the pro-

gram, and one that helped garner the institution a "notable mention" in the September 2001 *Time* magazine "Colleges of the Year" listing, is the Communities for Learning Success. The communities are cohorts of 25 entering students who take a freshman seminar course concurrently with a freshman composition course and one other general education course.

Board chair Michael Coles, the founder of the Great American Cookie Co. and the person for whom Kennesaw's business school is named, describes the work of the college as "entrepreneurial." Coles explains that the Freshman Year Experience program has improved and expanded over the years to reflect changes in student demographics and in the campus itself. "The

that will persist through their college careers.

Students will have their first encounters with faculty and will form judgments about their capabilities, interests, sensitivities, and accessibility. They will make tentative decisions about an academic major—decisions that either may contribute to their success and intellectual involvement or that are unrealistic and unachievable—and many will change their major more than once.

During their first terms of college, students select friends and informal role models. These choices are among the most important young people make during their college experience, and their decisions will directly affect their success and satisfaction, as well as your institution's ability to keep them enrolled. They make choices about group affiliation, participation in sports, and use or abuse of alcohol and drugs. Traditional-age students also are most likely to explore romantic relationships and redefine their relations within their families.

Adult students face a different list of academic and personal issues. Although adults often are more motivated than 18-year-olds, they often underestimate their academic abilities and approach first-year classes with anxiety. Most adults also are juggling family and work responsibilities and face high levels of personal stress and potential conflict with employers, spouses, or partners.

In a nutshell, the first year for nearly all students is a significant transition to a new phase of life. But a central philosophical debate swirls around the issue of responsibility: Who has primary responsibility for student engagement and success—students themselves or the institutions in which they are enrolled? A recent study by the National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education found that the public believes that while high schools are primarily responsible for ensuring their students are learning, the students themselves bear primarily responsibility for their success by the time they enroll in college, often a

program exists for the purpose of retention, but it goes beyond that," he says. "There is a larger mission to enhance student success. There is committed presidential leadership and great energy among the faculty. This doesn't happen by accident."

As a testament to her commitment to student success, President Siegel changed the title of the chief student-affairs officer five years ago to "vice president for student success." For its attention to students, Kennesaw has become, as Coles puts it, "the model university for best practices—not just in the state, but nationally."

Coles describes his governing body as "an active board that does not live apart from the school. The trustees don't want to live in a vacuum." To stay in

touch with the students' perspectives, board members periodically invite student leaders to talk. Coles also spends a great deal of time speaking with student groups on campus, routinely telling them: "Stay in school! This is a great place. Don't let outside forces take away from what you need to be doing as a student. Be the best you can be in what you do."

Historically a commuter campus, Kennesaw State soon will build its first residence halls, which once again will change the campus culture for entering students. Coles and Siegel say the campus is excited about the new dimension the residence halls will add to student life. After all, as Coles says, "The school belongs to the students."



mere three months out of high school.

This attitude is consistent with the long-held notion of "academic Darwinism"—that only the fittest students survive and flourish, and the weakest fall by the wayside. Such beliefs, in effect, have relieved institutions of significant responsibility for student success. And in spite of more contemporary concerns about student attrition, this attitude persists among many college faculty, administrators, and trustees.

Trustees cannot afford to subscribe to a "survival of the fittest" philosophy for higher education. For the sake of the educational imperative in democracy, for the students themselves, and for the survival and growth of our institutions, we must find ways to support today's students as they pursue their educational aspirations and the American dream.

Lily Roland Hall, a trustee emeritus of the University of South Carolina, warns that we cannot leave the success or failure of first-year students to chance. "During my 16 years of

trustee service at an institution noted for its commitment to freshmen," she says, "I realized that from a business point of view—not just from our caring and humanitarian view—we spend so much on recruiting them, that we should do everything we can to keep them."

It is not in society's interest to educate only the "cream of the crop." And the evidence is clear that resources invested in the success of first-year students yield positive results.

Current Efforts at Improvement. "We don't have just one isolated 'freshman-year thing,'" says Appalachian State Chancellor Borkowski. "We integrate a multiplicity of freshman-year programmatic efforts into the total fabric of the institution."

A growing body of research suggests that for new students academic success, satisfaction, and retention are highly correlated with the following factors:

- high levels of academic preparation;

- commitment to the institution and to academic goals;
- involvement in the life of the campus;
- interaction with faculty (especially out of class) and other students; and
- high levels of academic engagement, "active learning."

These factors have become primary objectives for many current first-year initiatives and can be used as a sort of litmus test for new program development. Following is a review of some of the most effective interventions currently in use on many campuses across the country. Each supports one or more of the aforementioned success factors.

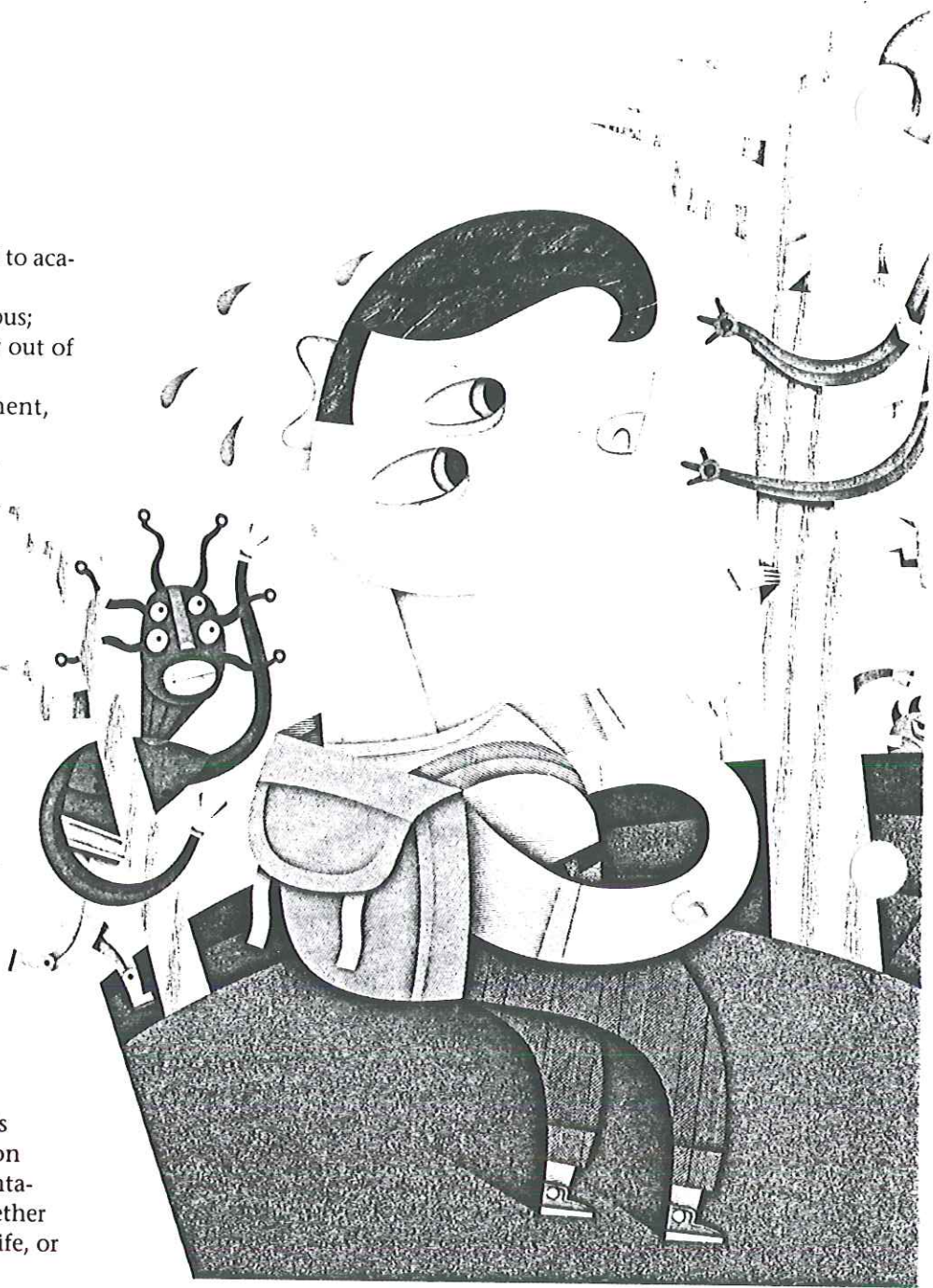
Orientation, advising, and residence life. The staples of the first year are orientation, advising (academic and personal), and residence life, all of which play a critical role in supporting a successful transition to the institution and to higher education in general. Unfortunately, these services often are on the periphery of institutional life. These functions either can be dynamic, responsive areas of the new-student experience or reasons for student dissatisfaction and departure. Boards should understand how their institution organizes and delivers new-student orientation, whether attendance is required, whether it includes an introduction to academic life, or whether it is merely "fun and games."

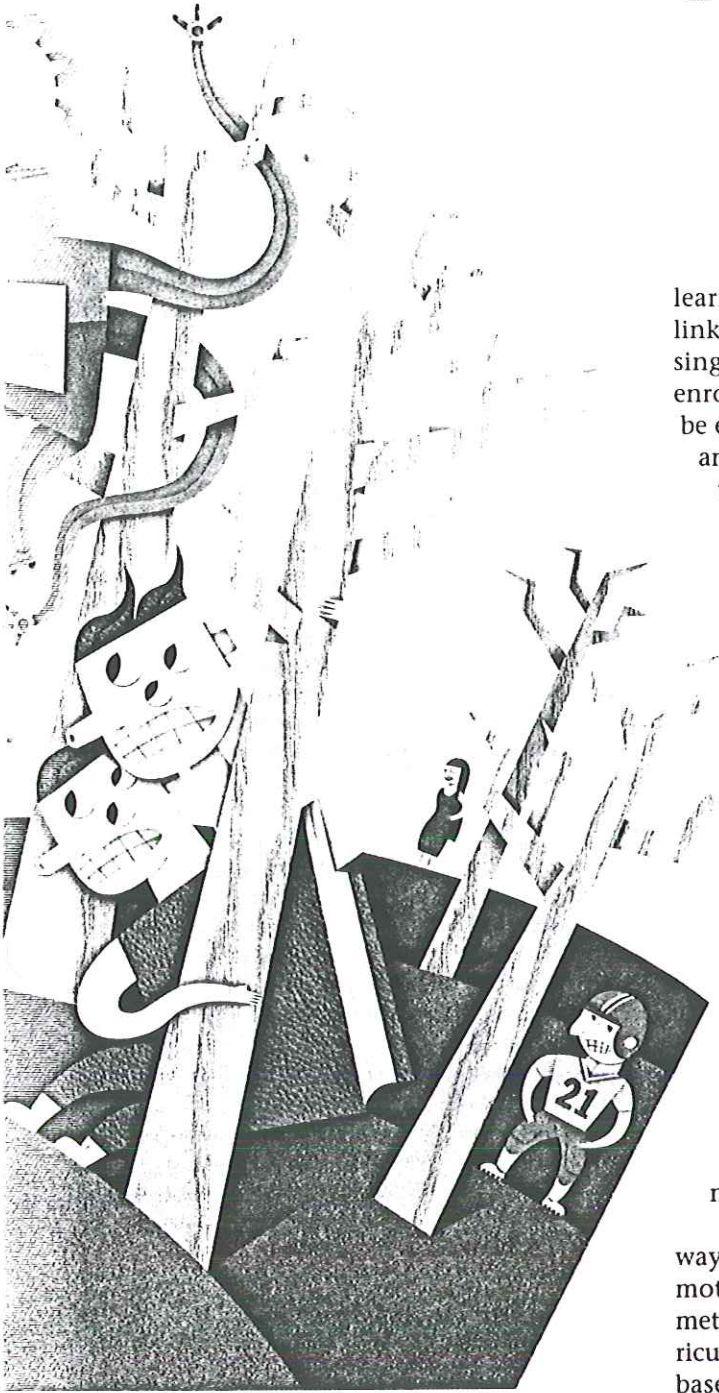
Including families in orientation activities is extremely important for boosting the comfort level of new students and building their future support of the college or university. Take a close look at advising and ascertain the extent to which advisers are trained, evaluated, and rewarded for their important work. And visit your campus's residence halls to become familiar with the living conditions and the student-life program. Would you want your children living there?

First-year seminars. First-year seminars are special courses designed to introduce students

to the collegiate experience and to teach them how to master it. They are considered on many campuses to be one of the primary agents of socialization and success for first-year students. Long known to significantly improve the retention and success of entering students, first-year seminars today are offered at more than 71 percent of U.S. colleges and universities.

The best programs involve outstanding faculty members, last a full academic term or longer, involve a very high percentage of first-





year students, and are challenging, credit-bearing, degree-applicable courses. Topics typically covered include effective study skills, time management, orientation to campus facilities, drug and alcohol awareness, dating, responsible sexual behavior, and the value of a diverse student and campus environment.

Learning communities. Of the current curricular structures designed to improve student-learning outcomes, one of the most promising is the concept of the “learning community.” A

learning community comprises thematically linked courses, in pairs or clusters, in which a single and usually small cohort of students is enrolled. Although learning communities can be employed during any year of college and at any institution, they may be especially important for first-year students on commuter campuses. By taking more than one class with a single group of students, commuting students are more likely to make friends and feel connected to the campus.

On residential campuses, learning communities may be coupled with planned residence-life experiences. This approach is based on the idea that students who live and learn together are likely to be more engaged by continuing conversations in their living environments that have begun in the classroom, and vice versa. The growth of learning communities has been an intentional effort to integrate both the academic and social experiences of students. Bottom line: First-year students who have been part of a learning community earn higher grades and are more likely to persist in college.

Service learning. Impressive efforts are under way at many colleges and universities to promote the civic engagement of students. One method of linking civic engagement to the curriculum is through “service learning”—course-based learning that is actively derived from a required contribution to community service. National research shows that many first-year students have a strong interest in community service, emanating from their previous experiences in church or high school. Service learning continues that pattern of civic engagement but also integrates it into the curriculum. Because service learning is inherently active, relevant, and experiential, it enlivens first-year courses, promotes interest in course material, and responds to many students’ preferences for “hands on” learning experiences.

But the service-learning component of a

Case Study

College of the Holy Cross— “How Then Shall We Live?”

“How then shall we live?”

That simple but profound question posed by Leo Tolstoy has for ten years been the framework for the First-Year Program at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass. Each year, participating faculty from diverse disciplines consider the question. For 2001-02, the more pointed query posed to the first-year class is this: “In the struggle for authenticity amid conformity, how then shall we live?”

The faculty leading the program, after deciding on a yearly theme, design eight discipline-specific courses around it. Six one-week units of the yearlong program are given over to reading and discussing books or sets of writings related to the year's question. Common readings for this year's theme, for example, will include *Night*, by Elie Wiesel; “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” by Martin Luther King; and the 1998 novel *The Intuitionist*, by Colson Whitehead.

The Holy Cross First-Year Program grew out of a sense—and the findings of formal reports from the campus—that students were not fully engaged in their educations, and that out-of-class social life centered on alcohol consumption. Some who offered comments suggested that the faculty were disengaged from students as well, a presumed

price of becoming a more research-oriented institution.

The First-Year Program was launched a decade ago as a five-year pilot to address these concerns. At the end of the pilot period, virtually every indicator of success—improved classroom performance, more campus leadership, more community service, higher retention and graduation rates, and so on—was in clear evidence, despite no discernible entry differences between First-Year Program students and those who did not elect to participate. The program has continued essentially in the format in which it was launched.

About 160 of Holy Cross's first-year students participate in the program each year, a number determined by a confluence of student interest, residence hall capacity (First-Year Program students live in the same residence hall), and the ability of faculty to staff the program and still maintain disciplinary offerings. Those 160 students are about one-quarter of the first-year class. About one-third of Holy Cross's 200 full-time faculty, both junior and senior, have participated in the program. They have helped students learn “good academic citizenship,” while occasionally teaching courses out of their disciplinary comfort ranges and “learning with the students,” says

David Damiano, a mathematician and this year's director. Select sophomore alumni of the program serve as peer facilitators.

In addition to the eight thematic seminars, the common readings, and the residential program, First-Year Program students attend a series of cocurricular events during the year—films, concerts, lectures, performances, and other events tied to the yearly theme and the common readings.

Holy Cross graduate and trustee Joe Donelan looked at the First-Year Program and saw benefits that he didn't receive as a student in the 1970s. “When I was at Holy Cross, the college was isolated from the city, and it was a loss for Worcester, for the students, and for the college,” he said.

To advance that connection, which is one of the service and involvement goals of the First-Year Program—Donelan recently donated \$1.2 million to the college to establish the Donelan Office for Community-Based Learning. Experiential, community-based learning will be combined with classroom learning to explore even more facets of the question, “How then shall we live?” And among the benefits of Donelan's gift will be strengthening that examination for the first year and beyond.

course—integrated as an academically rigorous requirement in the same manner as any term paper, assignment, or exam—must encourage the student to be reflective. Reflection promotes more active learning, ties classroom concepts to the practical realities of a service experience, and unites academic theory and everyday practice, all of which enhance civic engagement.

Service learning is established on the basis of reciprocity: The college and community give as well as receive, and both are teachers and learners. In the best and most effective forms of service learning, citizens of the community are included as teachers and evaluators. Service learning has positive effects on student engagement and helps instill a powerful sense of



Chief among the concerns driving first-year initiatives is the alarming attrition rate between the first and second years.

belonging to both campus and community. It is therefore an influential factor in raising an institution's first-year student-retention rate.

Academic support services. The recent growth in campus-based academic support services benefits not only students who need to improve basic skills, but also those who have strong academic abilities and want to be even more competitive for entry into graduate or professional schools. Essential support services include writing centers, math labs, technology-support programs, counseling (both academic and emotional), services for students with learning disabilities, career centers, and services for student athletes. Research shows that resources committed to providing these types of academic support yield higher student retention and greater academic achievement.

One special type of academic support is the "summer bridge" program, generally offered to at-risk students during the summer between high school and college. Many schools, including some elite institutions, offer such programs to provide a needed sense of community for participants and a head start on the challenging task of learning the academic requirements of a college or university.

Assessing students' skills, knowledge, and academic capacity is central to the effectiveness of academic support programs. Although baccalaureate-level higher education has witnessed a trend away from remedial or developmental courses (often for political reasons, and not necessarily sound academic ones), many institutions find these programs warrant continued institutional investment, and some embrace them as

part of their mission. Countless students who started in remedial or developmental courses ultimately are graduated from college and today lead highly productive and successful lives.

Recruiting upperclassmen. Research shows that the greatest influence on college students is their interaction with other students. Hence, many colleges are recruiting, selecting, training, and rewarding outstanding undergraduate student leaders to mentor and appropriately influence new students. These student leaders serve in various capacities, such as peer counselors, advisers, and course assistants, especially in first-year seminars.

One effective use of student leaders is in a program developed at the University of Missouri-Kansas City called Supplemental Instruction (SI). Now replicated by more than 700 institutions in the United States and abroad, SI focuses on improving academic success in courses that historically have a 30 percent or greater rate of Ds, Fs, or withdrawals. SI trains faculty who teach these difficult first-year "killer" courses to recruit and train student leaders to facilitate voluntary weekly supplemental classes. These courses provide students another opportunity for clarification and review of difficult concepts. Students who participate regularly in SI earn significantly higher grades than do nonparticipants.

Health education. Over the last two decades, many colleges and universities have focused attention and resources on serious health issues such as sexually transmitted diseases, sexual assault, eating disorders, and binge drinking. These problems can affect any student at any level; however, they seem to have a disproportionate effect on first-year students, many of whom are influenced by the overwhelming desire to fit in socially and gain approval from peers. This indulgence in newfound freedoms appears more common today than it was in the 1950s or early 1960s.

Concerns about excessive drinking, now higher education's foremost public-health problem, are moving trustees to action. For example, DePauw University trustee James W. Emison has taken the initiative to convene a national group of higher educators to take a fresh look

Trustees cannot afford to subscribe to a "survival of the fittest" philosophy for higher education.

at this challenge. Although these problems are not new in college and university settings, they have reached epidemic proportions, especially within the last years. Parents are increasingly holding institutions accountable for student behavior, and no trustee wants to face an anguished parent (or the parent's lawyer) who has suffered a child's preventable injury or death. Campuses need professionally staffed programs to address these issues.

Once again, upper level students also play an important role. While first-year students often tune out adults they perceive to be acting "in loco parentis," they are more likely to take seriously warnings from fellow students who can discuss the dangers of alcohol, sexual decisions, or eating patterns that threaten mental or physical health. Boards should ascertain the status

of such campus initiatives to determine how their institution's efforts compare with those of others.

Ask the Right Questions.

Trustees may find it difficult to know where to begin in examining their institution's commitment to improving the academic and social dimensions of the first-year experience. Although commitment to first-year student success is now universally endorsed and supported in concept, some higher education officials have difficulty articulating and defining the ingredients of effective programs and assigning front-line responsibility and bottom-line accountability.

Trustees can help bring more focus and attention to these issues. By monitoring certain areas and asking the right questions, board members will find a basis for discussion with

Case Study

University of South Carolina at Columbia— An Array of Transitional Programming

"I don't think I have ever learned more in a single class."

"My University 101 class turned out to be a lot more demanding than I thought it would be. But I'm glad I took this course."

"I loved it. It was a very warm and fun environment, full of enthusiasm."

These testimonials, given by students who have completed the University 101 course at the University of South Carolina at Columbia, suggest not only substantial accomplishment and satisfaction among the students who have taken the course, but also how far the course has come from its origins. Conceived by the institution's president, University 101 was introduced in

1972 as a first-year experimental elective in response to students protesting the war in Vietnam, as well as other perceived social injustices and campus issues. The course was an effort to build trust and understanding and open lines of communication among students, faculty, and administrators.

Today, University 101 and its associated offerings enroll some 2,700 students, more than are enrolled in all but three colleges at the university. Students conditionally admitted to the university must take the semester-long, three-credit-hour course, but all first-year students are encouraged to enroll, and more than 75 percent do so.

Objectives of the course

include the development of academic, critical-thinking, and decision-making skills, technological savvy, campus involvement, knowledge of campus resources, and planning for a major and career. Consistent with a liberal arts focus, the course requires substantial writing.

University 101 instructors are chosen through an application process. Requirements include a minimum of a master's degree and completion of an instructor training workshop. Interest in teaching the course is greater than the number of slots available, and potential instructors are cautioned that securing a section is a "privilege subject to approval." Instructor workshops are offered twice yearly, and each

institutional leaders, staff, faculty, and other stakeholders.

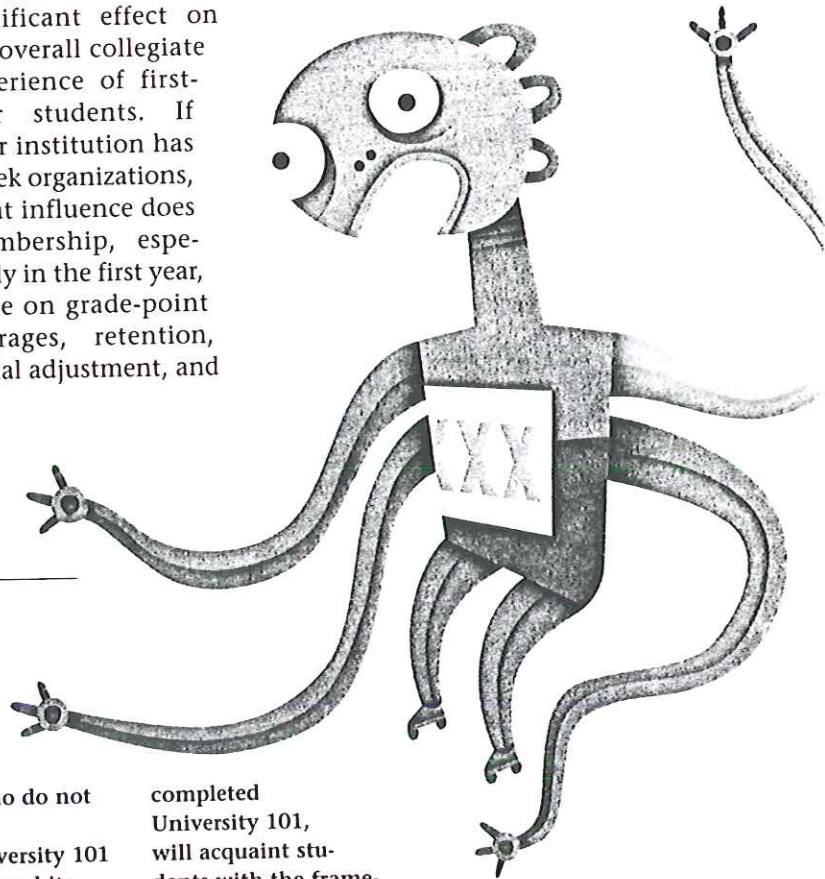
• *The importance of being intentional.* How intentional is your college or university about its efforts to make new students successful, as opposed to leaving desired outcomes largely to chance? How much assistance does it provide to assimilate new students into the institution's unique campus culture and values, and what form does this assistance take? How effective is your campus's "basic training" for its new recruits?

• *Orientation for new students.* Who is in charge of student orientation? Are the length and timing of orientation programs appropriate and effective, and does the content sufficiently espouse and convey academic values?

• *Academic advising and planning.* What is the quality of academic advising for new students? Is first-year advising an institutional priority, or do new students suffer from "leftover" advisement and course selection? Does your institution require students to select a major in the

first year? How does it treat students who are undecided? The quality of assistance in helping students determine an academic major may be a potential turning point in their quest for academic success and personal satisfaction.

• *Greek life.* Fraternities and sororities can have a significant effect on the overall collegiate experience of first-year students. If your institution has Greek organizations, what influence does membership, especially in the first year, have on grade-point averages, retention, social adjustment, and



draws 30-40 participants.

Instructors are encouraged to invite three-to-five special-topics presenters each semester, and more than 60 individuals have volunteered to speak on such topics as study skills, date rape, professional ethics, and critical consumption of news and entertainment media. Special programs involve upper level students as peer leaders, role models, and instructional assistants. First-year seminars are among the most closely examined and assessed courses on campus, and researchers consistently have found that University 101 course graduates earn higher grades, are more involved in curricular and extracurricular activities, and graduate at higher

rates than students who do not take the course.

The success of University 101 has led officials to expand its goals and share its principles with other institutions. Among the spin-offs is the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (see page 12). South Carolina also offers University 401, the Senior-Year Experience, a capstone course that further integrates the academic experience, helps students plan their postgraduate lives, and examines the citizenship roles demanded of college graduates in contemporary society.

Also in development is University 201. This course, for sophomores or others who have

completed University 101, will acquaint students with the frameworks and methods of research and inquiry in particular disciplines. The development of the course is supported by the Hewlett Foundation, with matching support from the university. By year three of the offering, the university will assume full financial responsibility for the course.

"Retention is just too narrow a concept," says Professor Dan Berman, director of instruction and faculty development for the University 101 program. "University 101 is not a survival course. This is not a picture of desperation. This is a story of university and individual success."

Two Research Centers Are Devoted To First-Year Students' Success

The National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, founded by John N. Gardner in 1986 and now led by Mary Stuart Hunter, is an outgrowth and extension of the University of South Carolina's University 101 first-year seminar course begun in 1972 and directed by Gardner from 1974-99.

The purpose of the center is to collect and disseminate information about the first college year and other significant student transitions. This information is used to help higher education officials and faculty enhance the learning, success, satisfaction, retention, and graduation of college students. To these ends, the center does the following:

- organizes and hosts a series of national and international conferences, seminars, teleconferences, and workshops;
- maintains a Web site and four topical listservs;
- serves as a host for sabbaticals and visits from scholars and educators;
- houses an extensive library resource collection; and
- serves as a publishing house for an extensive list of publications on improving the learning and success of students in transition.

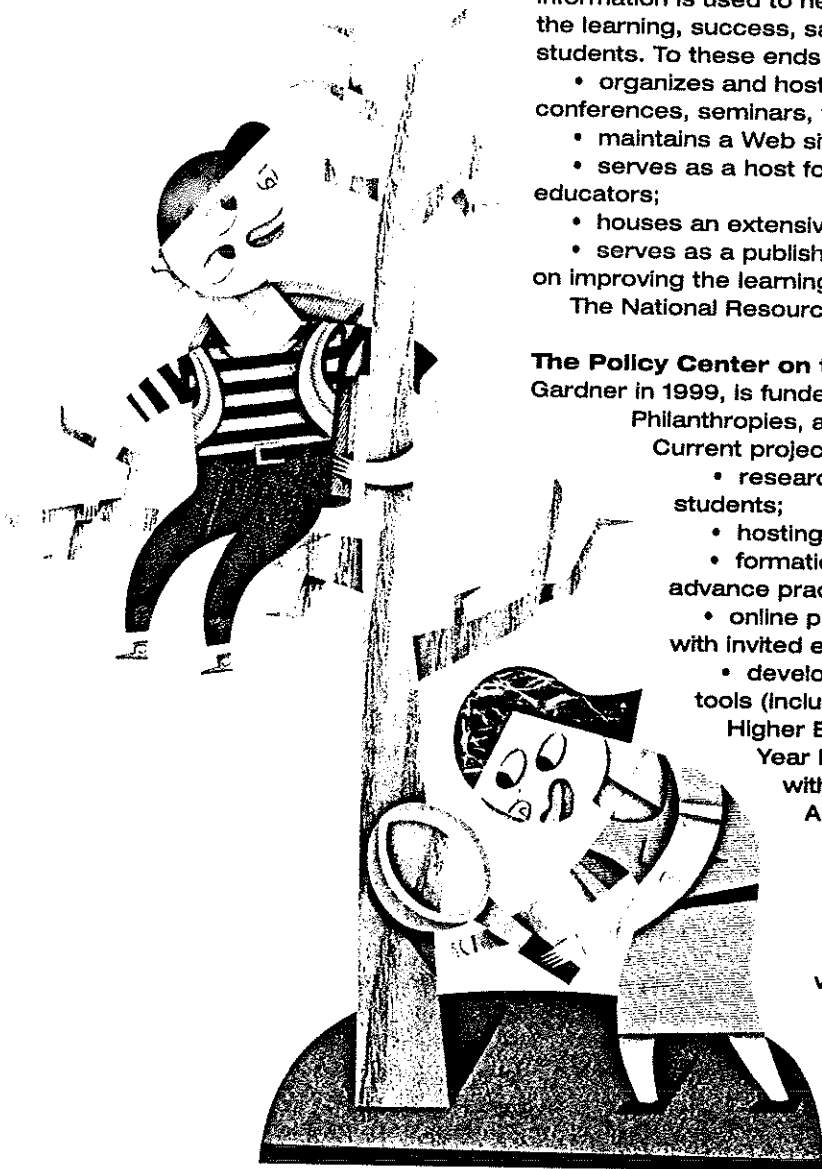
The National Resource Center's Web site is www.sc.edu/fye.

The Policy Center on the First Year of College, founded by John N. Gardner in 1999, is funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Atlantic Philanthropies, and is hosted by Brevard College in North Carolina.

Current projects include the following:

- research on institutional best practices for first-year students;
- hosting of forums and institutes for institutional leaders;
- formation of a statewide consortia of institutions to advance practices, cooperation, and peer-supported learning;
- online publication of a first-year-assessment magazine with invited essays;
- development, with key partners, of new assessment tools (including the "Your First College Year" survey, with the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA; the "First-Year Initiative" survey of first-year-seminar students, with Educational Benchmarking, Inc.; and the "Data Audit Toolkit," with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems); and
- dissemination of research through academic and practitioner publications, conferences, presentations, and Web site resources.

The policy center's Web site is www.brevard.edu/fyc.



There is a natural fit between strategies to improve the first year of college and the customary work and purviews of responsibility of established board committees.

disciplinary infractions? When are students “rushed” by fraternities and sororities? Are students allowed sufficient time to become established academically before they undertake this substantial social and financial commitment? What are the risk factors associated with Greek life, and how do these factors affect first-year students? And finally, who is really in control of Greek life on your campus—the institution or the Greek organizations themselves?

• *Class attendance.* Does your campus have a class-attendance policy, and are there special provisions to ensure that first-year students attend class? Is there a gap between attendance policies as espoused and as practiced? Is there an “early alert” monitoring system to identify new students who, early in the term, have excessive absences and/or significant academic problems? Once identified, does the campus intervene in some proactive fashion?

• *The first-year classroom.* Who teaches first-year classes—senior professors or less experienced teachers? Are faculty encouraged to interact outside of class with first-year students? How large are first-year classes? What do you know about the relationship of large classes to learning and retention? When classes are large, what opportunities are created for personal feedback and small-group interaction? What kind of faculty-development support does your institution provide to enhance the skills of faculty who teach first-year students?

• *Common experiences.* What common academic experiences, if any, are in place for first-year students? Is there a special first-year curriculum or course? What else does your campus do to create a sense of community and foster the development of sound relationships?

Bringing About Change. Despite the fine progress in recent years, many first-year programs can be improved. If your campus already has some of these programs or approaches in

place, the following ideas may help them be even better:

• *Make the first year a top priority.* Trustees should encourage campus leaders—presidents, chief academic officers, chief student-affairs officers, and others—to make the first year of college a high priority. This includes investing significant resources in the planning, delivery, and assessment of first-year initiatives.

• *Promote and reward faculty involvement.* Encourage and reward faculty involvement in teaching, advising, and interacting with first-year students. First-year initiatives, whether they are curriculum based or conducted outside of class, will not be institutionalized if faculty do not embrace them and become directly involved. Boards might provide funds for faculty development, establish teaching prizes, or develop other formal, merit-based honors. As a trustee of Marietta College, for example, I specify that my annual contribution be earmarked for first-year initiatives.

• *Establish an “organizational responsibility center” to oversee and coordinate first-year initiatives.* Though it is desirable to involve multiple offices in implementing first-year initiatives, streamlining efforts through one chain of command ultimately will produce more effective collaboration and communication.

• *Ground efforts to improve the first year of college in the institution’s mission statement.* Mission statements describe the educational purposes of an institution, convey the institution’s values and beliefs, and state the goals, aims, and ideals that undergird its operations. In monitoring an institution’s efforts to operate in accordance with its mission, trustees should ascertain whether there is a design for connecting what happens in the first-year to the desired outcomes of the college, namely, graduation. Encourage faculty, staff, and students to ground their work in the mission of the campus, and administer first-year programs and services accordingly.

- *Consider class size and effective teaching methods in first-year courses.* Before you subscribe to what may be the false economy of large classes, investigate the effect of these classes on new students—their learning, satisfaction, and retention rates. Encourage your institution to provide funds to support faculty who teach key introductory courses. Make sure your campus has some type of faculty-development component that places a high priority on improving instruction in first-year courses. This focus may present an opportunity for individual trustee giving to underwrite such initiatives.

- *Invest in institutional research and assessment of the first college year.* Ask your school's office of institutional research, as well as other faculty and staff who may be involved in assessment efforts, to improve the ongoing assessment of the first college year. Board members need the information generated from such work to make decisions about how to allocate resources. Because the first year lays the foundation for the entire college experience, it should be used as a baseline in the collection of data about entering students.

This information ultimately will be used to measure how students have changed during the course of their undergraduate years and whether your institution has achieved its educational goals. In addition, regional accrediting bodies want to know what your students were like when they entered and whether or how they are different when they graduate. The

Policy Center on the First Year of College is one of several sources of information and assistance on how to improve assessment of the first college year.

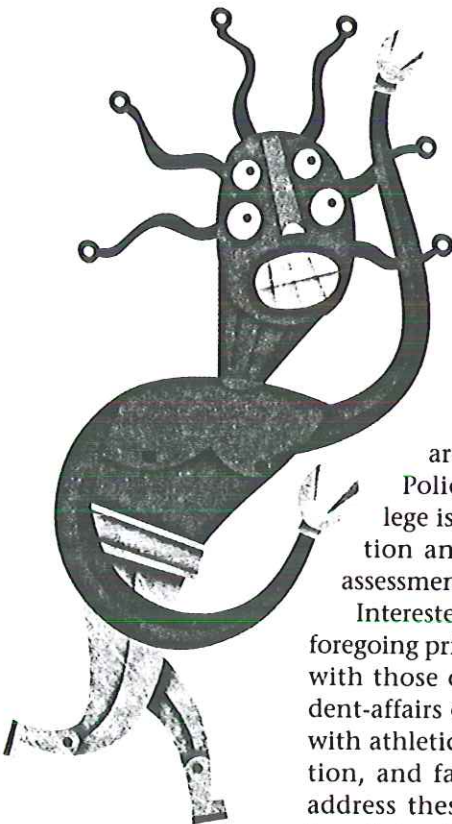
Interested governing boards must place the foregoing priorities on their agendas, beginning with those of their academic-affairs and student-affairs committees; committees that deal with athletics, admissions, recruitment, retention, and facilities design also may need to address these issues. College and university board structures naturally lend themselves to

consideration of these matters, as do strategic-planning efforts in which the board is involved. There is a natural fit between these strategies to improve the first year of college and the customary work and purviews of responsibility of such established board committees.

In addition, the board chair could stress to committee chairs the importance of individual committees looking at the institution's current policies and practices with respect to the first-year experience. When setting any agenda that must attract support for needed change, the board chair has a critical responsibility in exhorting colleagues to show interest and take action.

Conscience of the Campus. Board members have an enormous responsibility for helping to shape the institution's mission and values and to keep the campus focused on and accountable for success. Faculty, staff, and administrators can profit from having trustees who are well informed about the importance of the first college year. So many of the most pressing campus issues that concern trustees have direct connections to the first year—the impact of recruitment and retention on the campus revenue stream, student satisfaction, binge drinking, the success of first-year student athletes, artists, and musicians—the list goes on.

We need to encourage our nation to continue to provide broad access to higher education, but we must do our part to foster greater support for ultimate degree attainment. Meeting these goals will require boards to consider reinvigorating our support for new students. As many trustees have found in their own professional organizations and on other boards, academic leaders need encouragement to “think outside the box” and strengthen this most critical institutional foundation known as the first college year. To fail to encourage them is to condone the status quo, which on many campuses means tolerating too much student failure. Trustees, who serve as the conscience for the campus, often are the strongest advocates for the needs of students. I hope you and your fellow trustees will accept this challenge and push your institution to a higher level of commitment to the success of first-year students.



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Number 17, Fall 2001

Priorities is published as an AGB membership service to help trustees and chief executives identify and address strategic policy issues. It is published three times a year by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, One Dupont Circle, Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20036. Telephone: 202/296-8400. Fax: 202/223-7053. Web: www.agb.org. All board members and the chief executive and other administrative officers of AGB-member institutions receive *Priorities*. Additional copies are available exclusively to individuals at AGB-member institutions for \$10 per copy. Please call for bulk discounts. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily of AGB. Copyright ©2001 Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. All rights reserved.



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**PRIORITIES WAS INITIATED BY A GENEROUS GRANT
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BY SUSAN WHEELER JOHNSTON

I first met John Gardner when he came to the campus where I worked and performed a miracle. With John's help, our faculty, student-affairs personnel, and administrators came together to focus on one issue: increasing the retention rate of our students. Following his advice, and using the support available through research he had published and conferences he had organized, we instituted major changes in academic advising and freshman orientation and created a seminar for all first-year students. The miracle? Not only did the retention rate increase, but we also found the new seminar to be a wonderful activity for faculty development and renewal. The cross-disciplinary approach to student success was good for the entire campus.

Our experience was not singular, as this issue of *Priorities* reveals. For the past 20 years, John Gardner has been known nationally and internationally as the leader of the first-year experience movement. He has researched, written, and spoken on why and how colleges and universities can enhance the experience of their first-year students. Hundreds of institutions have listened, and as a result, hundreds of thousands of students have benefited.

For students, the benefits of participating in a first-year program can include improved academic skills and performance, increased graduation rates, and greater engagement with the college and the community, to name but a few. For institutions, these same benefits are powerful, especially at a time of heightened public demands for accountability and improved performance. But when financial advantages to institutions accompany gains in academic performance—and they do, as this essay explains—then

first-year programs truly warrant the attention of boards and administrators.

This issue of *Priorities* provides background on first-year programs—what they are, why they were created, what forms they take, and what benefits they offer. It showcases three institutions' first-year programs: Kennesaw State University's program emphasizing student success with a new twist—learning communities; the University of South Carolina-Columbia's University 101, a program soon to celebrate its 30th anniversary and which has evolved to include support for students at other transition points in their education; and the program at the College of the Holy Cross, where the connections between students and faculty are strengthened as they read, study, and discuss the question, "How then shall we live?" The variety of these successful programs speaks to the efficacy of matching student needs, institutional goals, and proven strategies for first-year programs.

Most important, this issue of *Priorities* argues for greater board awareness and monitoring of first-year programs. For these programs to continue to serve the needs of students—students whose backgrounds are increasingly diverse and whose preparation for higher education is decreasingly sufficient—they must be adequately funded, staffed, evaluated, and valued. In serving the needs of students through effective first-year programs, institutions not only act on their promise of education, they also stand to gain in important ways: increased retention and graduation rates, stronger academic performance, better satisfied students and faculty, a healthier student body, and a more engaged core of alumni. It's a lot to promise, but as John Gardner can prove, it's possible with attention to the first year of college.

—Susan Wheeler Johnston is AGB's director of private-sector programs.



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*Monograph Series
Number 19*

The National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience & Students in Transition
Monograph Series

The Community College: Opportunity and Access for America's First-Year Students

Joseph N. Hankin, Editor

*The National Resource Center for
The Freshman Year Experience & Students in Transition
University of South Carolina, 1996*

Chapter 1

The Freshman Year Experience: A Philosophy for Higher Education in the New Millennium

Joseph N. Hankin & John N. Gardner

The Freshman Year Experience is a philosophy for assimilating new students into the college environment. It is an underlying set of assumptions about how first-year students should be regarded, treated, taught, and supported by an institution. Because some 54% of all first-time, full-time college students in America start their academic careers in community colleges, we explore in this volume the extent to which the Freshman Year Experience already exists, or should exist, in community colleges across the country.

However programs and implementation may differ from two- to four-year schools, first-year students at either sort of school are comparable and therefore may be served universally by the philosophy espoused here. A new study prepared under the auspices of the National Center for Postsecondary Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, a federally financed research center at The Pennsylvania State University, tracked 2,685 freshman students at 23 colleges and universities in 16 states (National Center, 1995, p. 26). Tests completed in the fall of 1992 and the spring of 1993 were designed to measure reading comprehension, mathematical ability, and critical thinking skills. The principal researchers concluded that most colleges, two- and four-year, with the "exception of a small number of the elite liberal

arts colleges . . . do essentially the same thing"; that is, students at community colleges had scores similar to their counterparts at most four-year colleges. Despite the fact that the community colleges are thought to be less selective, students in them did as well as those in the more selective sector. Ernest Pascarella, as well as his coauthors in the study — Louise Bohr, of Northeastern University, Amaury Nora, of the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Patrick Terenzini, of The Pennsylvania State University — speculated that the reason may be the community colleges' emphasis on professors' teaching, in contrast to the focus on research at major universities. The investigators followed the students through their sophomore year and retested them, but that data is still under analysis.

Here we wish to focus not on the problems of the first-year experience at community colleges but on the solutions to these problems and on the ways the philosophy that is The Freshman Year Experience makes for an all around better undergraduate experience. We take to heart the dictum espoused by Louis Gerstner, the Chief Executive Officer of Nabisco: "No more prizes for predicting rain; prizes only for building arks." What is offered here is practical information. Not only do we have studies and analyses of The Freshman

Year Experience listed in the bibliographies and in several of the chapters, but throughout the monograph 57 community colleges in 25 states, and seven state systems of community colleges are listed as examples of where the philosophy is actually applied (see the Appendix to this chapter).

This present chapter is divided into three parts designed to move the reader from theory to practice. First, we look at the terminology of The Freshman Year Experience as it might apply to the community college, examine how students at community colleges differ from their counterparts at four-year institutions, and look at institutional differences between these two types of colleges in America. Next, we offer a comprehensive definition of The Freshman Year Experience. Finally, we give the reader a preview of the organization of the rest of the monograph.

A Look at the Terminology

Is there any such thing as The Freshman Year Experience in the community college, or should there be? Let us look at the terminology itself and the inherent concepts of the fresh/man/year experience and apply those concepts to students in the community college:

- ❖ Community college students are not “fresh,” in the sense that they are new to higher education and lack life experience. They are, in fact, more likely to be older students, often with prior college experience.
- ❖ They are also less likely to be male, and are, in fact, predominately female.
- ❖ Many do not complete the experience in a year. They do not complete one quarter of the baccalaureate degree or one half of the associate degree in one year because large numbers of them are not enrolled full time.

In addition, community college students are likely to differ from students at four-year institutions in the following ways:

- ❖ Community college students are not necessarily degree seeking (Otuya & Mitchell,

1994). In fact, they may be there just for a year and transfer to a four-year institution, or for certification of some kind for continuing education, for enrichment in retirement, or for vocational (re)training.

- ❖ Because few community colleges have residence halls, virtually all community college students live off-campus, often at home.
- ❖ Students are more likely to be married or divorced, and to have children.
- ❖ Many students want training for a specific job — a practical education.
- ❖ Because they are older, students are generally less well prepared academically and therefore need more help with basic study skills.
- ❖ Students are more likely to be in conflict with someone about the fact that they are in college (conflicts with spouse, significant other, children, boss). In general, they come less prepared, less sure of themselves academically, less venturesome, and more willing to trust authority than to rely on themselves.

Institutional Differences Between Community Colleges and Four-Year Colleges

- ❖ In the community college there is often more visible influence of the secondary school culture. For example, on some campuses, the presence of bells to announce class change, lockers, lounges restricted to faculty, and, most importantly, far more evidence of local control all resemble high school.
- ❖ Community colleges are newer institutions, and perhaps less constrained by tradition.
- ❖ Community colleges are public — hence, secular.

Some community colleges have less development of the student personnel service profession. This has great implications for student support and for getting students involved in co-curricular activities. This difference is explained by several factors:

- ❖ Community college campuses do not have graduate degree granting programs in student personnel or higher education administrative services, and therefore do not have a complement of graduate students as inexpensive student support personnel.
- ❖ Community colleges have very frequently been an outgrowth of former public school districts which do not necessarily subscribe to the student personnel philosophy of holistic education. This factor of less sophistication in student personnel services at community colleges is a very important difference because on many of the baccalaureate campuses, the impetus for The Freshman Year Experience reform movement came originally from student personnel services and because of the critical partnership between academic affairs and student affairs.
- ❖ The faculty in community colleges often live in the community and are more likely to come from the community, so they may have a better understanding of the community pressures and characteristics.
- ❖ Faculty and administrators in community colleges are not usually graduates of community colleges. Instead, they are more likely to have had traditional residential college experiences themselves.
- ❖ Despite the inclusion of a segment of general education in virtually every program, a smaller percentage of the community college curriculum is tied to the liberal arts than is the case in four-year institutions.
- ❖ Community college classes are more likely to be smaller than classes at public four-year institutions.
- ❖ Community colleges make frequent use of adjunct professors.
- ❖ Admissions in community colleges is, by and large, less selective, except to a few specific curricula such as the health sciences.
- ❖ Community colleges are generally less expensive for students to attend.
- ❖ Faculty at community colleges are more likely to be rewarded for good teaching than their counterparts in four-year schools.
- ❖ Advising and counseling are more likely to be done by student affairs officers in some kind of counseling center, and less likely to be done by faculty. Admittedly, many community colleges are unionized, and advising is done by counselors who do have faculty rank. However, they are still less likely to be faculty in the classic sense of traditional classroom teaching faculty.
- ❖ In the community college, there is usually a greater consensus about the institutional mission.
- ❖ In the community college, authority is more centralized and, hence, does not have the mass decentralization found in a large research university with its collegiate fiefdoms.
- ❖ It may be harder to develop a common institutional culture in the community college due to the enormous diversity of student backgrounds with fewer shared rituals and customs (e.g., intercollegiate athletics), plus the constant scattering of community members due to commuting.
- ❖ In the community college the primary allegiance of the faculty is to their teaching, students, and institution and much less to their disciplinary affiliations, unlike in the four-year sector.

What is "The Freshman Year Experience"?

Although the term *The Freshman Year Experience* is often used to describe a particular program to increase learning and success of first-year students, that is not what is meant by the authors of this chapter. Instead, we argue that The Freshman Year Experience is a philosophy for assimilating new students into the college environment. The term has also been commonly used to describe freshman orientation courses and freshman seminars which have existed in American higher education since 1888.

The community college is predominantly a 20th century phenomenon, but it has been a "quick learner" and an "early adopter" of innovative processes in higher education. Community college students are also overwhelmingly "first generation" students; thus there is a great need for The Freshman Year Experience at their schools.

Essential Themes

When The Freshman Year Experience is regarded as a concept, a philosophy underlying programs to assist freshman success, what is meant by this philosophy? What are the commonalities in these Freshman Year Experience programs?

First of all, Freshman Year Experience programs are based on an attempt by institutions to define freshman success comprehensively. Upcraft and Gardner (1987) in their review of first-year reform initiatives offer the following definition of freshman success: developing academic and intellectual competence, establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, developing personal identity, deciding on a career and lifestyle, maintaining personal health and wellness, and developing an integrated philosophy of life.

The Freshman Year Experience is a deliberately designed attempt to provide a rite of passage in which the students are supported, welcomed, celebrated, and ultimately assimilated. It represents an effort to reverse a several hundred year tradition of harassing new arrivals through intimidating rites of passage which were designed to enforce group cohesion through oppressive techniques known in American higher education as "hazing" which is now illegal in most states.

Freshman Year Experience programs are analogous to the kind of "basic training" that has been provided by the United States armed forces for decades and simultaneously most of America's major corporations for an equal amount of time. In this so-called basic training, the idea is to teach new members of the group the organization's history, customs, traditions, language, folkways, mores, norms, power structure, significant leaders, rules, regulations, programs, services and, in general, establish patterns for upward mobility and success.

Freshman Year Experience programs are also designed to convey a great deal of respect for new students *per se* in contrast to the historic contempt and disdain initially directed towards the newest arrivals on college campuses.

The Freshman Year Experience is equally manifested in a variety of mechanisms designed to guarantee for each entering new student a significant contact, such as a caring adult employee of the institution. This would be found in mentoring programs, academic advising programs, freshman seminar programs, as well as various types of tutoring and counseling approaches.

The Freshman Year Experience is a philosophy which involves the notion of intentionality. Institutions set deliberate goals for the freshman year and devise intentional strategies to help freshmen achieve these goals. The idea is to leave freshman success neither to serendipity nor to chance.

The Freshman Year Experience also includes making a systematic study and effort to identify the variables that interfere with freshman success and then designing programs to address these variables. For example, in recent years, Freshman Year Experience programs have been much more concerned with health and wellness issues, especially sexually transmitted diseases. Clearly, these are variables that interfere with new student success, and educational programs are being designed to counteract these variables.

The Freshman Year Experience is a philosophy which leads to the establishment of mechanisms designed to assist employees detecting potential dropouts and intervening to provide attention, support, and counseling for at-risk students. The programs are characterized generically as "early warning programs."

The Freshman Year Experience also stresses making positive predictions for new student success. The relationship between transmission of expectations by professors and positive student learning outcomes in response is well established. This is another illustration of how The Freshman Year Experience philosophy is attempting to reverse a historic tradition in

which the opposite was predicted for students, a tradition typified by the decades-old axiom: "Look to your left and look to the right. The two students you looked at will not be here at the end of the year."

The Freshman Year Experience also encourages the development of new structures for communication between freshman educators and students so that the educators are able to validate their assumptions about student backgrounds and characteristics by direct experience rather than stereotyped perceptions. One of the consequences of the 50-year period of growth in American higher education between World War II and the present has been a gradual movement of faculty away from many students, especially first-year students. The Freshman Year Experience movement, in part, is designed to get educators back in touch with the realities of the student experience.

The Freshman Year Experience, to borrow from the study *Involvement in Learning* (National Institute of Education, 1984), is an illustration of the concept of "frontloading" which argues that the overall educational experience for undergraduate students will be improved by reallocation of precious institutional resources from the upper divisions to the freshman and sophomore years.

The Freshman Year Experience is a concept that institutions are marketing in advance in an attempt to sell the institution to prospective students and their parents. The freshman year is described extensively, for example, in the "view books" of many colleges. After matriculation, The Freshman Year Experience is subsequently a deliberate series of experiences which are provided for the students. This is the time when many educators believe that students make a second critical decision (the first one being to attend in the first place), whether or not to stay or leave the institution they chose originally. In marketing terms, this is the concept of the "second sale" in which the institutions are trying to help students overcome "buyer's remorse" and make a commitment to remain at the institution. This kind of intervention, the reselling of the institution, appears to be particularly important during the first six weeks or so of the first term of the

freshman year, the time during which the majority of students who ultimately drop out, (Tinto, 1987) make that decision.

Freshman Year Experience programs are based on the fact that not all freshmen are the same. Therefore, they have a variety of special needs for orientation, support, and programs due to the heterogeneity of their backgrounds.

The Freshman Year Experience is based on the recognition that the freshman year is the foundation on which the rest of the college experience is based. Some institutions are now beginning to link this foundation to the desired outcomes of the undergraduate experience, those outcomes described as the Senior Year Experience (Hartel, Schwartz, Blume, & Gardner, 1994).

Another essential component of The Freshman Year Experience is the necessity of, in the language of Continuous Quality Improvement, presenting The Freshman Year Experience to the internal customers (i.e., the employees of the institution) to help college and university employees understand the needs, challenges, problems, hopes, dreams, and fears of new students (the external customers), and to help them satisfactorily respond to student expectations and needs.

A very important component of The Freshman Year Experience is the necessity to develop a campus-wide approach to increasing new student success. This involves making the first year a top priority of institutional leaders, especially the president and the chief academic officer. Illustrations of this idea are campuses where, for example, presidents and chief academic officers are actually involved in teaching first-year students or participating in orientation, mentoring programs, and teaching freshman seminar courses.

An extremely important component of student success is the essential partnership of academic affairs and student affairs personnel with the senior faculty of the institution.

Another way of understanding The Freshman Year Experience is to look at it as the uniquely

American concept of "support groups." Support groups are designed for persons whose lives are in transition, such as those who, for example, must deal with separation and divorce, cope with an illness, move to a new community, deal with being laid-off from long-term employment, and matriculate at a college. Support groups are, by definition, led by survivors of the same transitional experience (Aslanian, 1980). Individuals are more successful in making major life transitions if they are members of support groups, such as Freshman Year Experience programs (Fidler, 1991).

The Freshman Year Experience is based on a belief in a holistic approach to education which attempts to educate students by addressing all of the aspects of student development including the academic, social, personal, physical, and spiritual dimensions of learning, growth, and change during the college years.

The Freshman Year Experience also attempts to respond to students developmentally on their time table when they are ready and able to learn. For example, this may mean that students must be taught study skills repeatedly during the first term in college, especially after having failed their first midterm examination when they may be more motivated to learn new study skills.

The Freshman Year Experience philosophy has also produced the realization that concern for new students and the achievement of professional status need not necessarily be incompatible. In turn, this requires either the modification or the rejection of the graduate school model which most faculty have learned whereby status is measured in terms of one's distance from freshmen. Institutions with new student experience programs have had to make an effort to develop a reward system to sanction positively those who care for freshmen and to make a concomitant commitment to put some of their best people forward on behalf of freshmen.

And finally, in recent years, The Freshman Year Experience has been linked to the notion of advocacy to recognize, reward, and celebrate those campus leaders, change agents, and good

citizens who have taken special and sometimes courageous strides on behalf of serving new students.

What This Monograph Offers

From the theoretical and professional point-of-view of the authors of this monograph, there is no such thing as *the* community college — an ultimate archetype of such a school.

In Chapters 2 and 3, Beverly Bower and Tina Feiger respectively make clear that no monolithic attribution may be given to either students of color or women. Each group is a complex of individual traits and personalities and must be educated as such — on a person-to-person basis. Beverly Bower paints a beautiful picture of the mosaic of minority freshmen in the community college, and points the way more and more community college students will be proceeding in the near future.

Tremendous increases in the numbers of female students over the past two decades in higher education began first in the nation's community colleges. As Tina Feiger points out, these women have had the pervasive effect of encouraging colleges to bring about progressive changes in regard to the needs of female students, changes such as campus women's centers, day care for the children of these students, and rape crisis centers.

The author of Chapter 4, Carey Harbin, is a counselor who designed and implemented a community college orientation course and who continues to coordinate the resulting program today. "Total Transfer Management," the concept that all students are potential transfer students, is the result of his experience in helping students to persist in the community college and go on to matriculate at four-year institutions.

James Palmer focuses in Chapter 5 on community college articulation with four-year institutions by looking at it from four different perspectives: that of the student, the state, the academic disciplines, and the individual institutions — perspectives that must be understood if first-year students are to transfer successfully if they so desire.

Les Cook, in Chapter 6, focuses on linking orientation to the mission of the institution in assisting students and their families to adjust to a new social environment. He details the components of the process, giving specific institutional examples to reinforce the theoretical underpinnings of orientation.

Joseph Cuseo and Betsy Barefoot have done a masterful job of summarizing the case for the extended orientation seminar in the community college. Based on the research literature, as well as a survey completed in 1994 (to which 350 community colleges responded), they detail in Chapter 7 the effects of such seminars in two-year and community colleges, especially as they relate to persistence and degree completion. The prescribed content of such an experience may be used as a blueprint for those institutions considering initiating a similar endeavor.

In Chapter 8, Doug Kenny, a former administrator and current teacher of a Community College Success Course in The Freshman Year Experience, lends this volume his academic and political expertise in devising, selling, establishing, and implementing a course which captures many of the elements discussed in other chapters. The case study helps the reader avoid the pitfalls and anticipate the problems associated with starting such a program in an academic climate that may be resistant to the introduction of something new and nontraditional.

John and Suanne Roueche, in Chapter 9 have written on the subject of remediation for under-prepared students for decades. The difficulties in clarifying the subject are great; the Roueches point out that no fewer than forty terms have been used to name these programs. Many of the tenets of a good program in remediation may be found in good Freshman Year Experience programs.

Robert P. Pedersen makes it clear in Chapter 10 that even the historical precedents of our two-year institutions are, at the least, bifurcated, and most certainly misunderstood by even the best informed community college advocates. To correct the historical record, he challenges

community college history as it is commonly told. As he points out, the constant in these institutions is their philosophy: They shape themselves to their environments, to the changing conditions about them.

Vincent Tinto is well known as a researcher and theorist of higher education. No discussion of persistence may be had without including some of his insights. As he points out in Chapter 11, early research has focused primarily on four-year institutions, but that imbalance has been rectified. Tinto asserts that, "As attention has shifted to the experience of community college students and the task of enhancing their persistence, so too has it turned to the importance of the freshman year experience."

How do student learning needs in the community college differ from those in the four-year institution? Dennis McGrath, known for his work on writing across the curriculum, change and resistance, and staff development, turns to this subject in Chapter 12. He, too, views community colleges not as monolithic institutions and asserts that each one faces the tasks of initiation, social and academic integration, cultural translation, transfer, and articulation in differing ways.

In Chapter 13, Margaret (Peggy) King, past president of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), details the process of academic advising in which the student interacts with concerned members of the college family. She presents this process as the hub of a wheel, with supporting service "spokes" projecting in many directions and providing academic and social integration which lead to student success, persistence, and satisfaction.

In Chapter 14, three university educators, Deanna Martin, Robert Blanc, and David Arendale, wrestle with student difficulty in adjusting to the college environment, students' academic and social difficulties, the incongruence between student expectations and institutional demands, and the feeling of social isolation which many students new to the academic enterprise have. Much of their chapter deals with the program of Supplemental Instruction, almost two decades old, at the University of Missouri - Kansas City which has addressed these problems.

Vincent Tinto appears again in this volume along with two colleagues, Pat Russo and Stephanie Kadel-Taras, in Chapter 15, to discuss the subject of retention, and also to address the oft-discussed concept of learning communities and collaborative learning strategies as ways of involving the student. These authors focus on a particular institution to show how these concepts are actually applied in practice, and how success does not come overnight in reforming college communities.

David Conklin, a current community college president, details in Chapter 16 a comprehensive plan for retention which was carried out in an institution at which he had a long residence. He writes his chapter from the perspective of "having been there," and his advice may lead to methods for decreasing attrition.

In Chapter 17, George Vaughan, a former community college president and current university professor and administrator of a community college leadership program, provides us with insights about the leadership needed in establishing The Freshman Year Experience through specific examples from various colleges. He focuses on ways to establish a good campus climate and the introduction of change to campus culture.

This is a practical monograph that stresses "take-home value." It assesses various global elements of the community college, but mainly focuses on the importance of The Freshman Year Experience as it specifically affects the first-time community college student. These so-called "Democracy's Colleges" are likely to continue to educate the majority of first-time, full-time freshmen, hence the importance of this volume.

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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1996

ABOUTCAMPUS

ENRICHING THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE



LIFE ON THE BORDER

Thirty years ago Laura Rendón, the first in her family to go to college, crossed the border into academic life. Now, after researching the experiences of other first-generation students, she shares what she has learned.

Pat Hutchings on a new culture of teaching and learning, Smart Cards on Campus, and more . . .

BOTTOM LINE

HELPING AMERICA'S FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

A bottom-line list of what institutions of higher learning must do

By John N. Gardner

WHAT I KNOW about first-generation college students comes from two primary sources: the privilege and rewards of teaching first-generation college students for twenty-nine years in South Carolina, and my work as executive director of the University of South Carolina's National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience and Students in Transition and University 101, which has given me the opportunity to meet literally hundreds of first-generation students at colleges and universities around the country. Both of those contexts and perspectives on first-generation students make me extremely optimistic about our ability to be even more successful in helping them become even more successful.

Following are specific suggestions about what colleges must do to improve the bottom line for first-generation college students—that is, to enhance their learning, success, satisfaction, and retention:

School-college collaboration efforts. The task of working with first-generation college students must begin long before they arrive on campus. Faculty and student affairs administrators must reconnect our campuses to our host communities and begin working with precollege students and their families, as well as with public school faculty and administrators in respective disciplines, to serve these students and families long before they come to us. Both our center and the American Association for Higher Education have outstanding publications and resources on this critical initiative.

Orientation. Orientation is critically important for first-generation students, who often lack essential background knowledge about specific institutions and about higher education. However, at many of our institutions, orientation is still an optional activity. I believe that this is intellectually—even morally—bankrupt, given all that we know about the correlation between orientation, academic success, and retention. Orientation should be required. It should be provided preferably at

no cost, but at the very least at low cost. It should be for both students and family members. It should be offered at alternative times, dates, and hours for the convenience of students, not us. It should involve undergraduate student peer leaders who are themselves first-generation college students and should include a strong academic component in addition to social activities. A key resource for designing effective orientation is NODA, the National Orientation Directors Association.

Summer bridge programs. For over thirty years, summer bridge programs such as those offered

by the City University of New York, the California State University System, and other institutions have established a record of success. The Upward Bound concept is another outstanding example of a summer bridge

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activity. First-generation college students use these programs as laboratory experiences to test their skills and abilities while taking real college courses.

Academic advising enhancement. It has long been known that attention paid to academic advising yields student success. This is especially true for first-generation students, who may lack knowledge about potential majors and alternate degree paths. We must direct more attention to the selection, training, evaluation, and rewarding of academic advisors, taking advantage of the assistance of the National Academic Advising Association.

Explaining the culture of college. One of the biggest differences between first-generation and other students is their lack of familiarity with and understanding of the culture of college. This is due, in part, to their lack of association and comfort level with college graduates. They particularly need to learn how colleges differ from high schools, how college is organized, and what expectations professors have of students. They also will profit from learning more about their learning styles versus the teaching styles of their professors. The culture of college can be taught in many ways: during orientation, in freshman seminars, and in study skills courses and centers.

The freshman seminar. Since the 1880s, freshman orientation seminars have been a successful structure within which new students, especially first-generation students, have been taught the culture of higher education. Current research conducted by our center has determined that approximately 70 percent of American colleges currently offer these courses.

Creation of common experiences. Because first-generation students often feel they have little in common with other students, it is important to bring all students together in rituals, convocations, precollege summer reading experiences, common courses with common reading—all in an effort to create common experiences for all students.

Positive rites of passage. We must strive further to end three centuries of negative hazing rituals for new students. First-generation students do not adapt well to these. Rather, we need to provide dignified, celebratory welcomes where we make *positive* predictions, thus ending the centuries-old tradition of urging students to "look to the left and look to the right" and telling them that those indicated won't be here four years later.

More time on campus. Increased time, effort, and commitment on campus correlates with enhanced student retention. Anything we can do to increase the amount of time that new college students spend on campus—in study groups, in the library, in cocurricular activities, and especially in living and working on campus—will enhance their probability of success.

Early warning alert systems. Because first-generation students may be more likely to encounter academic (and personal) difficulty early in the first term, campuses need to maintain an early warning alert system. This can be an important partnership effort between academic and student affairs professionals.

Appropriate counseling and mentoring programs. The hopes and dreams of first-generation students' families often weigh heavily on the students during the first college year. Many students will need help in managing stress and in sorting out their feelings.

Campus involvement programs. Joiners are stayers. We know that students who join groups stay in college longer and are more academically successful. Organized forms of campus involvement provide first-generation students with role models who understand and are committed to the academy.

Faculty and staff development. Institutions have a responsibility to provide comprehensive demographic information on their students for the faculty and staff who educate these students. Educators will be more effective with these students if they have a better understanding of their culture, hopes, dreams, and fears and if they have knowledge of successful interventions elsewhere in higher education that increase first-generation student success. An excellent way to accomplish this is to link faculty and staff development with teaching new-student seminars that involve first-generation college students.

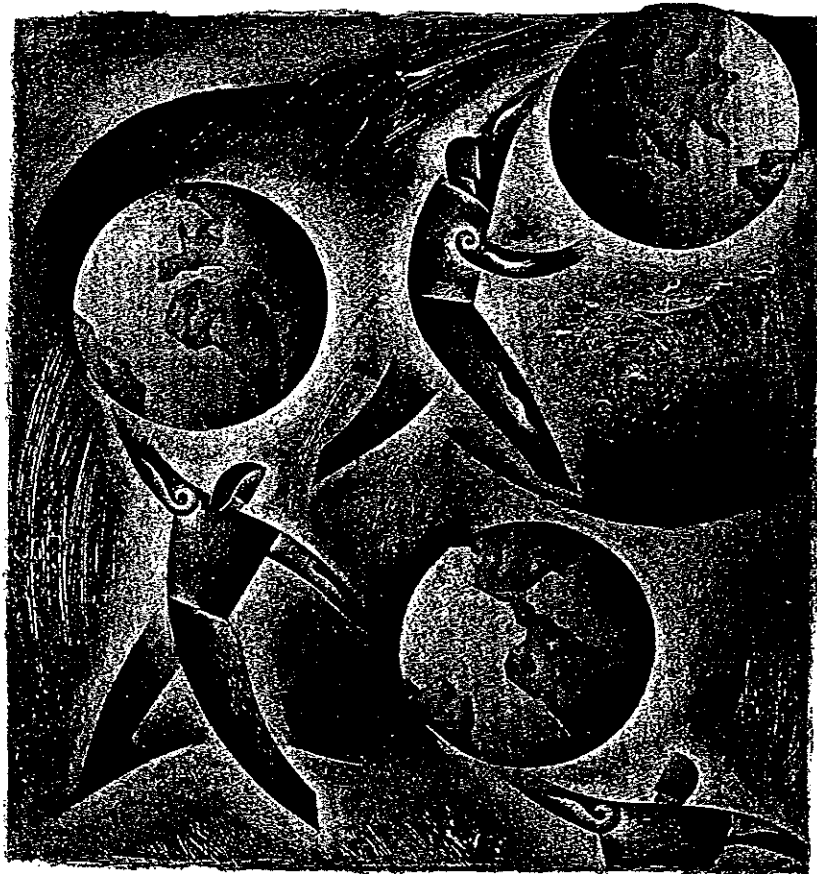
This list is certainly not exhaustive and its brevity leaves much unsaid. But the campus that intentionally pursues these initiatives will go far toward enhancing the success of first-generation college students. Demographic realities demand that we pay more attention to these deserving and interesting students—on whom we are becoming more and more dependent.



MARCH/APRIL 1999

ABOUTCAMPUS

ENRICHING THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE



THE SENIOR YEAR EXPERIENCE

John Gardner, known for his work on the freshman year experience, is now turning his attention to seniors. We have a practical and a moral imperative, he says, to give them our best before we send them on their way. Here's what that best might look like.

Dealing with student credit card debt, making room for spiritual diversity, and more...

BY JOHN N. GARDNER



THE
SENIOR YEAR
EXPERIENCE

Higher education needs to do a lot more for seniors than simply hand them a diploma. We have a moral obligation to define and improve the senior year experience to ensure student success after graduation. Here, the architect of the freshman year experience explains why seniors now deserve our special attention and what it would take to give it to them.

SENIORS, our soon-to-be-graduates, are American higher education's frequent flyers. They have logged the most miles with us, been the most loyal, and spent the most time with us. Even though other carriers may have tempted them, they have stayed with us. Our frequent-flying students have been our bread and butter; they have generated the biggest portion of our gross revenues, and many of them will bring future flyers to us as well.

And much like America's frequent flyers, our seniors often get treated badly even though, or perhaps because, they are our best customers, and we can surely take them for granted. Or can we? Will they rush out and join our alumni associations? Will they refer other students? Will they encourage their children to become

"legacies?" Will they write the beloved alma mater into their wills? When they are elected to the state legislature, will they remember the support and benefits they received from the beloved alma mater?

Just as the major airlines have continued to squeeze their best customers by raising prices, reducing flexibility and perquisites, and limiting the amount of carry-on baggage allowed, so we find campuses engaging in practices constituting benign, or even malign, neglect.

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As institutions of higher education face increasing scrutiny, a growing circle of educators and prospective employers has joined me in saying that colleges need to do more for seniors than simply confer a diploma upon them.

Examples include charging graduating students for diplomas, caps and gowns, and transcripts after some of those students and their families have already invested over \$100,000; scheduling insufficient numbers of core and major courses needed for graduation and neglecting to provide seniors with registration priority (giving them preferential access to classes needed for timely graduation); evicting graduating seniors from residence halls the day they graduate; neglecting to provide adequate officially sponsored celebratory recognition ceremonies and instead providing mob scene commencements designed with no student input, soon to be hastily forgotten; charging seniors for admission into the Alumni Association and soliciting them with a first "ask" before they have even left the campus; failing to provide appropriate "capstone" intellectual experiences in the major to demonstrate to students and faculty alike an exhibition of mastery; and failing to address seniors' needs for information and support to help them deal with their concerns about personal finance, relocation, family interactions, and major life decisions, such as mate selection and child rearing.

As college seniors leave their undergraduate careers behind, these new alumni will face the complex demands of a new economy, ever-changing technology, an increasingly diverse America, and a demanding, fluctuating, and highly competitive job market. Given these realities, are today's college graduates adequately prepared to address the challenges of the future? Are they prepared to enter or reenter the world of work or graduate or professional school? Are they prepared for leadership roles in their organizations and communities? Are they prepared for the inevitable decisions involving family obligations and personal finance? On the basis of their undergraduate experiences, will today's graduates embody a sense of responsibility and obligation to support the future development of our institutions as alumni?

Several decades ago, as high school enrollments declined, college educators became interested in improving student recruitment and retention. As a part

of that effort, educators began to define and champion "the freshman year experience" by studying the transition needs of entering students and identifying factors that contributed to success in college. Now, as institutions of higher education face increasing scrutiny from the general public, legislative bodies, governing boards, accrediting associations, and students and their families in regard to the real and perceived value of postsecondary education, a growing circle of educators and prospective employers has joined me in saying that colleges need to do more for seniors than simply confer a diploma upon them. Some believe that the senior experience must also be better defined and improved and have stated that higher education has a moral obligation to pay more attention to students' preparation for practical success beyond graduation. I have been attempting to orchestrate a national conversation about the needs of seniors since 1989, when I began to organize my center's National Conference on the Senior Year Experience. In this article I present the reasons why it is critical that we turn our attention to seniors and then detail what campuses can do to improve the senior year experience.

WHY SENIORS DESERVE OUR ATTENTION

Seniors have high expectations. Because they have invested so much time and energy and so many resources, seniors and their families have high expectations. Seniors expect that finishing their degree will be a big deal—an exciting, satisfactory, rewarding, and celebratory experience. They also expect that it will be the ticket to a high-paying job and an immediate improvement in living standards and that it will provide the means to repay the student loans they have accumulated. It is very clear that we need to deliver on these expectations.

As students in transition, seniors have special needs. During students' final months as undergraduates

they finish required course work, apply for graduation, and prepare for an unknown future. Whether they are aware of it or not, these students are moving through a time of personal transition. While the transition issues for some graduates may be larger or more complex than for others (because of different personal characteristics such as age and experiential background), the senior year is particularly critical to student development because of the need for all students to reflect on and make meaning of the undergraduate experience.

In the senior year, special emphasis needs to be placed on helping students cope with impending change, assisting them in becoming aware of how various aspects of their lives have contributed to their development as learners, and enabling them to make connections between their academic experience and future plans. While there appears to be a general acceptance of the need for specific interventions to help students successfully make the transition into college, the problems and needs associated with the transition out of college have received little attention from college and university personnel, let alone researchers.

Seniors are our last chance. There is mounting evidence that while colleges are doing a very competent job of producing students with the requisite cognitive skills, they are not doing as good a job of producing graduates with certain important behavioral and attitudinal skills and with the competencies demanded by employers. The senior year is the last window of opportunity to address this potential deficit before students leave our custodianship.

Seniors will soon be our alumni. We need the support of these soon-to-be alumni more than ever because of increasing costs and reduced state and federal support. Economists estimate that between now and the year 2040 more than 10 trillion dollars in assets will

have been handed down by parents to their children. These inherited assets may then be available for potential distribution to offsprings' favorite charities, such as their alma maters.

While diverse in age, ethnicity, experience, and individual interests, graduating students also share common characteristics. What has been most striking to me during my research on the senior year has been the consensus that has developed among the scholars and practitioners I have consulted. The consensus is that the most basic need of seniors is for opportunities for reflection on the meaning of the college experience, integration and closure, and holistic support during the transition to post-college life. The senior year experience provides a vehicle for raising campus consciousness about addressing these long-neglected issues.

IMPROVING THE SENIOR YEAR EXPERIENCE

WHEN I REFER above to "the senior year experience," I mean a variety of initiatives in the academic and cocurricular domain that, when implemented in a coordinated effort, can promote and enhance learning, satisfaction, and a successful transition during the final quarter of the baccalaureate educational experience. I draw on my work with other scholars and practitioners to outline a set of recommendations that together make for such a coordinated effort:

Create a high-profile campus task force to assess the current senior year experience, make recommendations for improvement, and monitor the change process. Change does not occur on a college or university campus without a compelling reason. The value of data collection documenting deficiencies in meeting senior needs and expectations on a campus



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cannot be underestimated in establishing a senior experience effort. The task force should ideally represent all stakeholder groups. An outstanding model for such an assessment, change agent, and oversight group has been developed at the University of Maryland. Further information on this can be obtained by contacting William Thomas, vice president for student affairs.

Institute mandatory capstone experiences.

These are primarily, but not exclusively, summative curricular strategies that help synthesize basic themes of general education. They might include, but certainly aren't limited to, final projects, theses, recitals, senior seminars, or internships. I recommend that such experiences be incorporated into every academic major and that they be mandatory for all graduating students. On the basis of my own experience developing University 401, the new capstone course at the University of South Carolina, I suggest the following possible goals for capstone transition seminars:

1. Study transition in the senior year experience.
2. Prepare students for transition during and after the senior year.
3. Have students engage in analysis, self-assessment, and reflection about the meaning of their total undergraduate experience.
4. Have students demonstrate what they have learned from their liberal arts and general education courses and demonstrate the inter-relationship between at least two disciplines.
5. Have students demonstrate what they have learned in a career planning process that will be provided in this course.
6. Have students prepare a portfolio that documents and portrays what they have learned and how they have developed in college, academically and personally.
7. Allow students to participate in an academic support group of fellow students in which they receive instruction, support, and feedback from their instructors and classmates and in which they provide the same to them.
8. Encourage students to consider holistically a variety of issues to be faced in the process of leaving college. These issues will be in the following possible dimensions: personal, social, vocational, spiritual, political, civic, financial, practical, philosophical, psychological, and physical.

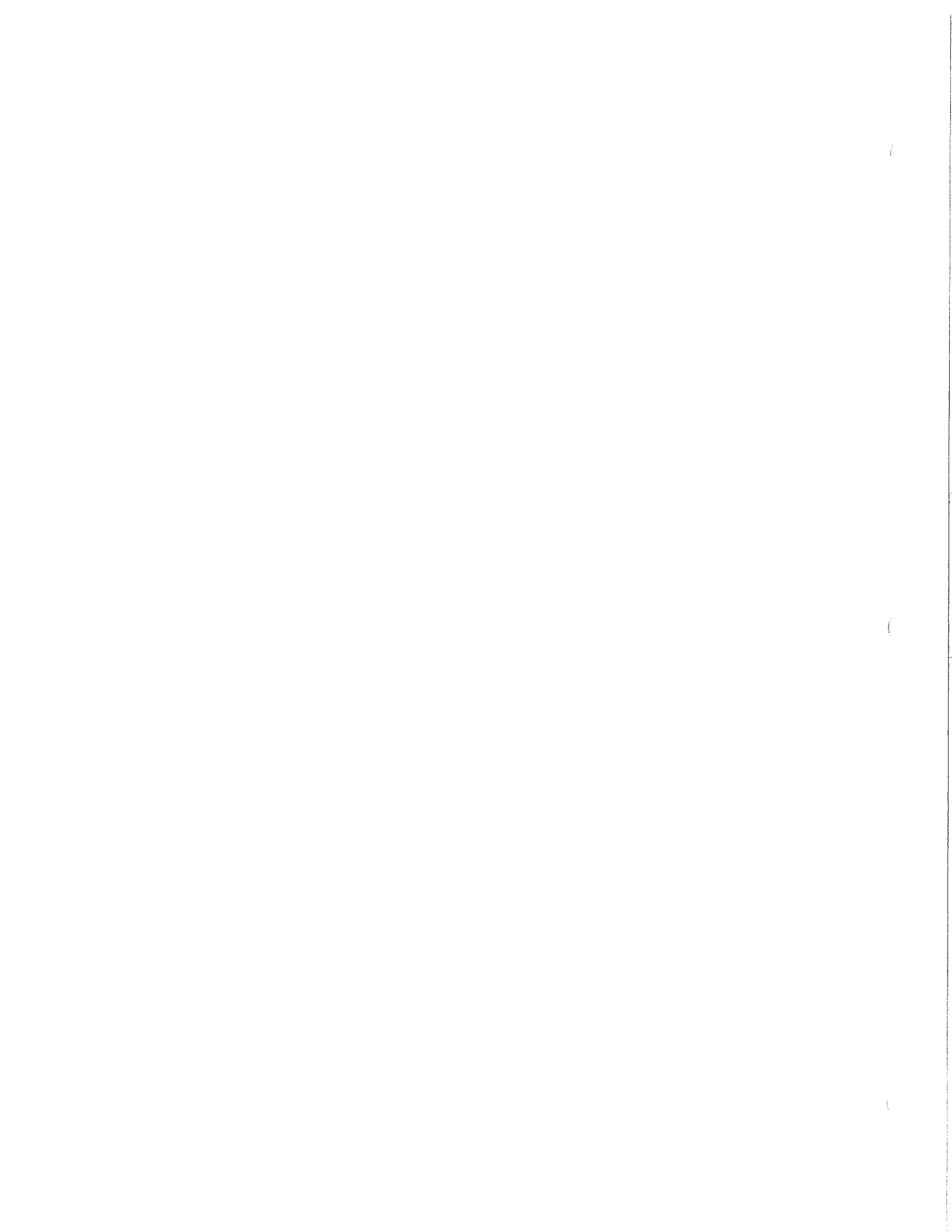
These efforts can be intentionally designed into capstone seminars or noncredit learning experiences, such as special counseling and advising groups, residence hall programming, career planning workshops, and alumni mentoring and work-shadowing efforts. I believe an especially productive and useful type of group support may be the creation of special senior seminars designed to be analogous to freshman seminars in addressing student transition needs holistically.

Pay special attention to rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations. Rituals such as commencement represent a unique opportunity to make students feel special and to help them leave the campus feeling positive about the institution and the time and money they have spent there. Senior rituals also present a marvelous opportunity for reflection, integration, and closure. Clearly, we need to make the most of these opportunities. In addition, it may be necessary to pay more attention to unofficial nonsponsored senior rituals, some of which may bring harm to students or unfavorable publicity to the institution. At the very least, there needs to be a standing committee responsible for commencement(s) and other rituals for departing students. Such a group must have representation from the faculty, student affairs, student governance organizations, and appropriate administrative offices.

Departing ceremonies, rituals, and customs also provide an outstanding opportunity to link new graduates with alumni and to instill a sense of ownership and responsibility for the campus's future. Practitioners wishing to improve senior rituals and celebrations need to make sure that campus practices unify the senior class; recognize achievement; cultivate loyal grads; encourage students to reflect on the meaning of their experience; and ease the transition to life after college.

Cultivate alumni before they leave the campus. Students need to be aware that their alma mater needs alumni for more than simply giving money. Here is another opportunity for positive contributions and new initiatives from an appropriate task force. Senior capstone courses can be an ideal curricular vehicle for consideration of the roles, responsibilities, and possibilities of alumni status. Another useful vehicle is the creation of a student-alumni association or group—that is, a group of currently enrolled students working with current alumni on institutional improvement. The creation and maintenance of “young alumni” groups and chapters can provide a bridge for anxious new graduates entering new communities and situations of work.

Evaluate the services provided by the career center. Because of the absolute necessity of having a dynamic, effective, successful, supportive career center, I recommend a special focus on, and assessment of the



My Educational Philosophy

John N. Gardner

To do any significant, focused work in higher education, each of us has to have an individual philosophy of education, which contains certain core value positions and beliefs. Here is mine, for example, which is my basis for my efforts to improve the first college year. I do not mean this to be a proscriptive recitation, instead, merely a catalyst for your own thinking.

1. Successful access to and attainment in higher education is the principal channel of upward social mobility in the United States.
2. Rates of failure and attrition are unacceptable and represent an enormous waste of human resources and capital. The largest amounts of failure and attrition during the college experience take place during or at the completion of the first year (or the equivalent thereof).
3. Necessary changes in pedagogies, policies, and curriculum must be based on sound assessment practices and findings, but this assessment must be mission-related and must pay appropriate respect to the vast diversity of American postsecondary institutional types. Institutions want and need to be able to compare their performance in the first college year with peer institutions and/or with aspirational groups in terms of learning outcomes vis a vis recognized, desirable standards.
4. The public demand for accountability is increasing and will continue to do so. In order to satisfy this demand, campuses must have more data on their student characteristics, what those students experience in college, how and what they are learning, and whether they are improving and receiving value-added knowledge and experiences.
5. Any efforts to improve the beginning college experience must be more connected to the K-12 pipeline than they are today. Although there are many notable efforts, the pre-college and college experiences are still largely unconnected.
6. Any effort to more seriously improve academic success during the first college year must involve more of the faculty and must be legitimized by the disciplinary cultures and bodies which measure and determine the criteria for success and advancement of faculty in their subcultures. A central issue is faculty resistance to change and the resulting need to vastly increase faculty buy-in to these proposed first-year initiatives.

7. The roles of campus chief executive, chief academic and chief financial officers, and trustees are also critical for mobilizing institutional change, for determining priorities, and for finding and allocating necessary personnel and fiscal resources; more attention must be paid to the knowledge of the first college year possessed by these four leadership categories and how they act upon this knowledge. In addition all important campus middle managers—deans and department heads—who either promote or inhibit change, must also be addressed in like fashion. Another key cohort is the institutional research professionals and other colleagues who are responsible for assessment and reaccreditation self-studies.
8. The most dominant perception held by the public and its elected representatives in terms of where responsibility for college student learning/failure rests is that the problems we face in higher education attainment are most fundamentally due to the failure of college students to take sufficient responsibility for their own learning. Pat Callan's National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, in its 1999 report "Taking Responsibility," stated the following:

We also found agreement on what these leaders take to be the most serious problem facing higher education. For these leaders, the real obstacle is not the price tag, but the fact that many students are not sufficiently prepared to take advantage of a college education . . . the most critical factor in higher education is the responsibility taken by students themselves.

While we recognize the enormous importance of student responsibility as a basis for their learning, we will not join in full agreement this chorus of student bashing and blaming the victim. Instead, we believe that responsibility has to be jointly and equally shared by the postsecondary institutions that have admitted these students and by the students themselves.
9. The first college year should be transformational; pedagogies of engagement are known, necessary, and desirable, and student learning in the first year also must be tied to issues of civic concern.
10. The foundation of all the outcomes we desire from American higher education, for better or worse, is laid in the first college year. Unfortunately, most campuses have very little research-based data on the effectiveness of their first college year, and thus more assessment of that year (and the tools to do so) is in order.

John N. Gardner
University of South Carolina
Remarks by John Gardner for His Retirement Reception
September 17, 1999

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for being here tonight and for your willingness to honor the University's efforts on behalf of providing more support for our own freshman students and therefore enhancing the freshman year experience throughout American higher education and beyond. As I've learned from my relatively recent work in my latest manic binge, The Senior Year Experience, there are four basic themes which must especially be addressed for departing students, our seniors, and I think these four themes are relevant to this occasion tonight and to my remarks. These are the themes of integration, reflection, closure, and transition.

First a few words about purpose. As I understand the intent of the organizers was in part to respond to my own request for the focus of this evening. We had a number of purposes:

1. To reflect on the origins and accomplishments of the University 101 freshman seminar here at USC.
2. To reflect on the origins and accomplishments of the international freshman year experience movement led by USC.
3. To celebrate our accomplishments.
4. To come together in a sense of University System-wide faculty and staff community.
5. To allow me an opportunity to bring together so many of my friends and colleagues over the past 32 ½ years.
6. To bring all of us together to renew our commitment to the concept of student success and add to our collective belief that we really are a great University, more than an outstanding local, state, regional institution - an international University with an international reputation.
7. For me to allow you to meet the people who have made me look good for these many years (my 101/FYE Center staff).
8. And finally, to give me an opportunity to thank a number of people. This list will not be exhaustive, but it will be thorough.

That's been one of my trademarks here, why should I change now?

First, some comments on University 101. You all know this is our nationally acclaimed three credit hour, letter graded freshman seminar course. We are now in our 28th year. We have taught over 50,000 students at USC Columbia and thousands more on the other campuses of the University. We have become a prototype for a course that is offered now at hundreds of campus in the United States and beyond. We started in the aftermath of a student riot in May, 1970. Students stormed the administration building and gave the University's 23rd president, Thomas F. Jones, an opportunity for what he later liked to describe, as an "opportunity for reflection on the meaning of student behavior." It

was that University president that moved the University forward to make an extraordinary commitment to its first year students. While I am often incorrectly given credit for starting University 101, I did no such thing. This was really the brainchild of Thomas F. Jones, who created a visionary group of faculty and administrative staff who worked with him on a task force to take a careful look at the freshman year with the hopes that we might create a next generation of students who wouldn't want to riot and trash the campus. I was called one day in July, 1972 by President Jones who invited me to participate in a workshop. He asked me if he could count on me and I said, this being a month after Watergate, "yes sir as long as it's not illegal or unethical." He laughed and then he told me that if I liked this workshop, I would be invited to teach a course. When I asked him what the course would be about, he said that "I didn't need to know that now, I would learn that in the workshop." Off I and 24 others went to a workshop of three weeks duration, three hours an afternoon, five days a week for three weeks. Seventeen out of the twenty-five of us taught University 101 for the first time that Fall 1972. Two years later, before the era of Affirmative Action was ushered in, I was contacted by an emissary from President Jones, two weeks before he left USC, and asked if I would like to become the director of University 101. I later learned that I was his third choice. The other two were tenured and had the good sense to say "no." My start then was rather inauspicious. My arrival in South Carolina had been even more so. I arrived here on January 10, 1967 on active duty of the U.S. Air Force. I was a psychiatric social worker working in the base hospital at Shaw Air Force Base. Twenty-four hours after arriving, I was clearing into the Base Education Office and was asked by the education officer if I would like to do some college teaching. Told him I didn't know. I'd never thought about becoming a college teacher. He asked me if I had any family in South Carolina, if I was married, and if I had a day shift job. When he learned that I did indeed have a day shift job, had no spouse, no significant other, no family in South Carolina, he said, "what do you have better to do then teach in the evening and earn a little extra money?" He added not parenthetically that "we're desperate for teachers." As Sid Varney was fond of reminding me years later if I had applied for a job in any other time in USC's history, I wouldn't have been hired. I didn't have the credentials.

Anyway, that's how I got my start as a part time adjunct teacher teaching courses first at USC Lancaster in the spring semester 1967. I will be eternally grateful of the students and community of Lancaster for giving me the gift of epiphany. It was there that I realized when I stopped to analyze why I was having more fun teaching than anything I had done in my young adult life, and I mean anything. Teaching South Carolina students was the opportunity to do the four things I loved to do the most: talking, reading, writing, and helping people. If it had not been for that initial experience, I'm sure I wouldn't have continued in higher education as a vocation. After completing my tour of active duty in October 1968, I took a full time job for two years at Winthrop College. I was fired at the beginning of my second year for my great teaching, great student report, and left wing political views. The University of South Carolina long a bastion of liberalism, promptly hired me back. I was appointed as an Instructor of History in the College of General Studies, September 1, 1970. It has been an incredible ride.

Now I would like to give appropriate thanks.

1. To Thomas F. Jones, the 23rd President of the University of South Carolina, may he rest in peace, for having the vision to create University 101 and the willingness to take a gamble on a young faculty member, John Gardner. He was an inspiration for me until he died in 1981. Three weeks before that horrible death, Sid Varney and I flew to his office on the campus of MIT where I swore a blood oath pact that I would do my best to keep the spirit of University 101 alive for the rest of my natural life.
2. W.H. Patterson, the 24th President of the University, may he also rest in peace. I want to thank him for his objectivity and for giving me a chance to prove that University 101 could indeed accomplish its objectives and bring great benefit to the University. I also want to thank him for reading a very long memo I sent him in 1974, some 21 pages, in which I laid out what I wanted to do with University 101 if only he would give me a chance. He let me know that he had read the memo but that it wasn't necessary to write him at such great length in the future. As you can see, I've learned that lesson well.
3. My first provost, Keith Davis, for giving me a direct order to get out of Columbia and sell the freshman seminar USC concept to American higher education. And also to Keith much more recently, for carrying the torch forward to develop a meaningful senior capstone seminar, University 401, in the Department of Psychology as a prototype for the rest of the University to emulate.
4. To the USC TRIO programs for introducing a number of innovative techniques that greatly increase the success of at-risk South Carolina students, especially in the Upward Bound Program. And also to the TRIO programs, especially Upward Bound, for giving me the opportunity to teach in Upward Bound for four summers, a profoundly influential teaching experience early in my career.
5. To the late Nicholas P. Mitchell, Dean of the College of General Studies and his #2 John J. Duffy for hiring me in the first place back in January 1967. Since then, I've been at every rank in the University.
6. To H. E. Varney for instilling in me that my highest oath of loyalty and service must be to South Carolina first - a true educator of the people in the best sense of the 20th century American educational populism.
7. And also to H.E. Varney and my former wife, Donna Gardner, for encouraging me to become the first faculty director of University 101.
8. To my colleagues in Applied Professions and the greater University faculty for tenuring and promoting me originally in 1976 and then again in 1981. No greater form of respect can a faculty member learn from his colleagues.
9. To my three Deans in Library and Information Science, Bill Summers, John Olsgaard, and Fred Roper, and to my loyal and supportive faculty colleagues in the College of Library and Information Science for inviting me to join them in this pioneering, innovative, and humanistic educational unit and for allowing me to contribute.
10. To John Duffy for inviting me to join the Regional Campuses as his Vice Chancellor for academic affairs, a position in which I served from 1983 to 1996. And also to John Duffy for teaching me to do two things first and foremost. 1) Make decisions as if I were going to stay at USC for the rest of my career and could live with the consequences of those decisions. 2) For making the primary

criteria for our decision making - what's best for the people of South Carolina and USC not necessarily for our own particular units. To understate the matter, John Duffy had a profound influence on my development.

11. To my former Provost, Frank Borkowski, for supporting me in many ways including and especially on the founding of our National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition in 1986.
12. To former President James B. Holderman for giving so many of us the courage to overcome South Carolina's massive inferiority complex and dare to be the very best at what we did.
13. To Provost James Moeser for allowing our Center to broaden its mission beyond freshmen to what we've come to call Students in Transition which include transfer students, senior students, and even those in the sophomore slump. Also to James Moeser for blessing my initial impulse to develop a senior capstone pilot course in 1994.
14. To Winona Vernberg, the first and only woman I worked for over my entire career at the University, a special thanks for her special breed of immediate, non-deferred, decisiveness, and for encouraging me to do the right thing for myself and others. I had some very tough personal choices to make that I couldn't have made without her. She gave me wonderful backing and I wished I had worked for a woman like her at an earlier point in my career when I might have had longer to enjoy it. Thank you Winona.
15. To Provost Jerome Odom, Associate Provosts Don Greiner, and John Olsgaard. I have never worked for three more competent and compassionate individuals who love this University of ours. To Provost Odom for supporting my unit in one of the most crucial decisions in our 28 year history. What an honor it has been to work for an academic I respect so much. For being an example of institutional loyalty, instructional and research excellence. Also to Provost Odom for really encouraging me on the University 401 concept.
16. To Associate Provost Don Greiner for really integrating University 101 into a larger more comprehensive set of undergraduate initiatives. For being really open to seeing what he could learn from the scholarship of our Center and providing, finally, a coherent rationale for undergraduate reform initiatives and simultaneously pursuing higher standards and academic excellence.
17. To Associate Provost John Olsgaard for being the key administrative, continuing link who provided invaluable support for large and small units including my little unit for over ten years, a pillar stability in a large context of frequent administrative changes.
18. To a number of members of the University's Board of Trustees who let me know throughout my career here that our work with University 101 and our South Carolina freshmen really mattered to them and that they really wanted me to stay focused on these students.
19. To my faculty and staff colleagues on the Regional Campuses who are among the least self-serving and dedicated higher educators I've ever met and who have earned a true and appropriate appreciation from their citizens and community. You folks in Columbia just can't believe how much they love us out there in

Sumter, Beaufort, Hilton Head, Lancaster, Union, Laurens, Allendale, and Walterboro.

20. To my colleagues on the USC Columbia Faculty Senate who I served for six years as Senator and three years as Secretary. Who taught me that at this great University, it is truly possible to have a collegial partnership with the administration for the governance of this institution.
21. To President John Palms, our 26th president for having both the vision and courage to be the only State agency head in South Carolina to exhort not only members of the USC family, but citizens and communities all over the State to help us be one of the top Universities in the United States and not to settle for being at the southeastern average. Not to settle for being poor and second or third rate. Let us recall when we think of John Palms in the regard, the words of John West in his inaugural address as governor in January 1971 when he said the greatest threat to South Carolina's future was "the tyranny of limited expectations." John Palms has not allowed that to happen to us. I also want to thank him for allowing me to pass his interview test in March 1991 and for making undergraduate education a higher priority here than it has been at any other time during my career. And also to John Palms for being such a marvelous example of the Greek adage of sound mind, sound body. For encouraging me by his example of not to give up my own regimen of physical fitness no matter how busy I was. While I never dared challenge him on the racquetball court, I want you to know I did top his time on the treadmill stress test. But that's the only thing I've topped him on. And finally, thank you John Palms for appointing Jerry Odom as our chief academic officer. Thank you President Palms.
22. To my faculty and staff colleagues of USC who have participated in University 101 faculty trainings over these past 28 years and who have taught University 101 and now University 401.
23. To my colleagues of countless University units who have developed partnerships with University 101.
24. To the staff of USC Columbia who really taught me how to be a good administrator and who really make the place work.
25. To my most beloved colleagues in our University 101 and FYE Center. Jerry Jewler who served as Co-Director of University 101 for six years after surviving a coronary by-pass surgery. To Dan Berman who also joined me after a major surgery and has served with me for ten years and for his willingness now to give up his great love of teaching film criticism in Media Arts to devote himself 100% to building on my work for a quarter of a century. I know he will further improve this great model program we have built here. To Stuart Hunter who was my principal administrative partner for sixteen years and who succeeds me as chief administrator of our National Center and who is as outstanding an administrator as any I have worked with in all my years, and whose judgement, fairness, and organizational skills made possible the achievement of my vision for the freshman year experience movement. And to my beloved colleagues, present and past, on the staff, especially Vicky Howell and Penny Smoak who cleaned up after me for 19 and 13 years respectively, Michael Miller, Joan Kirkpatrick, who continues our tradition of keeping track of every red cent so we maintain our record of no audit

exceptions. Ann Jennings our wonderful graphic artist. To Nina Glisson, our Conference Coordinator who has stayed with us for 13 years. I hope she never leaves. To Dorothy Fidler who had the vision and ability to found our publication series and Betsy Barefoot who won the mainstay at directing our research and publications activities for the past eleven years. There are a great many individuals out there tonight that I will thank individually and privately in addition to those aforementioned.

Finally, a few words about the future. University 101 is 28 years old and is still growing and learning how to more fully achieve its potential. We are a service unit to the USC Columbia schools and campuses and to the University's Regional Campuses. Eighty-five percent of our students are now enrolled in discipline specific sections for the Colleges. We will continue to help the academic units make their own first-year students be more successful in their majors. The demographic trends in the pipelines in South Carolina suggest that even as we raise our academic admissions standards, South Carolina freshmen will need University 101 more than ever.

In addition, due to the impact of performance funding, the importance of enhancing retention, graduation rates has never been greater. In 1994, we started University 401, Senior Capstone Seminar, which was given permanent approval by the USC Columbia Faculty Senate on April Fool's Day 1998. We now have University 401 courses in the units of Psychology, Education, and Journalism and new offering in the process of being developed in Engineering, Applied Professions, and pre-professional programs for pre-medical students. Given the importance of creating even more loyal and supportive of alumni who will support the Capital Campaigns of the future, we will need University 401 even more which we would not have had were it not for Jerry Odom, Don Greiner, and Keith Davis, the Department of Psychology and John Palms, Too, the latter who kept getting letters from influential donors to have the University do more to make seniors ready for the real world, and kept nudging Jerry Odom and me.

I'm also pleased to say that I leave my beloved National Resource Center in a position of great strength. This past year we had a record year. For example, our annual conference, our 18th in a row, was up 50% in attendance. We're now holding our breath on the NAACP flag boycott. I hope many of you out there will work hard to persuade your legislators to take that flag down. It's hurting all of us. It's having a negative effect on many other great things this University can and must do. This past year, our teleconferences reached 8,000 people due to our stellar partnership with DEIS. Our publications reached 4,000 subscribers, thanks to the work of Dorothy Fidler and Betsy Barefoot and their great team. Dorothy incidentally also retired with me June 30th along with her beloved husband, Paul. She is staying on as our Journal editor.

A few words about my own personal transition. I am moving to Brevard, North Carolina where I'm now in the final stages of building a dream house on a mountaintop. I wanted to live in a somewhat cooler place and enable me to give my successors whom I leave behind the freedom they deserve in my literal absence. But I'm not really going away, thanks to Provosts Odom, Greiner, and Olsgaard. I have been reappointed by them as

Senior Fellow in our Center and I will continue to provide advice, counsel, vision, commitment for our conferences, teleconferences, publications, and University 101. In my new role, I will serve in the role of corporate memory and I will continue to work to develop more versions of University 401. I didn't create University 101, I just kept that alive. But I did create University 401 and have much to do yet to develop its potential. I will also continue to work to bring new partnerships to our Center and to the University for new strategic alliances. There's also some probability I'll be taking on a full-time project for a major foundation focusing on freshman year experience assessment issues. Regardless of the outcome of that potential project, I will be working 100% on my great passion, the freshman year experience.

Finally, I want to thank the people of South Carolina for being such great and appreciative students, colleagues, and supporters. For being so accepting of this Connecticut Yankee. I'm especially thankful to this University for giving me a chance for 32 years to do anything I was willing to work hard to achieve. This place has been my foundation, my platform, my family, my inspiration, my support group. I could always count on Carolina never letting me down. There is no friendlier, more nurturing place on the face of my earth. I am so glad I stayed here and could never get another job. I thank all of you and I hope you will help my colleagues keep University 101, University 401, and our National Center flourishing. They will serve you well. They need you. I know you will be there for them just as you always were for me. Like me, they will be there for you too.



Empirical Measures of the Impact of the Work of John N. Gardner

Prepared for Provost Brian Foster, University of New Mexico

- 1. Establishing the national and international workshops, seminars, teleconferences offered by the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition at the University of South Carolina which I founded in 1986:** We have offered a total of 103 professional meetings of these types attended by 74,548 higher educators from nations all around the globe.
- 2. Establishing a national publishing house and developing a literature base on the topic of the first year experience and students in transition:** Again through the National Resource Center, we have institutionalized the country's only academic publishing house which focuses exclusively on the topic of the first-year experience and other students in transition. Cumulatively this represents production and dissemination of some 33 monographs and books, 10 other center publications including the only blind referee journal in the field, the Journal of the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, 12 teleconference videos, and 3 instructional videos. Each year approximately 4,000 individual orders are placed for these publications. We can reasonably assume that each publication order is used in some fashion by multiple individuals suggesting a significant further impact.
- 3. University 101, The First-Year Seminar at the University of South Carolina at Columbia:** This course of which I was the first faculty director, who served in that capacity for a quarter of a century, will be offering classes this year for its 31st year of existence. Through the fall semester one year ago the course had enrolled over 52,000 students. Research done over many years on the outcomes of this course suggest that students who participate in this course are significantly more likely to return for a second year of college and to ultimately graduate from the University of South Carolina than students who do not enroll in University 101.
- 4. Concepts developed by Gardner and widely utilized in higher education:** The terms "First-Year Experience", "Senior Year Experience", and "Students in Transition" were all developed and coined by Gardner; they have been universally adapted and permeated through the American and international higher education lexicon. These terms are used on hundreds of college and university campuses to describe specific programs offered for students. They are even used now in announcements placed in various professional print organs announcing positions open for application. The terms "the first-year experience" and "the senior year experience," developed by Gardner, were ultimately registered with the U.S. Patent Office as licensed trademarks of the University of South Carolina.
- 5. Impact of Textbook Series:** Gardner is the co-author with A. Jerome Jeweler (also with the University of South Carolina) of the first text by a U.S. college

textbook publishing company (Wadsworth) to be utilized specifically for first-year seminar courses. This work, College is only the Beginning, was published in 1985 and has been followed by fourteen other Gardner/Jewler textbooks which have been used by hundreds of thousands of American and Canadian college students. Considering the adage that "imitation is the highest form of flattery," it should be noted that virtually every major college publisher in the country now offers some type of textbook in this genre in emulation of Gardner's original work in establishing this new field of publishing.

6. **Reports of ACE Survey:** For a number of years the American Council on Education conducted an annual survey entitled "Campus Trends." A 1987 issue of that survey reported 37% of the responding institutions indicated that they were "taking steps to improve the freshman year." By 1995, 87% of the respondents indicated in the affirmative to that same question. This change and dramatic rise is commensurate with the increase in activities of Gardner's National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition to call more attention to the importance of the first year of college.
7. **Wide spread Use of First-Year Seminars:** The first-year seminar course, Univ 101, for which Gardner provided 25 years of leadership at the University of South Carolina has been replicated by hundreds of colleges and universities. As a result of this, now, according to the "Survey of Current Practices in the First Year of College" conducted by the Policy Center on the First Year of College in 2000 by surveying 600 academic officers who were a representative sample of all postsecondary institutions in the United States, is that 62% of community colleges offer first year seminars and 80% of baccalaureate institutions offer these courses for a total of 73% of all American postsecondary undergraduate degree granting accredited colleges.
8. **Philanthropic Support for Gardner's Work:** Since 1999 Gardner has been awarded from private philanthropies \$3,000,000 for the founding of a new Center, The Policy Center on the First Year of College, and it is anticipated that an additional \$2,400,000 will be awarded for 2003-2004.

Brian, I could continue in this vein but I think this gives you enough to go on for your letter. Let me know what else you need.

CONFERENCE HISTORY							
#	Conference	Location	Date	# Part.	#Sess.	#Pres.	Hotel
FISCAL YEAR 1982-1987							
1	Annual	Columbia SC	2/4-6/82	173	25	27	Holiday Inn
2	Annual	Columbia SC	2/2-5/83	322	92	125	Holiday Inn
3	Annual	Columbia SC	2/5-8/84	364	94	199	Holiday Inn
4	Annual	Columbia SC	2/17-20/85	476	158	225	Radisson
5	Annual	Columbia SC	2/15-19/86	944	165	291	Radisson
6	International	Newcastle, England	7/7-11/86	228	139	211	Polytechnic/Crest
7	Annual West	Irvine, CA	1/29 - 2/2/87	559	94	163	Irvine Hilton
8	Annual	Columbia SC	2/21-25/87	800			
	TOTAL			3866	767	1241	
FISCAL YEAR 1987-1988							
9	International	Southampton	7/20-24/87	256	127	167	Univ&Moat House
10	Southwest Conf	Tulsa, OK	11/19-21/87	177	45	85	Westin
11	Annual-West	Irvine, CA	1/23-27/88	448	109	189	Irvine Hilton
12	Annual	Columbia, SC	2/20-24/88	847	195	379	Radisson
13	Midwest Conf	Oak Brook, IL	4/14-16/88	355	68	119	Hyatt Oak Brook
14	Northeast Conf	White Plains, NY	4/21-23/88	436	100	180	Holiday Inn Crowne
	TOTAL			2519	644	1119	
FISCAL YEAR 1988-1989							
15	International	Cambridge	4/25-29/88	212	116	94	Robinson College
16	Small College	Pittsburgh, PA	10/2-4/88	258	44	184	Pittsburgh Hyatt
17	Canadian American	Toronto	11/6-9/88	432	89	57	Hilton International
18	Community College	Columbia, SC	12/4-6/88	165	31	92	Marriott
19	Annual West	Irvine, CA	1/29-31/89	298	50	274	Irvine Hilton
20	Annual	Columbia, SC	2/18-22/89	660	130	105	Radisson
21	Northeast Conf	White Plains, NY	4/6-8/89	215	48	87	Holiday Inn
22	Midwest Conf	Oak Brook, IL	4/13-15/89	222	45		Crowne Plaza
	TOTAL			2462	553	893	
FISCAL YEAR 1989-1990							
23	International	St. Andrews	7/10-14/89	163	93	131	Univ. of St. Andrew
24	FYE Conference	Denver, CO	10/8-10/89	198	24	53	Hyatt Regency
25	Small College	Cincinnati, OH	12/9-11/89	371	50	95	Omni Netherland
26	Diversity	Costa Mesa, CA	1/25-27/90	407	66	165	Westin South Coast
27	Annual	Columbia, SC	2/17-21/90	759	121	234	Radisson
28	FYE Conference	Austin, TX	4/8-10/90	213	43	74	Austin Marriott
	TOTAL			2111	397	752	
FISCAL YEAR 1990-1991							
29	Canadian American	Halifax	7/22-25/90	239	63	110	St. Mary's Univ
30	Small College	Baltimore, MD	11/11-13/90	217	49	75	Omni Inner Harbor
31	FYE Conference	Tampa, FL	12/2-4/90	133	38	55	Shearaton Grand
32	Diversity	Long Beach, CA	1/31-2/2/91	271	47	102	Shearaton Long Bch
33	Annual	Columbia, SC	2/22-26/91	506	104	191	Marriott
34	Teaching	Kansas City, MO	4/11-13/91	202	57	103	Kansas City Marr.
	TOTAL			1568	358	636	
FISCAL YEAR 1991-1992							
35	International	Cambridge	7/22-26/91	106	63	98	Robinson College
36	Small College	Mystic, CT	11/7-9/91	244	35	68	Mystic Hilton

37	Annual	Columbia, SC	2/21-25/92	472	84	144	Marriott Gov House
38	Teaching	Kansas City, MO	4/2-4/92	132	35	63	Holiday Inn
39	Canadian American	Victoria, BC	5/3-6/92	240	47	85	Univ of Victoria
40	Science & Technology	Worcester, MA	6/11-13/92	116	28	51	Worcester Poly. Ins
	Total Conferences			1310			
	Total RSITs			562			
	GRAND TOTAL			1872	292	509	
FISCAL YEAR 1992-1993							
41	Small College	Philadelphia, PA	10/25-27/92	91	19	23	Penn Tower Hotel
42	Annual	Columbia, SC	2/19-23/93	473	72	133	Gov House Mar.
43	Undecided Forum	Columbia, SC	2/20/93				Gov House Mar.
44	Leadership & LA	Marietta, OH	4/16-19/93	149	49	64	Marietta College
45	Diversity Forum	Charleston, SC	5/27-29/93	150			Univ of Charleston
	Total Conferences			863			
	Total RSITs			697			
	GRAND TOTAL			1560	140	220	
FISCAL YEAR 1993-1994							
46	International	Boston	7/10-14/93	203	34	50	Boston College
47	Small College	Oak Brook, IL	10/17-19/93	142	26	37	Hyatt Regency
48	Teaching	Arlington, VA	11/18-20/93	124	29	41	Crystal City Marr.
49	Annual	Columbia, SC	2/18-22/94	537	100	170	Adam's Mark
50	Athlete Forum	Columbia, SC	2/18/94	65	16	19	Adam's Mark
51	Disability Forum	Columbia, SC	2/18/94	97	21	27	Adam's Mark
52	Urban Campus	Charleston, SC	6/2-4/94	129	24	47	Univ of Charleston
	Total Conferences			1297			
	Total RSITs			737			
	GRAND TOTAL			2034	250	391	
FISCAL YEAR 1994-1995							
53	International	Dublin	7/18-22/94	172	69	104	Dublin University
54	Leadership & LA	Marietta, OH	10/7-10/94	104	30	47	Marietta College
55	Small College	Minneapolis, MN	10/20-22/94	124	25	42	St. Paul Airp. Hilton
56	Annual	Columbia, SC	2/17-22/95	667	142	252	Adam's Mark
57	Athlete Forum	Columbia, SC	4/30-5/1/95	56	10	13	Embassy Suites
	Total Conferences			1123			
	Total RSITs			904			
	GRAND TOTAL			2027	276	458	
FISCAL YEAR 1995-1996							
58	International	York	7/11-15/95	129	65	91	University of York
59	Students in Transition	Dallas, TX	11/9-11/95	356	89	150	Fairmont Hotel
60	Canadian American	Toronto	12/3-5/95	262	52	99	Royal York Hotel
61	Annual	Columbia, SC	2/16-20/96	803	121	275	Adam's Mark
61	Diversity Forum	Columbia, SC	2/17/96	62	17	32	Town House Hotel
63	Leadership & LA	Marietta, OH	4/12-15/96	89	28	41	Marietta College
	Total Conferences			1701			
	Total RSITs			920			
	GRAND TOTAL			2621	372	688	
FISCAL YEAR 1996-1997							
64	International	St. Andrews.	7/15-19/96	169	81	133	Univ of St. Andrews
65	Students in Transition	San Antonio	10/23-26/96	283	64	102	Crowne Plaza
66	FYE West	Costa Mesa	1/18-21/97	223	32	51	Westin South Coast

67	Annual	Columbia	2/21-26/97	777	109	211	Adam's Mark
68	Meeting of Minds Teleconference-est viewers		3/25/97	945			
68	Prof. Devt Seminar	Newark, NJ	4/11-12/97	129			Newark Radisson
	Total Conferences			2526			
	Total RSITs			1120			
	GRAND TOTAL			3646	286	497	
FISCAL YEAR 1997-1998							
69	International	Warwick, England	7/21-25/97	155	46	103	Univ of Warwick
70	Students in Transition	Oak Brook, IL	11/5-8/97	320	67	113	Oak Brook Marr.
71	FYE West	San Diego, CA	1/29-2/1/98	372	53	92	Mission Valley Mar
72	Annual	Columbia, SC	2/20-24/98	821	127	262	Adam's Mark
73	Teaching Teleconf.		4/21/98	1824			
74	Changing Teleconf.		4/21/98	5454			
	Total Conferences			1668			
	Total RSITs			699			
	GRAND TOTAL			2367	293	50	
FISCAL YEAR 1998-1999							
75	International	Dublin, Ireland	7/20 - 24/98	267	91	202	Univ. College Dublin
76	Students in Trans-East	Arlington, VA	11/11 - 14/98	215	38	62	Doubletree Hotel
77	Students in Trans-West	Irvine, CA	1/20 - 23/99	303	67	128	Orange Cty Hilton
78	Annual	Columbia, SC	2/19 - 23/99	1273	168	402	Adam's Mark
79	Leadership	Arlington, VA	4/9-11/99	124	24	54	Crystal City Marriott
80	Retention Teleconf.-estimated viewers		3/18/99	3570			
81	SYE Teleconference-estimated viewers		4/9/99	1057			
82	Learn Comm Teleconf.-estimated viewers		4/19/99	2557			
	Total Conferences			9366			
	Total RSIT			91			
	GRAND TOTAL			9457			
FISCAL YEAR 1999-2000							
83	International	Edinburgh, Scotland	7/26-30/99	303	135	219	Univ of Edinburgh
84	Students in Transition	St. Louis, MO	11/10-13/99	325	58	121	St Louis Apt Marriott
85	FYE West	San Francisco, CA	1/26-29/00	449	74	148	San Fran Apt Marriott
86	FYE Annual	Columbia, SC	2/18-22/00	1095	184	195	Adam's Mark Hotel
87	Binge Drinking teleconf. - estimated viewers		3/16/00	1232			
88	Service Learning teleconf. - estimated viewers		4/6/00	1067			
89	Partnerships teleconf. - estimated viewers		4/27/00	972			
	Total Conferences			5443			
	Total RSITs			151			
	GRAND TOTAL			5594	451	683	
FISCAL YEAR 2000-2001							
90	International	Reading, England	7/24-28/00	246	90	186	Univ of Reading
91	Students in Transition	Cincinnati, OH	11/1-4/00	410	69	117	Omni Netherland
92	FYE West	Costa Mesa, CA	1/24-27/01	327	42	82	Westin So Coast Plaza
93	Annual FYE	Houston, TX	2/16-20/01	953	155	285	JW Marriott
94	Enrollment Mgt teleconf - estimated viewers		3/8/01	938			
95	FYS teleconf - estimated viewers		4/5/01	1934			
96	Commuter students - estimated viewers		4/26/01	1092			

	Total Conferences			5900			
	Total RSITs			202			
	GRAND TOTAL			6102	356	670	
	FISCAL YEAR 2001-2002						
52	International	Honolulu, Hawaii	7/9-13/2001	418	109	248	Sheraton Waikiki
68	Students in Transition	Oak Brook, IL	10/27-30/01	327	65	115	Hyatt Regency Oak B
89	FYE West	San Francisco, CA	01/9-12/2001	249	40	80	San Francisco Airport
106	Annual FYE	Orlando, FL	2/15-19/2001	936	168	283	Hyatt Orlando
101	Retention Teleconf		3/7/02	don't have these #s yet			
102	Assessment Teleconf		4/4/02	don't have these #s yet			
103	Demographics Teleconf		4/25/02	don't have these #s yet			
	Total Conferences			1930			
	Total RSITs			170			
	TOTAL TELECONFERENCES			22642			
	OVERALL RSIT TOTAL			6253			
	OVERALL CONFERENCE TOTAL			45653			
	GRAND OVERALL TOTAL			74548			

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**Senior Fellow, National Resource Center for
The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition**
Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Library and Information Science
University of South Carolina at Columbia

Education.

Marietta College, Marietta, Ohio. 1961-1965
Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences
Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana. 1965-1966.
Master of Arts in American Studies

Honorary Doctoral Degrees.

Marietta College, 1985
Doctor of Laws, Honoris Causa
Baldwin-Wallace College, 1990
Doctor of Education, Honoris Causa
Bridgewater State College, 1991
Doctor of Public Education, Honoris Causa
Millikin University, 1999
Doctor of Humane Letters, Honoris Causa
Purdue University, 2000
Doctor of Higher Education, Honoris Causa
Teesside University (United Kingdom), 2000
Doctor of Letters, Honoris Causa
Rowan University of New Jersey, 2001
Doctor of Humanities, Honoris Causa

Employment.

October 1999 – present. Brevard College, Brevard, NC

Executive Director, Policy Center on the First Year of College
(funded by grants from The Pew Charitable Trusts and The Atlantic Philanthropies)
Distinguished Professor of Educational Leadership

1967-Present. University of South Carolina, Columbia.

1999 - present. Senior Fellow, National Resource Center for The First-Year
Experience and Students in Transition

1999 - present. Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Library and Information Science,
University of South Carolina

1974 – 1999. Executive Director, University 101

1986 – 1999. Executive Director, National Resource Center for The First Year
Experience and Students in Transition

1998 – 1999. Distinguished Professor of Library and Information Science

1983 – 1998. Professor of Library and Information Science

1983 – 1996. Vice Chancellor/Associate Vice Provost for Regional Campuses
and Continuing Education

1981 – 1983. Professor of Applied Professional Sciences

1976 – 1981. Associate Professor of Applied Professional Sciences

1972 – 1976. Assistant Professor of Applied Professional Sciences

1970 – 1972. Instructor, College of General Studies

1967 – 1968. Part-time Instructor, College of General Studies

1968 – 1970. Winthrop College, Rock Hill, South Carolina

Instructor of History

1969. Director of Counseling Services, Project Upward Bound

1966 – 1968. United States Air Force

Active duty, honorable discharge. Served as psychiatric social worker
363rd Tactical Hospital, Shaw Air Force Base, Sumter, South Carolina.

Awards and Honors.

University of South Carolina

Outstanding Teaching Award, 1975.

Division of Student Affairs Faculty Award,

“for outstanding contributions,” 1976.

Honorary Life Membership, USC Alumni Association,

the highest award to a non-alumnus “for devoted service
in behalf of the University,” 1997.

Administrative Affirmative Action Award, “for an outstanding
job in promoting equal opportunities at the University,” 1998.

John N. Gardner Inspirational Faculty Award, "to be given henceforth to a member of the University faculty who has made substantial contributions to the learning environment in campus residential life," 1999.

Recognition from Professional Associations.

Selected by the American Association for Higher Education as one of 20 faculty in the US who ". . . have made outstanding leadership contributions to their institutions and/or American higher education," 1986
Outstanding Contributions Award to the Orientation Profession, National Orientation Directors Association, 1995
Honorary Member, Canadian Association of College and University Student Services, "in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the Association," 1995
Academic Leadership Award, Council of Independent Colleges, "for exemplary contributions to American higher education," 1996
Virginia N. Gordon Award for Excellence in the Field of Advising, National Academic Advising Association, 1999
Recipient of Lifetime Achievement Award, American College Personnel Association, 2002.

Other Forms of Professional Recognition.

In the January 1998 issue of *Change* magazine, Gardner was cited in an article naming approximately 80 people as the "past, present, and future leaders of higher education." The authors of this study drew on the results of approximately 11,000 questionnaires to name the leaders whom *The Chronicle of Higher Education* dubbed "the movers and shakers." Gardner was included in a special category of eleven so-called "agenda-setters."

Also in 1998 Gardner was named as one of the "top ten professionals who have most influenced student affairs practitioners." This was based on a random sample of practitioners throughout the country as part of a study entitled "The Professional Influencer Project" sponsored by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Foundation and conducted by the University of Georgia.

On January 28, 2002, Gardner received an award from the First Year College, North Carolina State University, for "Vision and Leadership in the National Movement of Research and Advocacy on Behalf of First-Year University Students."

Board Service.

Member, Board of Trustees, American Association for Higher Education, 1990-94.
Member, Board of Trustees, Marietta College; additional service as member of

the Board Executive Committee and Chair, Academic Activities
Committee 1994-present.
Member and Treasurer, International Partnership for Service Learning
Board of Trustees; 1992-present
Member, National Advisory Board, American Association of Colleges
and Universities Health and Higher Education AIDS and HIV Project, 1996-1999
Member, National College Advisory Board, *The New York Times*, 1997-present
Member, American Council on Education National Advisory Board to the
Cooperative Institutional Research Program, 1996-1999
Member, Academic Advisory Council, Lumina Foundation for Education, 2001 - present

Presentations.

Gardner has delivered hundreds of papers, speeches, presentations, workshops, seminars in the US, Puerto Rico, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, Denmark, and Norway on issues related to the success of first-year and senior students.

Consultancies.

Gardner has served as a consultant to more than 400 colleges and universities in six nations.

Publications.

Books.

Gardner, J. N., & Jewler, A. J. (2003). *Your college experience*, (5th edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

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Gardner, J.N. (1983). *A guide for orientation course instructors* (2nd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

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Articles and Book Chapters.

Gardner, J. N. (2002). Why department chairs are critical to the success of first-year students. *The Department Chair*, 12(3), 19-20.

Gardner, J. N., interview with (2002). Improving first year: Good for students and departments. *Academic Leader*, 18(4), 4, 8.

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Gardner, J. N., Siegel, M. J., & Cutright, M. (2001, Fall). Focusing on the first-year student. *Priorities*, A publication of the Association of Governing Boards.

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Professional Memberships.

American Association for Higher Education
National Orientation Directors Association
Canadian Association of College and University Student Services
National Association for Developmental Educators
National Academic Advising Association



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MEMORANDUM

DATE May 29, 2002
TO Trent Gabert
FROM Brian L. Foster *Brian*
SUBJECT Information packet for John Gardner

Attached is the information packet for John Gardner. I think it's pretty self-explanatory. If you have questions, or if it's inappropriate in some way, please let me know.

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