

The FYP Approaching 20: Reflections and Challenges

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As the First-Year Program approaches its 20th anniversary, and as I approach the end of my six years as associate dean, this is a good opportunity to take stock of where the program is and assess some of the changes that have taken place in the last few years. It is also an opportunity to lay out some of the new issues and challenges that the program will face entering its third decade.

A brief history of the FYP

For those newer to SLU, a brief history of the program is in order, if only to help understand the particular challenges that the program faced in 2001 when I became associate dean. The year-long program is comprised of two distinct semesters. In the fall, each FYP college is built around a team-taught, multi-disciplinary course that examines certain general, enduring and fundamental human questions, and where the students in that course live together in all or part of a residence hall. Originally, a single course was taught across the various colleges; each faculty team would put its own twist on a syllabus that was created by the program as a whole. In 1990-91 the FYP underwent a thorough review by an ad hoc University committee and external consultants. On the basis of that review several changes were made, the most important of which was that teams of FYP faculty could propose thematically-organized courses, distinct in content from each other, and then students could choose the college based on the theme of most interest to them. The guiding notion was that both faculty and students would find the FYP more engaging if the subjects of inquiry were those in which both groups, students and faculty, had a keen interest. Although the colleges now explore a rich diversity of themes, the program has strengthened its common expectations with regard to promoting critical, active, and collaborative learning, and in its handling of the communication skills it seeks to develop in first-year students.

Until the spring of 2001, that fall experience was carried over into the spring, with the difference being an emphasis on research-oriented communication skills. However, beginning in 2001, as a result of a broader curriculum review on campus, faculty voted for “stand-alone,” individually-taught first-year seminars for the spring. These seminars still continue the historical focus on research skills, but students can now choose one of 35 to 40 seminars based on an area of intellectual interest. Although these seminars are not residentially-based, they are small, thus allowing students to build close relationships with another group of students and with another faculty member. Students who wish to enroll in the seminar taught by their fall FYP seminar instructor/advisor are guaranteed a spot in this seminar.

Another major change that has taken place over the course of the program’s history is a change in the size of faculty teams. For the program’s first 10 years, the

standard FYP college was three faculty and 45 to 48 students, with a few cases of four faculty and 60 students. In the mid and late 1990s, a few faculty began to experiment with two-person teams and over the course of the ensuing five to seven years, the two-person team became the most common size, with it eventually completely replacing the three-person team. The program has not seen a three-person team in several years. The benefits of the smaller team are multiple:

- Even though the student-faculty ratio was the same, a classroom of 30 or 32 felt much more intimate and was more pedagogically effective than one of 45 or 48, and disengaged students were less able to “hide,” thus enhancing learning for them and the rest of the class.
- Coordination between two faculty members was much easier than with three, both in terms of being on the same intellectual page and the more mundane issues of calling meetings and the like
- Having two faculty also reduced the ability of students to try to play off one instructor against the others, leading to smoother-running classrooms
- Finally, the two-person teams began to realize that they did not need to split up into “seminars” as often (and many don’t at all) in order to do communication skills instruction. This was manageable with 30 in a way it wasn’t with 45. The result is a more consistent message to students within each college, removing many of the old complaints about inconsistencies in instruction, evaluation criteria, and/or grading.

The final major change worth noting was the structure of the residential portion of the program. Over the course of its history, no aspect of the FYP has undergone more change than how the residential piece is administered. For most of that history, especially during the 1990s, the FYP was responsible for administering the residential and judicial elements of the first year. The FYP office hired the residential staff for the FYP and was largely responsible for disciplinary and judicial issues within the program. In the late 90s, with the arrival of Dan Sullivan and former Vice-President and Dean of Student Life Cissy Petty, the program lost this responsibility as both Dan and Cissy felt strongly that students needed a seamless four-year residential and student life experience. The “break” between the way the FYP operated in the first year and the rest of the student experience was simply too large. In giving responsibility for the FYP residential component to Student Life, the office of (then) Residential Learning Communities and Housing was created, and a full-time professional director was hired, with the promise of partnership with the FYP and a growth in other sites of residentially-based academic programs. That change and the new director were in place by the fall of 2000.

By the spring of 2001, the FYP was in the midst of its first full year with two distinct semesters, in the middle of a transition to two-person teams, and just beginning a new collaborative relationship with Student Life in the administering of the residential component of the program.

Challenges facing the program in 2001

In that context, the program faced a number of challenges as I took office in the summer of 2001. These can be grouped into three categories:

- Pedagogy and curriculum
- Staffing
- Collaboration with offices with overlapping responsibilities

Below I provide specifics for each category and in the next section I discuss where each area of concern is today.

Pedagogy and curriculum

The major challenge in this category was what to do with the newly created “First Year Seminars.” Although the program had a long-standing commitment to teaching research skills as the central goal of the spring semester, we had not done a great deal of faculty development work in this area, and with the prospect of each of us individually having to assign, teach, mentor, and evaluate an ongoing research project for each of 15 or 16 first-year students, we didn’t have a much of a collective sense of how to do that, or at least how to do it well. Faculty had little difficulty in finding exciting topics in that first spring, but it seemed as though we needed some new pedagogical tools to really enhance student skills in research. In particular, the rise of the Internet as a research tool, and the lack of sophistication with it that students were quickly demonstrating, posed new challenges for the program’s stated goals with respect to research skills.

A second pedagogical challenge was our collective recognition that we needed to do more with oral communication. This recognition emerged from a variety of places, not the least of which was an increasing push in the late 1990s to get oral communication to the same place of importance we had always held writing. The advent of the FYS was also relevant here, as more faculty began to assign oral presentations of one sort or another as a culminating assignment for student research projects. Our general disappointment with the quality of student presentations made it clear that we had to address the pedagogy of oral communication. Of course, doing so could not mean neglecting writing. However, we did feel as though we had more or less figured out the basics of teaching writing in the fall semester, at least to a point where we could offer a fairly standard set of pedagogies and assignment models to faculty. Given this, it made sense to focus our energies on the research and oral communication skills.

The major curricular challenge we faced was ensuring that FYPs, especially in the fall, had serious, substantive content. One perception on the part of some number of faculty was that even if it was true that the skills instruction of the program was effective, there were too many courses that were intellectually lightweight. Whether or not this criticism was true, it was out there and the program needed to at least pay attention to it. Although the skills instruction was the “glue” that held the FYP together as a coherent program, we had to recommit ourselves to making sure that we offered courses that also challenged our students as critical thinkers and provided them with some degree of substantive knowledge relevant to the rest of the curriculum.

Staffing

The changes made in the early 1990s that moved the program away from a common syllabus had relieved a number of staffing pressures by making the program more attractive to more faculty. However, getting the 36 or so faculty necessary to staff the program was a continual challenge, especially finding the last few. The last-minute scramble to staff the program had several problematic consequences. Throwing teams together at the last minute to ensure we had them in time to mail course descriptions to incoming students was not a recipe for successful team teaching, and often resulted in quickly written course descriptions that were not sufficiently descriptive of the course students actually ended up taking.

Where we were unable to find faculty from the full-time instructional staff, the program ended up hiring adjuncts to teach in the program. The obvious drawback of this solution was that in a few cases we ended up hiring instructors with often tenuous ties to SLU and then had them teaching in one of our flagship programs, and one that emphasized academic advising, which was a particularly difficult task for an adjunct who either had no institutional ties or was not especially interested in having any of a more ongoing nature. One way we were able to avoid these problems was hiring spouses/partners of full-time SLU faculty as part-time faculty teaching in the program. To the extent that being able to offer FYP adjunct work (which is well-compensated) is a way to attract job candidates with academic spouses/partners, this use of adjuncts in the FYP made, and continues to make, institutional sense (even if the program was sometimes marginally worse off in the process). In 2001, we were still too dependent on adjuncts with somewhat tenuous ties to SLU, despite the increased hiring of faculty spouses and partners.

One final staffing issue was expanding the pool of faculty participating in the program, specifically by bringing in tenured faculty who had not previously taught in it. When the FYP was created, the assumption was that senior faculty would be the primary source of staffing, given that they were the most experienced teachers and that tenure afforded them the opportunity to try something new and challenging. That is not the way that the program evolved. After the first two or three years, assistant professors were the most frequent contributors to the program during most of the 1990s. I will have more to say about these numbers later on, but in 2001, the challenge was to get the senior faculty back on board, especially by expanding the pool of participants.

Collaboration with other offices

As noted earlier, the shift of first-year residential responsibilities to Student Life meant that administering that component of the FYP would now be a collaborative effort between RLCH and the FYP. In 2001, we had only one real year of experience with this model, so it would be an ongoing challenge to figure out how to make that collaboration work. This process was complicated by the perception among many long-time FYPers that this work had been “taken” from us, leading to lingering resentment about the process and the new structure. In addition, although having a full-time professional with a master’s degree running RLCH brought needed expertise and new ideas to the process, the gulf between the cultures of student affairs and academic affairs that was beginning to

make itself present on the campus at that time was playing out in challenging ways within the FYP. Figuring out how to make a living-learning program work when the “living” part reported to one VP and the “learning” part reported to another VP was the problem we faced.

A second area of collaboration was with academic advising. For a number of years, the associate dean of the first year was also the director of academic advising. Around 1999 or 2000, that job was cleaved off and assigned to a member of the faculty as a part-time responsibility. This was clearly a step in the right direction of ensuring that someone had more focused attention on advising, and especially beyond the first year. However, it did mean that the relationship between the FYP and the new advising office needed to be clarified, especially since the offices shared clerical support.

More generally, the FYP had for many years, and for understandable reasons given the politics that surrounded it, often operated in a bit of a vacuum, with limited communication with the rest of campus. One of the results of this was that many faculty didn't know very much about the program, or, in some cases, held factually wrong impressions of it. Given that the faculty, during the 2000 curriculum revision, had both reasserted the importance of the fall semester by not even being able to get a motion on the floor to abolish it, and voted to keep the second semester in a revised form, it seemed that the days of serious threats to the program's existence were over and now it had to make itself a fully confident part of the university community.

These were the challenges faced in 2001. In the next section, I provide a brief description of where each of those issues stands today and the questions that need to be addressed in the next few years.

The state of the FYP in 2006

Pedagogy and curriculum

Over the last five years, the program has put a great deal of attention on faculty development in the FYS. We have included workshops on teaching research skills as part of our regular offerings during the year and at our May retreat. We have also created a regular pair of workshops in December and January, totaling 5 hours, designed for faculty new to the FYS, but also attended by some returnees, that lays out the goals of the course and then shares pedagogical best practices and assignments from past courses. Those best practices have focused on sharpening our students critical thinking and organizational skills by working closely with them as they learn to evaluate research materials they find in the library and online, and as they attempt to integrate those materials into their finished products. By using a series of assignments that involve us constantly “looking over the shoulders” of students as they engage in the process of research, we have seen the quality of research projects in the FYS steadily increase over the last few years. These assignments ask for evaluative summaries of source material, challenge students to clarify their thesis and the sub-arguments it implies, and then to outline their final project at the paragraph level. The best evidence for this success is the

number of students who tell us they are using these techniques in other classes in the sophomore year and beyond even though they involve a substantial amount of work.

The results of this pedagogy are evident in the FYS evaluations, where over the course of the last six years, we have seen the question asking about hours spent preparing for the course rise by 0.22 (on a 5 point scale), the question on effort put forth rise by 0.13, the question on learning to distinguish among kinds of sources rise by 0.20, and the connection of the research work to the content of the course rise by 0.14. (The full data can be found in Appendix 1.) Anecdotal evidence from long-time FYS faculty point to a rising quality of work being done in the spring term, though some of this is certainly due to a better quality of student. The high quality of papers awarded the O'Brien Research Prizes over the last three years is demonstrated by their inclusion in the Honors Reception at Family Weekend in the fall, where the projects of first-year students hold their own with the work of upperclass summer research fellows and other participants.

Oral communication in the FYP and FYS has also received additional attention over the last five years. We have done a number of workshops on this topic, from the more formal sorts of speaking, and its evaluation, to the use of informal speaking and group work as a mode of learning in the classroom. The Oral Communication Initiative and Finkel's Teaching with Your Mouth Shut has been very influential for a number of faculty in the program. Faculty are much better at assigning carefully constructed oral communication assignments, often integrated with other course work, and have developed sophisticated and appropriate evaluation processes for them. One practice that is becoming increasingly common is working with students to develop the criteria of evaluation for oral presentations so that they have more buy-in. This fall, three or four FYPs are asking students to create posters and present them, nicely combining visual literacy with research and oral communication. Finally, an increasing number of FYP and FYS faculty are making use of Finkel's "conceptual workshop" technique and other forms of active learning and group work that are moving us away from both traditional lecturing and unstructured whole-group discussion and giving students more direct responsibility for their own learning. Student evaluations suggest that the Finkel pedagogies are both enjoyable and effective, especially in the FYP where students really get to know each other both in and out of the classroom. In the fall of 2005, our main two questions about instruction in writing and speaking were evaluated equally for the first time ever, as oral communication finally caught up with writing.

It is hard to measure the intellectual weightiness of FYP courses directly. A look at syllabi over the last few years would suggest that more substantive work is going on, and some evaluation numbers might help complete the picture. The mean response to "Learned a great deal in this course" rose 0.4 from 1995 to 2005 and 0.3 from 2000 to 2005 (and is currently at a record high, 0.6 above its lowest number in 1997). The question about the degree to which in-class discussions simulated further conversation in the residence hall is up 0.5 from 1997 and 0.3 from 2000. And the question on the overall evaluation of the course is up 0.3 from 1995 and 0.2 from 2000, and up 0.6 from its low in 1997. The complete data can be found in Appendix 2.

The PSC course evaluation means for FYP and FYS courses run, overall, near the means of other 100-level courses (see Appendix 3). The FYP tends to run two to three-tenths below the mean for 100-level courses, with the FYS scores running a tenth to two-tenths higher. It is worth noting in the context of the issue of intellectual weightiness and “rigor,” that the FYP scores best on the PSC question about whether the course demanded a high level of effort. The FYP does comparatively worse on the direct questions about quality of instruction. Whether this is a function of it being a required course, or the dynamics and challenges of team teaching, or something else, we do know from experience that for many instructors who otherwise have very high evaluations, FYP evaluations tend to run a step lower. Given that FYS scores so much higher, my own guess is that the team teaching environment has something to do with those lower FYP scores. It may be that it’s harder for teams to come across as being as “prepared” or as able to “answer questions effectively” and the like than it is if it is one’s own classroom, given that classroom management and preparation require additional coordination in a team environment. It would be an interesting project to see whether teams who have taught together for a number of years see a smaller drop-off in their FYP evaluations compared to their individually taught courses, including FYS, as their experience together makes the classroom feel to students more like one taught by one faculty member.

Staffing

The program has also made progress on the staffing issues noted earlier. The Dean and I have moved up the calendar for recruiting faculty for FYP and FYS, beginning the process in late fall for the following year. I have run informational meetings in the fall as a way to give faculty, especially new faculty, a chance to learn about the program. As the program has evolved over the years, and as the composition and interests of the faculty have changed, staffing has become less of a problem. Rather than hunting down 5 or 6 faculty in the last few weeks, it often comes down to just one more team or even one more person. We have been consistently able to get 36 faculty, or more, in time to get materials out to students. Finally, over half (95) of the current SLU faculty have taught in the FYP or FYS at least once. Given that the last five years has seen a significant turnover in the faculty and that only a small number of these new faculty have entered the program, this means that the vast majority of tenured faculty have participated.

With respect to adjunct faculty, we have largely eliminated the employment of faculty with no experience teaching at SLU or no other connection to the university. It has been several years since we hired an adjunct who was not a spouse/partner and who had also no teaching experience at SLU. The creation of the Lecturer positions has helped here, as two of our long-time adjuncts were able to secure Lecturer positions, giving them a stronger tie to the university (though both are spouses of full-time faculty). We have also been fortunate to have several other spouses remain in the program for multiple years, often moving in and out of adjunct and full-time visiting positions in the process. These longer-term part-time faculty have been excellent program citizens and have done well in the classroom. Their other commitments to the university and their desire to secure longer-term employment has given them the ability and incentive to

develop the institution-specific knowledge and skills that the FYP requires, especially in advising. The result has been that the number of true adjuncts in the program has been just 2 or 3 over the last few years, with all having prior SLU teaching experience and a family relationship with a full-time faculty member. In 2005-06, the percentage of FYP/FYS instructors not on tenure-track or tenured was 18.6%, the lowest since 1999-2000, though still high by longer-term historical standards. That number jumped a bit this fall. The complete historical data on FYP participation by rank can be found in Appendix 4.

The strategy to hire spouses/partners of full-time faculty to do this work has been largely successful along other dimensions, as several of the partners hired this way have made major positive contributions to the program, with a number of them parlaying their work in the FYP into either full-time status or an ongoing lecturer position. In the best of all possible worlds, the program would be entirely staffed by full-time faculty, but if we can find part-time instructors with an ongoing relationship to SLU who are interested and able to do the work of the FYP and FYS we should continue to hire them, especially if they enable us to hire or retain a spouse/partner in a full-time position.

One of the reasons the number of non-tenure-track faculty remains high, despite the use of adjuncts being low, is the combination of the two Lecturer positions and the participation of staff members who are not part of the faculty. For example, Ginny Schwartz and now Carol Budd both teach in the program on a regular basis as members of the Academic Affairs staff. Both the Chaplain and Associate Chaplain have taught in the program, as have members of the Library faculty and the Student Life staff (back a few years). These are almost all people with teaching backgrounds of one sort or another, and they have brought a diversity of interests and topics to the program, while their experience in it has made them better at their jobs. In some cases a lack of teaching experience has created a steep learning curve, and some challenges for students, but nothing that has been a serious problem in the classroom.

The issue of participation by rank is a fascinating one. I think the program has been successful at attracting some senior faculty in who in previous years were highly skeptical of the FYP. At the same time, the overall level of participation by full professors has been fairly consistent at 20%, although it jumped a bit this fall. I reprint in the paragraphs below an analysis of staffing by rank that I shared with department chairs this past spring.

The more interesting trend of the last few years is a jump in the participation of tenured faculty and a drop in the participation of assistant professors. This year [2005-06] saw 61.4% of the FYP/FYS faculty come from the ranks of the tenured faculty. That is the highest percentage since the first two full-time years of the program in 88-89 and 89-90. Interestingly, that increase is almost solely due to a larger number of associate professors joining the program. The participation rate of full professors is amazingly consistent at about 20% of the program faculty. The associates have averaged about 31% in the long run, but for 5 or 6 years from about 1999 forward they had fallen well below that number,

finally getting above it this current year. For the last two years, associates have been the largest contributors to the program, and the last time that was the case was in 1997-98. The participation rates of the assistant professors have dropped from a fairly stable 33% or so in the late 90s and early 00s, to 20% and 18% in the last two years, both well below the long-term average of about 34%. Over the history of the program, assistant professors have been the largest contributors, and the last two years are a throwback to the participation ratios of the early years of the program.

So the question at hand is whether these changes in participation by rank among the tenure-track faculty are problematic. I think the answer is a qualified “no.” As I understand the origins of the FYP, it was believed that the tenured faculty should and would staff it heavily, given that interdisciplinary work made more sense after tenure and that the time commitment of the program might interfere with research agendas for tenure. Plus, it just made sense that a “flagship” program should be staffed by the best faculty we had to offer. However, two things changed that dynamic in the 1990s, I think. First, the unintended faculty development benefits of the FYP made it clear that teaching in the program could actually enhance one’s case at tenure because one would come out of the program a better teacher. The FYP was the place where exciting, cutting edge teaching was taking place. Second, more young faculty were trained in, or were really interested in, interdisciplinary work. The move away from a common curriculum likely made the program more attractive to junior faculty who wanted to design their own interdisciplinary courses. These two factors likely explain the high junior faculty participation rate for many years in the 90s.

So what has changed? Two things I think. First, there are now a number of other places on campus where there is exciting pedagogy taking place. Or put differently, the FYP was instrumental in transforming pedagogy across campus, and the ironic result was that we lost the distinction that differentiated our product and made us an attractive place to teach! Young faculty who want to do cool teaching have more options. Part of this is due to the creation of the CTL, which has become a site to do much of the faculty development work that used to happen only in the FYP. That’s a good thing, of course, but has also made the FYP less differentiated as a teaching opportunity. Second, even though we continue to hire junior faculty with interdisciplinary interests, we are also hiring more faculty with serious research agendas who may well believe (I think wrongly) that the opportunity costs of the FYP are too high before tenure. This may be especially true in the sciences in the aftermath of a recent tenure case. The end result of this is somewhat frustrating as the FYP cannot seem to capture enough of this amazing energy and interdisciplinary thinking among the junior faculty

Perhaps we are moving to a faculty culture where more junior faculty get their interdisciplinary joys from area studies programs or the collaborations within the arts and the sciences, rather than through the FYP. To the extent that this

means that they are crossing disciplines in ways that probably contribute more directly to their research agendas and thus have a scholarly payoff at tenure, that is probably to the institutional good. And perhaps the recent rise in the participation rates of associate professors reflects a decision to come in to the FYP post-tenure when the scholarly opportunity cost is lower and people have a better sense of the institution. Again, that is probably a good thing overall. My concern is that the FYP not completely lose the energy and fresh thinking of junior faculty, and that we continue to get the participation rate from tenured faculty that can compensate if we do not attract junior faculty.

These trends involving rank have continued this fall, with the percentage of assistant professors at an all-time low and the percentage of full professors at an all-time high since the pilot year. As much as the staffing picture has stabilized in recent years, it remains an ongoing challenge for the program to attract enough faculty to staff it fully at our desired student-faculty ratio and to continue to capture the energy and excitement of junior faculty, especially in the sciences.

A final staffing note is the decreasing use of the three-year commitment and one-semester leave option. As part, I believe, of the increased teaching options on campus, fewer faculty are making the three-year commitment and opting to take the one-semester leave at the end. The option for a pre-tenure sabbatical has also decreased the lure of the leave option in the FYP. The result is more faculty moving in and out of the program in various FYP/FYS combinations, normally just negotiating a rolling reduced departmental load as they do. I am slightly concerned about a rise in faculty wanting to just come in for a semester or two and take the extra .5 unit as half an adjunct stipend. I'd like to discourage that where possible, but it hasn't posed a big problem so far.

Collaboration with other offices

The most important administrative change in the last five years with respect to the work of the FYP has been the creation of the office of Academic Advising Programs (formerly known as Academic Planning, Advising, and Services) and having a full-time director, now associate dean, in place in Whitman Hall. Bringing several of our academic resource offices under one umbrella, with one person dedicated to overseeing that work, has not only improved the work of those offices (as evidenced by our increased retention rates and falling probation and suspension rates), but has also relieved the FYP of some of the responsibility for getting that work done. Speaking personally, simply having another faculty-administrator colleague here in Whitman has made collaboration much easier and made a number of communication processes more efficient. This improved relationship has, however, yet to translate into the kind of sustained consistency in first-year advising that we need to achieve. I will have more to say about this below, but it remains an area that needs the attention of both associate deans.

The relationship with Student Life and Residence Life specifically has been in a great deal of flux in the last two years, given the changes in leadership at both the vice-presidential level and the director level in Residence Life. The most persistent problem

since 2001 has been the lack of stability in the Residence Life director's position. In the last five-plus years, there have been four different directors. This has posed significant challenges to the collaboration needed to make the residential component work. Each new director has had to figure out how the collaboration with the FYP should work (and such collaborations with academic affairs are not always experience they have had) while simultaneously trying to figure out how to run their own office. One result of this is that the rules of the collaboration changed every year, particularly the details of the roles of Community Assistants and Residential Coordinators, as well as the way in which both interacted with Security and the Chief Judicial Officer as well as faculty. Once FYP faculty got used to one arrangement, the rules would shift again.

On top of that instability, the vision about Student Life's work that came from the very top was, for many years, one that often ran contrary to the how the FYP understood the residential component of the program contributing to the university's educational mission. For example, it is essential that FYP faculty know enough about student behavioral and community issues so that we can be effective academic advisors to them and so that we do not walk into class blind to issues that may be bubbling beneath the surface of a group that lives and learns together. For much of the last 5 years, the leadership in Student Life often used claims of "confidentiality" as a way to restrict the flow of such information between residential staff and faculty, with the result being that FYP faculty were unable to see the bigger picture in ways we saw as central to a functional living-learning program. Faculty who were willing to collaborate and genuinely see themselves as having a role to play in teaching and advising the whole student frequently found themselves feeling as though they were in a turf battle rather than a partnership.

All of these factors together made getting the residential piece right nearly impossible, and the constant changes in direction quite understandably caused many FYP faculty to wonder whether investing in that work was worth the trouble. FYP veterans in particular were becoming increasingly frustrated with both the lack of productive collaboration and the apparent inability of the leadership in Student Life to understand and appreciate the nature of the FYP and the work that faculty wanted to do but couldn't.

Many of these frustrations came to head with the death of Emily Mounce, when her former FYPers turned to their faculty advisors for information and comfort, yet the advisors were not seen as having any real role to play in that process in the eyes of the Student Life leadership, preventing them from providing the information and comfort students needed. Not understanding, or seeing as threatening, the power of the faculty-student relationship in the FYP, and the multiple dimensions it could take on, made it hard for the leadership in Student Life to allow those on the ground floor to work with the FYP in the ways that many of us saw as possible and necessary. These tensions became a constant source of frustration over the last few years.

At the same time that the Residence Life-FYP relationship was constantly reinventing itself, the program's relationships with other Student Life offices improved, often in spite of the aforementioned problems in Student Life more generally. As

Orientation moved from the FYP to Residence Life and finally to Co-Curricular Education and Programming (CCEP), the collaboration between the FYP and that office has been excellent, and we continue to have an Orientation program that is the envy of many other schools. The maturation of the Wellness Initiative has also created very positive collaboration between the FYP and CCEP, as well as with the FYP and Health and Counseling, Security, and the Associate Dean of Student Life. The Residential Education committee continues to function well as a site of collaborative problem solving and of continuity and collective memory even in the face of turnover in Residence Life. The FYP's relationship with Career Services has also improved in the last few years. Where staffing has been stable in Student Life, these relationships developed out of personal connections and now have become structural and institutionalized. It is worth noting that Kate McCaffrey (CCEP) and Carol Bate (Career Services) both arrived the same year that I became associate dean.

At the moment, we seem to have come to a better place in the Residence Life-FYP partnership. Two important things have happened. First, stability in the assistant director for community development position has meant that Josh Drake has been able to, as he enters his second year, really understand the FYP and the way it might work better with the student residential staff. As a result, we began some new initiatives over the summer and into the fall that have restored some of the older, more productive, practices that were standard in the FYP when it ran the residential component itself. Second, the arrival of Joe Tolliver as dean and Matha Thornton as director of residence life appears to have bought stability to those positions. Even after only a short time, it is clear that they understand how this collaboration can and should work and are beginning to put into practice procedures and policies to forward that goal. It will take a cycle or two for this understanding to filter down to the Community Assistants and throughout the FYP faculty, but the groundwork is there. One piece of evidence is the way in which we responded to the Patrick Breslin death, with all involved recognizing that his FYP would be a central group of concern, and potential source of healing, as the campus dealt with the fallout.

The relationship between FYP and Admissions has continued to strengthen in recent years. The FYP has a clear and regular role in the Admissions visit days in the spring, and the associate dean has become a regular attendee at the Enrollment committee of the Board, both of which help the FYP to understand Admissions strategy and marketing. Including the associate dean on a number of search committees within Admissions has helped to ensure that new entry level counselors get a clear understanding of the program and that academic affairs' interests are in the room when new hires take place. Communication throughout the late spring and summer has continued to improve, and the "handoff" of the incoming class from Admissions to the FYP in early May and the transmission of student files to the Registrar and then back to Advising and the FYP have both become much smoother than several years ago. In the past year, we have also revamped some of the ways we work with international students, which appears to have been successful. Finally, Admissions continues to be extremely helpful in tracking down students who are missing forms over the summer.

One other office worth mentioning is the Center for Teaching and Learning, as its doors opened during the last five years. The CTL and FYP have, of necessity and desire, had to work closely from the start to ensure that our faculty development offerings were coordinated. Spending a year running both offices was helpful to me in understanding the possible synergies and overlaps. For a couple of years, we have tried a model where the FYP's workshops were folded into the broader CTL schedule. That had some advantages, but this year we have moved to a model where the FYP will have its own schedule of workshops and brown bag lunches, but where we will also recommend, especially to new FYP faculty, that they attend workshops at the CTL that are of particular importance to our work, e.g., the two this fall on advising.

Challenges for the next associate dean

The challenges of the FYP are surely too numerous to list (see the attached job description in Appendix 7). However, these are ones that I believe are most pressing for the next associate dean. They are in no particular order.

1) *Repairing and revitalizing the collaboration with Student Life, especially Residence Life.* As noted earlier, I believe that with the new leadership in Student Life, we are already starting down this road. The next step is to get more and deeper buy-in to the residential component on the part of program faculty. If cynicism about Student Life continues to fade, this may not be a huge challenge. The deeper challenge will be maintaining the culture of collaboration and mutual understanding should staffing instability grown. Finding ways to institutionalize this work into the very structure of the program and student life will be the key to making this work.

2) *Ensuring more consistent high-quality first-year advising.* One of the ways the FYP sells itself to prospective students and parents is on the basis of the advising relationship. A number of FYP faculty do excellent work here, both in terms of the mechanics of getting students into courses and meeting requirements and as mentors in transitioning students to the world of liberal education. However, high-quality work is not nearly consistent enough across the program. We cannot afford to do anything less than our best work here, both because it is a promise we make on the way in and because of the potential that bad advising has for creating problems for students. The next associate dean will have to work closely with Bob Thacker and the faculty who have already committed to re-envisioning academic advising to provide resources and leadership to bring other faculty into this work and to shape a recommitment to the centrality of high-quality academic advising in the FYP.

A key element of that collaboration with the Academic Advising office will be helping our students to become increasingly intentional in their work over all four years at SLU. A group of FYP faculty this year are piloting a kind of "advising journal" with their students, where students write short essays in response to various "prompts" during the summer, beginning with a "letter of introduction" and including a reflection on liberal education prompted by discussions and readings at Orientation. We hope to get this project in place across the FYP next fall. The next associate dean of the first year will

have to ensure that faculty take this work seriously and determine whether or not it actually contributes to student intentionality in the ways we believe it can.

3) *Cultivating a stronger partnership with International and Intercultural Studies.* Specifically, both Assis and I agree that we need to encourage the creation of more FYPs that draw on faculty from area studies programs as a way of bringing students with those interests immediately in contact with those faculty. This will have obvious benefits for enrollment in courses in those programs, but can also be seen, in partnership with good advising, as a way to start thinking about off-campus study early on. The next associate dean will need to think about recruiting program faculty in partnership with Assis and the directors of those area studies programs.

4) *Continued work with grants and assessment.* One of the unexpected parts of the last five years has been the degree to which the FYP has been involved with various grants and assessment projects on campus. The AAC&U grant involving Brown College (which we hope we can continue) has been wonderful as has the Department of Justice grant on sexual violence. Both, however, have meant time and energy to administration and assessment. The FYP will continue to be deeply connected to the Wellness Initiative and its work on data collection and program assessment. And as our own campus-wide assessment work, and Middle States in particular, continues to grow, the FYP will surely be front and center there.

5) *Better students, higher expectations, and grade inflation.* One set of issues that has become more pressing in the last couple of years is what to do with the fact that we are now admitting better students. To what degree has the FYP historically been premised on the need to “bring students along” as they enter SLU, and to what degree has a stronger incoming student profile, especially as they become more “serious of purpose,” undermined that premise? To what degree does it demand that we, in the FYP and FYS, begin to ratchet up our expectations? The average grade in both semester has climbed over the last decade and, in my view, remains somewhat too high in the FYS for sure. How can we better calibrate our grading and assignments to the ability of our students?

6) *The implications of the new Philosophy and Goals statement.* I have said little about it to this point because I am not certain what impact it will have. The new Philosophy and Goals statement can be found in Appendix 5. The good news is that it was passed with the input of a wide range of faculty in the program and, I think, genuinely reflects the kind of program that a newer generation of faculty would like to teach in. There is ownership there. The caution is that the original proposed document was much heavier on specifics about rhetoric and communication goals, and the eventual outcome was to put those pedagogical goals and strategies in a separate document (see Appendix 6). To some degree that was the result of some skepticism about the level of detail in that now-separate document, but it also reflected some skepticism about the goals themselves. The next associate dean is going to have to figure out how those two documents are related, what the “constitutional” status of the guide to rhetoric and communication pedagogy is, and how the program’s work interlaces with the developing broader Rhetoric and Communication Initiative.

7) *Faculty development and program identity in the wake of the demise of Canaras.* The single worst thing that has happened to the program in the last five years is the loss of our annual program retreat to Canaras in May. Those 48 hours were not only a chance to engage in focused faculty development work and to enable teams to have real time to work on their courses, it was, crucially, a time for faculty in the program to get to know one another socially and for us to develop a real identity as a program. It was also a chance to extend all of that work and socialization to our colleagues in Student Life. Doing this work on campus has kept some of the faculty development work, little of the focused team time, and almost none of the socializing. The next associate dean will need to figure out how to, if at all possible, recapture the spirit and content of Canaras. Part of this challenge is finding ways for faculty to see themselves as members of the FYP in the same way as they see themselves as members of their home departments or programs. Canaras helped in that regard, and with its loss, the next associate dean will have to be inventive in finding substitutes.

He or she will also have to figure out how to re-engage veteran faculty in the faculty development work that takes place while classes are in session. This has been an ongoing challenge the last few years and one that will persist as more and more faculty who teach in the program are coming back rather than entering for the first time. This challenge is two-fold. First, we need returning faculty to share their experience and expertise with the rest of the program. However, those faculty who have been gone for a number of years have missed out on successful innovations and discarded failures in our pedagogy. The FYP and FYS they are stepping back into is not the same one they left. Finding ways to get returning faculty to see that they might need to get caught up on changes in our pedagogy and new “best practices” will be a significant challenge for my successor.

Conclusion

The state of the FYP approaching 20 is largely good. The program has become institutionalized in the best sense of the term, and many of the problems of its childhood and adolescence are gone as it reaches maturity. The challenges facing the next associate dean are largely those of a program in good shape overall with a few places that need some focused attention. If there is one overarching theme that comes out as I look ahead, it might best be summarized by remembering that the FYP is the only common experience that virtually every SLU student has. As such, that puts a tremendous burden on the program to live up to its promises. The hardest part of administering this program is ensuring that the quality of the experience students get in 18 or so FYPs and 35 to 40 FYS sections is roughly the same. I constantly worry that some students are coming out of either semester not having been challenged in the ways that I would minimally expect, or that they have not mastered the minimal level of skills that they should have. Administrators and faculty can only control the conditions we create for student learning and not student effort. The challenge as an administrator to make sure that FYP and FYS faculty and their courses are creating the conditions such that students can meet program’s learning goals. The next associate dean needs to learn from what has worked in this regard, and what has not, so that the quality of the student experience is consistent across the program. The universality of the FYP/FYS experience demands no less of us.

Appendix 1: FYS Spring Course Evaluation History 2001-2006

	Spring 2001		Spring 2002		Spring 2003		Spring 2004		Spring 2005		Spring 2006		Change from 2001
	M	std	M	std	Mean	std	Mean	std	Mean	std	Mean	Std	
Asked to think critically	4.42	0.67	4.27	0.70	4.32	0.70	4.31	0.73	4.35	0.69	4.41	0.67	-0.01
Encouraged participation in discussions	4.33	0.76	4.26	0.86	4.30	0.86	4.30	0.85	4.41	0.74	4.40	0.76	0.07
Learned locating research materials	4.22	0.74	4.17	0.86	4.26	0.75	4.22	0.79	4.32	0.78	4.29	0.72	0.07
Learned distinguishing among diff. sources	4.10	0.84	4.04	0.87	4.26	0.72	4.20	0.79	4.27	0.77	4.30	0.73	0.20
Learned how to cite appropriately					4.07	0.88	4.01	0.90	4.15	0.86	4.14	0.81	0.07
Learned integrating research into writing*	4.20	0.76	4.17	0.80	4.13	0.78	4.06	0.85	4.22	0.79	4.21	0.77	0.01
Learned integrating research into speaking*	4.03	0.79	3.96	0.84	3.84	0.93	3.82	0.95	3.99	0.84	3.93	0.85	-0.10
Understand strengths as writer	3.84	0.93	3.74	1.00	3.78	1.00	3.70	1.06	3.81	0.98	3.78	0.91	-0.06
Understand strengths as speaker	3.73	0.89	3.67	0.93	3.65	0.97	3.62	1.03	3.75	0.94	3.66	0.92	-0.07
Understand weakness as writer	3.99	0.85	3.88	0.94	3.88	0.88	3.79	1.01	3.92	0.92	3.95	0.86	-0.04
Understand weakness as speaker	3.76	0.89	3.56	0.92	3.58	0.99	3.62	1.04	3.71	0.97	3.57	0.93	-0.19
Research projects connected to class	4.18	0.88	4.22	0.89	4.26	0.86	4.26	0.88	4.25	0.83	4.32	0.78	0.14
I put considerable effort into course	4.26	0.83	4.12	0.93	4.23	0.78	4.22	0.92	4.28	0.79	4.39	0.68	0.13
Hours spent preparing for class	2.68	1.01	2.60	0.99	2.64	0.93	2.74	0.98	2.85	0.94	2.90	1.00	0.22
Average, q. 1 through q. 13	4.09		4.01		4.04		4.01		4.11		4.10		

Appendix 2: FYP Fall Course Evaluation History 1995-2005

	F'95	F'96	F'97	F'98	F'99	F'00	F'01	F'02	F'03	F'04	F'05
1. Climate was conducive for learning	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.8	4.0	4.0
2. Course challenged to think	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1
3. Students felt free to ask questions	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.3	4.2
4. Directions for course assignments were clear	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.5
5. Richer understanding through different professors	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.8
6. Instructions emphasized relationships among topics	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.8	4.0	4.0
7. Helpful to discuss conflicts in structured settings	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.5
8. Collaborative projects outside improved interaction inside class	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.8
9. Learned great deal in this course	3.3	3.4	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.7
10. Improved writing skills	3.6	3.8	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.7	3.8
11. Oral projects were valuable	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.8
12. Grades were accurate performance assessment	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.5
13. Instructors created climate for discussion	3.6	3.8	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.9	3.9
14. Out-of-class events enhanced course content.			3.2	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.7	3.5	3.8	3.5
15. Faculty were actively involved w/non-acad. Issues			3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.3
16. Discussions in FYP stimulated continued conversation			3.0	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.5
17. Expectation of critical thinking	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.3
18. Workload level for this course	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.7	na	na
19. Quality of student participation	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.7	3.5	3.7	3.6
20. Quality of instruction by faculty team	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.8
21. Degree of faculty availability and openness	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.9
22. Overall Course evaluation	3.3	3.2	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.6

Enrolled in Fall Semester	575	593	476	478	572	613	516	621	570	573	535
Surveys Returned	520	522	423	420	490	476	442	541	524	517	491
in %	90%	88%	89%	88%	86%	78%	86%	87%	92%	90%	92%

Instructor Evaluations (Note: Survey Changed in 1998 and 2004 to reflect stronger learning goals of FYP)

	F'95	F'96	F'97	F'98	F'99	F'00	F'01	F'02	F'03	F'04	F'05
Sign instruction in writing										3.6	3.6
Sign instruction in speaking										3.4	3.6
Sign instruction in research skills										3.5	3.5
Useful feedback on writing										4.0	4.0
Useful feedback on speaking										3.6	3.6
Gaining confidence as writer				3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6
Gaining confidence as speaker				3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.6
Effectiveness of introduction to research				3.4	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5
Learned from other students										3.8	3.9
Helpful advice on acad planning										3.7	3.7
Advisor available										4.3	4.2

Seminar engaging	na	na	na	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.6	na	na
Comments to improve writing	na	na	na	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.7	na	na
Comments to improve speaking	na	na	na	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4	na	na
Advice for development as student	na	na	na	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	na	na
Instructor's availability	na	na	na	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	na	na
Academic preparation for course	na	na	na	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.9	na	na
Time spent for class preparation	na	na	na	3.2	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.7	na	na

Fall Enrollment				478	572	613	516	621	570	573	535
Surveys Returned				432	535	498	472	562	520	482	471
in %				90%	94%	81%	91%	90%	91%	84%	88%

Appendix 3: PSC Course Evaluation Means for 100-Level Courses 2001-06

			Total Undergrad	First Year Program	Humanities	Arts	Sciences	Social Sciences	Inter-disciplinary
			Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
8. A high level of effort was demanded by this course	100-level	20012002spr	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.8	5.9	5.6	5.5
		20022003fall	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.9	5.4	5.4
		20022003spr	5.6	5.7	5.3	5.5	5.8	5.5	5.8
		20032004fall	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.7	6.0	5.5	5.5
		20032004spr	5.9	5.9	5.7	5.8	6.0	5.8	5.9
		20042005fall	5.9	5.8	5.8	6.0	6.1	5.7	5.9
		20042005spr	5.9	6.0	5.7	5.9	6.1	5.6	5.7
		20052006fall	5.8	5.9	5.7	6.0	6.0	5.7	5.6
		20052006spr	5.9	6.1	5.8	5.9	6.1	5.4	5.8
9. The instructor was well prepared for class meetings	100-level	20012002spr	6.3	6.0	6.1	6.1	6.4	6.4	6.4
		20022003fall	6.2	6.0	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.3	5.8
		20022003spr	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.3
		20032004fall	6.2	5.8	6.2	6.2	6.3	6.3	6.1
		20032004spr	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.5	6.5	6.4
		20042005fall	6.4	6.1	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.4
		20042005spr	6.4	6.4	6.2	6.5	6.4	6.5	6.4
		20052006fall	6.3	6.0	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.1
		20052006spr	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.2	6.2
10. The instructor was able to respond to student questions effectively	100-level	20012002spr	6.1	6.1	5.8	5.9	6.2	6.3	6.3
		20022003fall	6.0	5.8	6.0	6.2	6.1	6.2	5.8
		20022003spr	6.2	6.2	6.0	6.0	6.2	6.3	6.1
		20032004fall	6.0	5.6	5.9	5.9	6.2	6.2	5.9
		20032004spr	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.1	6.3	6.4	6.2
		20042005fall	6.2	5.9	6.3	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.3
		20042005spr	6.3	6.4	6.0	6.3	6.3	6.4	6.4
		20052006fall	6.1	5.8	6.2	6.4	6.3	6.0	6.0
		20052006spr	6.2	6.4	6.1	6.3	6.4	6.0	6.1
11. The instructor was able to present and clarify ideas well	100-level	20012002spr	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.6	6.0	6.2	6.1
		20022003fall	5.8	5.6	5.9	6.1	5.9	6.0	5.6
		20022003spr	6.0	6.1	5.8	6.0	6.1	6.1	5.9
		20032004fall	5.9	5.5	5.9	5.7	6.0	6.0	5.7
		20032004spr	6.1	6.1	6.1	5.9	6.2	6.3	6.1
		20042005fall	6.1	5.7	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.3	6.1
		20042005spr	6.2	6.3	5.9	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2
		20052006fall	6.0	5.7	6.0	6.3	6.1	5.9	5.9
		20052006spr	6.1	6.3	6.0	6.2	6.3	5.8	6.0
12. The instructor was an effective teacher	100-level	20012002spr	6.0	6.0	5.9	5.7	6.1	6.2	6.1
		20022003fall	5.9	5.8	6.0	6.1	6.0	6.1	5.7
		20022003spr	6.1	6.1	5.8	5.9	6.2	6.1	5.9
		20032004fall	5.9	5.5	5.9	5.9	6.1	6.1	5.8
		20032004spr	6.2	6.1	6.2	6.0	6.3	6.3	6.1
		20042005fall	6.1	5.7	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.3	6.1
		20042005spr	6.2	6.3	5.9	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.3
		20052006fall	6.1	5.8	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.0	5.8
		20052006spr	6.2	6.3	6.1	6.3	6.4	5.8	6.0

Appendix 4: FYP Staffing History, by Rank 1987-2006

<u>Rank</u>	87-88	88-89	89-90	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	Average
Ass't Prof	5	12	11	13	16	20	12	11	12	11	7	10	12	12	12	10	13	9	8	4	11.0
Assoc Prof	4	13	14	13	6	10	9	8	8	10	13	9	8	7	11	10	10	14	17	14	10.4
Professor	4	7	7	6	4	6	8	8	8	6	5	7	10	9	6	8	6	10	10	11	7.3
Adjuncts & Lecturers	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	3	3	4	3	3	5	6	9	7	6	3	4	3.1
Other	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	2	1	3	5	2	1	3	6	5	5	2.0
Total	13	32	32	32	27	38	33	29	32	32	31	30	36	38	37	38	39	45	43	38	33.8
	87-88	88-89	89-90	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	
Percent Asst	38.5	37.5	34.4	40.6	59.3	52.6	36.4	37.9	37.5	34.4	22.6	33.3	33.3	31.6	32.4	26.3	33.3	20.0	18.6	10.5	33.6
Percent Assoc	30.8	40.6	43.8	40.6	22.2	26.3	27.3	27.6	25.0	31.3	41.9	30.0	22.2	18.4	29.7	26.3	25.6	31.1	39.5	36.8	30.9
Percent Full	30.8	21.9	21.9	18.8	14.8	15.8	24.2	27.6	25.0	18.8	16.1	23.3	27.8	23.7	16.2	21.1	15.4	22.2	23.3	28.9	21.9
Percent Adj & Lect	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	9.1	6.9	9.4	9.4	12.9	10.0	8.3	13.2	16.2	23.7	17.9	13.3	7.0	10.5	8.5
Percent Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.7	2.6	3.0	0.0	3.1	6.3	6.5	3.3	8.3	13.2	5.4	2.6	7.7	13.3	11.6	13.2	5.2
Percent tenured	61.5	62.5	65.6	59.4	37.0	42.1	51.5	55.2	50.0	50.0	58.1	53.3	50.0	42.1	45.9	47.4	41.0	53.3	62.8	65.8	52.7
Percent non-TT	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.7	5.3	12.1	6.9	12.5	15.6	19.4	13.3	16.7	26.3	21.6	26.3	25.6	26.7	18.6	23.7	13.7

Appendix 5: FYP Philosophy and Goals Statement 2006-07

First-Year Program Philosophy and Goals Statement 2006-07

A residentially-based interdisciplinary first-year program is an ideal environment for beginning the four-year process of fostering the complex intellectual and social skills that are at the heart of a liberal education and the habits of considered values and engaged citizenship that such an education should produce and that are central to the university's aims and objectives. The First-Year Program (FYP) is comprised of a residentially-based, team-taught course (the FYP College) in the fall and a single instructor, research skills-oriented First-Year Seminar (FYS) in the spring.

This Philosophy and Goals statement serves as the guiding principles for the assessment of both fall FYP College and spring FYS syllabi to ensure that courses are meeting the agreed upon learning goals of the program. Not every course must attempt to address each and every goal below with the same depth. However, as part of the syllabus review process, each FYP and FYS course must identify which of the learning goals of the program their course will emphasize and how the syllabus and assignments address the rhetoric and communication skills goals of the program. FYS courses must demonstrate how the course speaks to the critical inquiry/research learning goals. Finally, although we do not mandate a minimum number of communication skills assignments, it is expected that students will be given multiple and varied opportunities to achieve the writing, speaking, and research learning goals, and that assignments are designed to both integrate the various modes of communication and offer students the opportunity to engage in drafts/rehearsals and revise their work with peer, mentor, and/or faculty feedback.

General philosophy and goals

With its commitment to collaborative, interdisciplinary teaching and its integrated sets of academic assignments, residential community-building and co-curricular activities, and the cultivation of student intentionality in academic planning over the whole first year, the FYP seeks to foster an intellectual community of literate, thoughtful, rhetorically sensitive and ethically responsible individuals who become increasingly able to:

- take a critical perspective on truth-claims of all sorts;
- confront issues of privilege (including and especially their own);
- develop interdisciplinary and creative intellectual agendas;
- place texts in their historical, cultural and political contexts;
- understand science and assess the ways scientific knowledge is used in society;
- recognize that they are in the world but not the center of it;
- participate in respectful debate about pressing social, environmental and scientific issues;

- recognize and reflect on their role as members of multiple geographical, political, cultural, intellectual and identity communities; and
- recognize the deeply social nature of knowledge production, including the processes that produce scientific knowledge;
- construct a course of study over four years that results from intentional decision-making about the process and goals of their education.

The FYP is built on six philosophical foundations that serve as the basis for our programmatic learning goals:

First, a liberal education requires an advanced degree of literacy and competency in a variety of communication skills. Reading (broadly understood) remains central to all forms of inquiry; however, today’s world also demands complex forms of rhetorical sensitivity and an ability to integrate multiple communications skills. “Rhetorical sensitivity” means that students should be able to assess the requirements of a particular task and make intentional decisions about which mode or modes of communication and inquiry (e.g., writing, speaking, performance, etc.) to use in addressing them. Doing so requires that students develop specific writing, speaking, research and other competencies and literacies. Through both in-class and out-of-class assignments and activities, the FYP provides students with an intensive and extensive opportunity to develop these competencies and to explore how critical reading informs and enhances the practices of writing, speaking, listening, performing, viewing, and conducting research, and how all of these practices are ways of learning and knowing as well as ways of communicating. More information on these rhetoric and communication learning goals can be found in the FYP’s “[Rhetoric and Communication in the FYP: A Guide to Pedagogy and Learning Goals](#)” document.

Second, a living-learning approach is essential if students are to become ethical and empathetic learners. Ours is a world marked by moral complexity, widespread inequality, diversity of all sorts, and the interaction (sometimes violent) of radically differing worldviews. The fall semester FYP College’s residential component provides students with an opportunity to create communities that are governed not by unethical manipulation, coercion, and violence (both rhetorical and physical), but rather by an active sense of the multiple ways in which their lives are interconnected, a respect for difference, and a commitment to responsible representation of ideas and beliefs in conversation in all of its forms. This philosophy is reflected in FYP classroom pedagogy, which fosters learning experiences that are collaborative, cumulative, self-reflective, and dependent upon regular feedback from instructors, peers, mentors, and other tutors. In creating and maintaining this sort of environment, we view the FYP College as rooted in an approach to residential education that is humane, rigorous, and liberatory.

Third, an interdisciplinary, intercultural approach to learning benefits all students and faculty regardless of their chosen field of study. One defining political feature of our time is the increasing integration of the globe at greater and greater speeds, a process that has immense consequences for human communities and the natural environment. A defining intellectual feature of our time is the breaking down of traditional disciplinary

boundaries in the face of challenges from new paradigms (e.g., postmodernism), new fields of study (e.g., gender studies) and the voices of groups (e.g., people of color) who have long been systematically suppressed, as well as the pressing need for collaboration between scientists and non-scientists on many of the central issues of the day. Engaging in interdisciplinary and intercultural learning is consistent with the traditional liberal arts injunction to seek a broad, integrated education and to do so with an open mind. The FYP reflects this through its emphasis on cross-departmental team-teaching in the FYP College and interdisciplinary subject matter in the FYS and its determination to offer a curriculum that reflects emerging global realities. In so doing, the FYP hopes to ignite students' passions about topics of study and introduce them to the variety of approaches one can take to those topics.

Fourth, students must learn to assume responsibility for their own academic planning in consultation with a faculty advisor. As FYP faculty are also academic advisors for first-year students, they have a unique opportunity to help students become more reflective not only about intellectual work and living in a residential community, but also about the course of their education over the full four years. With the privilege of getting the kind of education a liberal-arts college provides comes the corresponding responsibility on the part of students to take their time here seriously. The FYP's approach to academic advising focuses on creating student agency in the construction of a flexible plan for the project(s) they will pursue both in and out of the classroom over their four years. As such, the faculty's role as advisors is to be a partner in the development of those plans and projects. In this way, advising is an extension of teaching in that advisors attempt to create the conditions for students to take charge of their own learning.

Fifth, a responsible approach to education recognizes the fundamentally social nature of knowledge production and promotes social awareness in all participants. A liberal education does not take place in a social vacuum, but is immersed in the same set of complex social and environmental structures and relationships that make up the wider social and natural worlds. Small-town liberal arts colleges, however, are too often viewed as "bubbles" that protect their students from these realities. The FYP is in a unique position to help transcend such parochial tendencies by making the perceptual, intellectual and experiential boundaries between the university and "the world," both social and natural, more permeable. To this end, the FYP intentionally awakens and cultivates in students an understanding that intellectual work matters because it allows us to participate in the ongoing pursuit of leaving the world a better place than we found it. This emphasis on social and environmental awareness helps lay the groundwork for future off-campus study experiences, informed social action and community service, more engaged local, national, and global citizenship, and a range of career paths.

Sixth, a pedagogy that seeks to advance the goals above must be critically reflective in all aspects of its practice. As a program committed to the development of critical pedagogies, the FYP offers faculty the space to reflect critically on their own positions in the creation of knowledge for their students. The ways in which knowledge is framed in syllabi, assignments and classroom pedagogy all imply particular assumptions about the

location of the professor within those creations. By supporting faculty who choose to engage in dynamic, interdisciplinary work, the FYP fosters an ongoing critical engagement with these kind of assumptions about the relationships among the faculty, the students, and the subject matter of the course. By extension, the program provides an intellectual atmosphere within which students can begin to see themselves as active participants in the educational process while reflecting on the assumptions they bring with them to this process.

Ethical reflection and responsible representation

The work of the FYP asks students to reflect on the ethical dimensions of the choices they make, both in the classroom and out. Ethical concerns are most obvious in the case of doing academically honest work, where the choice of whether or not to uphold the standards of academic integrity needs to be understood as a matter of values and ethics, but students should also learn to develop an “ethic of responsible representation.” Relying on discredited sources, cherry-picking data, falsifying experimental results, making ad hominem attacks, or just doing lazy or sloppy work are all examples of choices with a clear ethical dimension to them. Writers, speakers, and performers have an obligation to represent their ideas, the ideas of others, and the other people with whom they interact in ethically responsible ways. Attention to the ethical dimensions of communication should also inculcate in students a commitment to listening carefully and sympathetically to other speakers, reading authors as charitably as possible, and engaging in intellectual interactions, whether with written or visual texts or in conversation with others, with the assumption that their interlocutors share their own good faith commitment to the pursuit of knowledge.

Residential living

The same processes that inform the communication and interaction that students undertake in the classroom can and should inform their relationships outside of it.. A classroom pedagogy focused on rhetorical awareness can foster meaningful dialogue among all members of a residential community by helping students become conscious of their positions as speakers and listeners. Situating these communication skills in the context of ethically responsible representation reinforces the fact that communication always involves other people and thus the need to be reflective about the impact words and actions can have. We hope to foster in students the ability to engage in intercultural communication, where “intercultural” is understood to include the dimensions of diversity (e.g., demographic, political, religious) present in a residential learning community and a pluralistic society. Residential programming that fosters and helps to cultivate skills in rhetoric and communication, and makes clear the centrality of their ethical dimensions in a living/learning community, is crucial to making the connections between living and learning to which the fall FYP College aspires. The residential component of the FYP College thus begins the process by which students:

- understand both the rights and the responsibilities that come with being members of a community and why they will be held accountable for their actions in those communities
- learn to communicate and listen effectively and respectfully with diverse others (including but not limited to communication across lines of gender, race, and class) and to learn to see dialogue as a means to resolve conflict in productive ways
- understand in particular that due to the rhetorical complexities of sexual communication, consensuality in sexual interactions requires clarity in speaking and careful, respectful listening by all parties
- see the residence hall as a site of learning and their peers as partners in that learning process
- learn about campus and community resources so that they can become more engaged in the ongoing issues and conversations that are part of the campus community and beyond

Appendix 6: FYP Guide to Rhetoric and Communication Pedagogy and Learning Goals

Rhetoric and Communication in the FYP:
A Guide to Pedagogy and Learning Goals

Fall 2006

A philosophy of rhetoric and communication pedagogy

As we note in the first of our six philosophical foundations of the FYP, reading remains central to what it means to be liberally educated in the 21st century, but the ability to be attune to the rhetorical dimensions of communication, whether that of others or our own, has become at least as important in a world where interpreting the barrage of information that we are faced with moment to moment remains a constant challenge. Much of that information is formulated to persuade us in one way or another, so cultivating the ability to recognize and critically dissect these attempts at persuasion and the techniques, both appropriate and inappropriate, being made use of in those processes should be central to liberal education's role in creating informed and engaged citizens. Individuals who are sensitive to the rhetorical dimension of other people's communication and aware of the ethical issues involved will, in turn, be better able to create written, spoken, and/or performed texts of their own that articulate their own voice and ideas and also responsibly and accurately represent the works of others in the process.

Engaging in this work with students requires a pedagogy of assignment design where such assignments ask students to **recognize** the rhetorical situation laid out in the assigned task, **plan** communicative strategies to address the task, **compose and present** a written, spoken/performative, aural and/or visual text in response to the task, and then engage in **critical assessment** of their own work and that of others. In recognizing that the creation of communicative texts is a process, drafting/rehearsing, including peer review, must be seen as acts of critical assessment that are essential to helping students learn to rethink, restructure, and revise their work. We further recognize that this process is not linear and that the effective creation of texts requires that students move among these different aspects of message design as required by the many contingencies posed by any rhetorical context.

The work of the FYP College in the fall and the FYS in the spring can best be seen as gradually and progressively building up basic communication skills students need while also engaging them with the questions of voice, audience, rhetoric, and representation that must be considered as they write, speak, and/or perform. The critical inquiry and research skills of the FYS can, in a number of ways, be seen as the culmination of this work in the FYP.

Below, we provide additional detail on these elements of our pedagogical approach to teaching rhetoric and communication to first-year students. We start with students' ability to interpret the texts of others, then move to the creation of texts of their own, and

then finish with the integration of these two sets of skills in students' engagement with critical inquiry and research.

Reading, listening, and viewing

Helping students to develop more sophisticated abilities in writing, speaking and research must go hand-in-hand with the cultivation of parallel abilities in reading, listening, and viewing. Just as designing and constructing messages are rhetorical endeavors, so too is the process of interpretation that renders messages meaningful. *Understanding* a text is not an automatic process; it involves a critical assessment of medium, tone, audience, and purpose. As teachers, we often focus on *whether-or-not* students understand, not on *how* they understand. To be able to become more aware of their own choices when they learn and practice different ways of constructing and presenting messages, they must also learn and practice ways of deciphering and analyzing a variety of texts from multiple sources, and in diverse contexts, in order to understand and assess the choices those texts reflect.

Critical reading

Effective pedagogies in the FYP include engaging students with the arguments presented in a written text. As we expect students to create different messages for different audiences, we must also ask them to learn to identify the rhetorical strategies incorporated in the writing they read. In addition, they will be expected to become increasingly able to recognize in others' texts the various conventions and elements of good writing that they are asked to produce as writers themselves. The ability to read a text critically is essential to producing the written, spoken, and performed work that the FYP communications skills goals require. Additionally, the ability to read in ways that move beyond understanding to critical assessment is an essential component of engaged citizenship. Achieving these learning goals is done most effectively when faculty devote classroom time to close analyses of texts.

Critical listening

Hearing is passive; *listening* is active. For what do we ask students to listen? What do we expect students to understand or learn from a performed text? How do we ask them to listen to us, to one another? What do we ask them to do with what they've heard and understood? How do *we* demonstrate that we value their thoughtful, engaged listening? Teaching critical listening means being clear as teachers that critical listening *and understanding* are not automatic processes; they are variable skills that must be cultivated and practiced. In the FYP students will be expected to learn to become increasingly able to listen carefully to others' oral/aural presentations, both formal and informal, creative and scholarly, and understand effectively their arguments, while also improving their ability to recognize the conventions and elements of good communication that they are expected to learn to produce as speakers and/or performers themselves. Helping students become good critical listeners is best forwarded by a pedagogy that offers a variety of listening opportunities to students, including lectures, large class discussions, performances, small-group work, and one-on-ones with faculty, peers, and mentors as appropriate.

Critical viewing

As more of our courses include film, visual and performing arts, cultural geography, and other forms of visual rhetoric (and as students' lives inevitably include multiple, visual messages), it is imperative that we engage students with the notion that viewing is a rhetorical process: that undergirding all visual images are designed intentions and arguments. Habituated to often passively "experiencing" visual messages, students will be expected to learn to step outside of the flow of visual stimuli and improve their ability to recognize and analyze the rhetorical strategies and specific arguments used by the creators of visual images and texts. As with reading, these learning goals are best achieved through conscious attention to the skills of visual interpretation in the classroom.

Writing, speaking, and performing/creating

Writing, speaking, and/or performing are ways students enter into conversation with their peers, their instructors, and the larger academic community. Students should understand that writing, speaking, and/or performing—joining this conversation—are rhetorical acts, whether they are making a scholarly argument or creatively expressing their experiences and opinions. Speaking, writing and/or performing give voice to thought, enable one to share thoughts, and are ways for us to create knowledge and communicate our values. Good communication involves the communicator deciding on a **voice**, a **purpose**, and a **thesis** (or **controlling idea**), as well as a recognition of his or her **audience** and having a command of the **conventions** of the mode(s) of communication being used. Being a good writer, speaker, and/or performer means thinking rhetorically and making communicative choices based on the following kinds of questions:

Who am I in this context?

All writers and speakers employ different **voices** in different situations: formal voices, informal voices—voices that muse, voices that prove, voices that dissent. Communicators must decide which voice they will use to accomplish a given writing task. What experiences and knowledge give writers or speakers the authority to discuss certain subjects and make certain arguments? What level of discourse should they use to express their ideas? Are experiences told in the first person relevant, or should writers maintain a more objective point-of-view? Students will be given opportunities to practice and develop various academic and/or creative voices through a variety of assignments and expected to learn to understand some of the potential consequences of employing any given voice or mode of expression.

What is the question I am being asked to address?

Sometimes the **purpose** of an assignment will be implied in the wording of the assignment itself: speakers, writers, and performers may be asked to *analyze, evaluate, propose, describe, argue, demonstrate*, and more. At other times, communicators have to define that purpose themselves and decide their intention and approach as they converse with certain concepts and ideas. Thinking more intentionally about the purpose of writing and speaking means that communicators must also consider the ethical dimensions of the choices they make. Students will be expected to learn how to

differentiate purposes—for example, how is evaluating a poem different from analyzing it or from making an argument about it?—and how to choose appropriate content and style for each rhetorical situation. Determining the purpose of a speech or a piece of writing will also help students learn to shape the **thesis** that will guide the choice of evidence, organization, and development of ideas, and will enable them to develop more sophisticated abilities in interpreting the arguments of others.

Who is my audience?

Because communication necessarily involves more than one person, speakers and writers must always remain aware of their **audience**. Students should be encouraged to see their audience as more than just an instructor or grader and rather to recognize their audience as a group of peers and others interested in contributions to the body of knowledge on any given subject. They should consider questions such as: For whom is this message designed? How will this particular audience hear and understand this message? What might be the most effective ways to communicate the information to this audience? Faculty can help students do this work by designing assignments that either call for a specific audience or explicitly indicate that students must consider who they imagine their audience to be. Students will be expected to learn to consider what effect they intend their writing and speaking to have on this particular audience, such as to persuade, entertain, inform, or call to action, and should demonstrate this learning in the work they produce.

How will my audience read what I write or hear what I say?

Writers and speakers who decide to enter into a scholarly conversation should realize that their audience has certain expectations for the way orators speak, writers present their writing, the way that writing looks on the page, and how speakers *appear and sound* to an audience. We expect certain kinds of speaking and writing in a formal assignment and expect other kinds of communication in an informal class discussion. **Conventions** for academic writing include appropriate diction, smooth quotation integration, proper citation format, and attention to sentence-level grammar and punctuation concerns, just to name a very few. **Conventions** for more formal, academic speaking include, but are not limited to, appropriate use of language, diction, volume, rate, smooth signposts and transitions, an interesting introduction and a reiterative conclusion. Students should both learn these conventions and become aware that they can vary across disciplines, and the cross-disciplinary nature of the FYP should ideally expose students to more than one set of disciplinary writing, speaking, or creative conventions. Students will be expected to learn to refine the college-level writing, speaking and/or performing skills their audience expects through much practice, including low-stakes or informal speaking, writing, and/or performing with a focus on the processes of drafting/rehearsal and revision.

Students may well notice that these questions, and their answers, are necessarily interrelated: for example, communicators must have an idea of their purpose before they can choose their most appropriate voice; they must know who their audience is in order to work with the most effective set of discursive conventions. As a communicator's answer to one question changes, the answers to others may also shift, requiring re-thinking and re-working of the text at hand. Students will be expected to learn that

making such adjustments and changes is an important and even desirable part of the process of writing and speaking, and should be presented with assignments that incorporate drafts/rehearsals and revision in significant ways.

Critical inquiry/research

Critical inquiry and research asks students to combine their roles as constructors of messages with their ability to interpret the messages of others. This work demands that students make use of their skills of critique. Our understanding of “critique” and “critical” involves their ability to analyze the intended purposes and functions of written, spoken, or visual messages. Thus, the faculty of the FYP see “research” in the broader context of “critical inquiry,” and we therefore believe that research is more than just gathering citations, formatting them properly, locating the sources, reading them and either welding, sewing, or fashioning the information together to yield a research paper or research project.

Research understood as critical inquiry is, instead, a way students become participants in an ongoing conversation among various people or groups with interests and/or expertise in a topic or subject area of mutual concern. Students must begin to think of themselves as part of a changing audience, listening to various opinions, focusing on different aspects and interpretations, and seeking out voices that are often not heard. One does not have to form an opinion on a controversial topic to start one’s own inquiry, and students can seek out new approaches to issues, find new data that support their own predilections, or even find material that causes them to change their minds.

Students will be expected to learn that when they engage in research, they are the active agents in determining who will partake in the conversation they are beginning. It is the student who gathers ideas, opinions, and facts about the subject. Students must learn to start as a silent partner in the conversation by balancing, refuting, accepting and synthesizing the conversations to which they are listening. They should also understand that to do a thorough job, they must include as many voices as possible, striving to omit no one who has something to say about the issues.

The communities, constituencies or voices students will be listening to while engaged in critical inquiry will generally fall into three broad categories: the scholarly community, the mainstream audience, and the viewpoints of those whose voices are often not heard but will have important things to say about an issue. However, regardless of who is “speaking,” students must learn to evaluate critically what they are saying. What is the basis upon which the arguments supporting the various views are based? Are seemingly factual statements correct? The critical inquiry and research process thus ask students to bring together in one place the rhetoric and communication work of the whole first year.

Learning to understand the research processes by which these questions and others can be answered is a major goal of the FYP, particularly in the spring FYS course. Specifically, students will:

- Be introduced to ways of conducting productive and imaginative inquiry and research in order to become a part of the various conversations surrounding issues.
- Learn to differentiate among the various ways that information is produced and presented, between popular and scholarly journals and books, between mainstream and alternative publications, between primary and secondary sources.
- Learn how to evaluate and synthesize information, whether gathered from traditional sources, e.g., books and journals, or from websites or electronic media.
- Begin to develop the skills of critical analysis in the interpretation and use of information gathered from any source.
- Be introduced to the ethical obligations that scholars have to both responsibly represent their sources and inform their readers of the sources of their information, as well as learning, and being held responsible for the proper use of, the conventions of scholarly citation and attribution.

Resources for help

Students should be aware of the numerous resources available to them to help achieve these learning goals. Currently writing mentors in both the fall FYP College and the spring FYS who are trained as peer tutors and familiar with the course material can help students plan, write, and revise with attention paid to all of the rhetorical issues raised above. In addition, mentors are increasingly being trained to assist students with their speaking and critical inquiry/research projects so that mentors can provide peer feedback on all of the elements of their communication competencies. Peer response, done effectively, can expose communicators to even more opportunities to reconsider their rhetorical, stylistic, research, and organizational choices, as well as enhancing their ability to listen actively and interact intellectually with peers.

Appendix 7: ADFY Job Description

**ASSOCIATE DEAN OF THE FIRST YEAR
JOB DESCRIPTION**

The Associate Dean of the First Year is responsible for all aspects of the First-Year Program/First Year Seminar academic programs. The Associate Dean works in conjunction with the Director of Residential Life and the Student Life team to coordinate the residential portion of the program. Specific responsibilities include faculty recruitment, development, and evaluation, curriculum development and evaluation, co-ordination of the residential life of FYP Colleges, further integrating academic and student life in the first year, developing and administering the budget of the FYP/FYS, and representing the Program in University planning, administration, external relations and development. The Associate Dean of the First Year also supervises the Director of Research Instruction and a full-time Administrative Secretary, as well as co-supervising the Administrative Secretary in Academic Advising.

The Associate Dean of the First Year is a half-time administrative appointment; she or he is also expected to teach half-time, as a faculty member of the FYP/FYS.

The specific duties of the Associate Dean of the First Year include the following:**Responsibility for Faculty Affairs:**

- Recruit the faculty of the FYP and the First-Year Seminars and collate course descriptions and requests for teaching space and times
- Place students in FYP Colleges and First Year Seminars
- Maintain an on-going conversation with departments about departmental and FYP/FYS interests and participate in the departmental hiring process as requested by departments
- Convene the FYP Faculty Development Committee, including the Director of the Munn Writing Center and the Director of Research Instruction, to plan the series of in-service seminars offered each semester, the annual May retreat, and the orientation and training of faculty new to the FYP/FYS, all in coordination with the offerings of the Center for Teaching and Learning
- Evaluate all pre-tenure faculty on a yearly basis, as well as those faculty with less than 3 years of FYP/FYS teaching. Evaluation should include reviewing teaching evaluations and talking with each member of the team about team dynamics. In cases where a faculty member or team is having difficulty, the Associate Dean will work with the faculty member(s) by arranging mentoring, class visitation, and/or classroom videotaping and review
- Oversee the program's process for the evaluation of faculty who have taught in the FYP/FYS as needed for mid-probationary, tenure, and promotion review
- Act as a department chair in relation to FYP/FYS concerns, including the Classroom Stewards committee
- Sit on the Academic Standing Committee
- Sit on the Academic Affairs Staffing Committee

- Assist the Vice President of the University and Dean of Academic Affairs through participation in staff meetings and other projects as requested and assigned

Responsibility for Curriculum Affairs:

- Work with program faculty to plan and implement a syllabus review procedure each semester
- Work regularly with the Director of the Munn Writing Center, the Coordinator of the Rhetoric and Communication Initiative, and the Director of Research Instruction to assess and improve the quality of writing, speaking, and/or research instruction in the FYP/FYS
- Supervise on-going assessment studies of the FYP/FYS and represent the FYP/FYS in campus-wide assessment projects
- Work with the Director of the Munn Writing Center to provide mentors for each FYP and FYS course.

Responsibility for Student Life:

- Work with the Office of Residential Life to:
 1. participate in the hiring and evaluation of the Residential Coordinators working in the FYP
 2. participate in the hiring, training and evaluation of the undergraduate Community Assistants in the FYP
 3. assign and house first-year students in FYP Colleges
 4. select the winners of the Bradley Evers Outstanding First Year Student Awards
- Work with the Office of Co-Curricular Education and Programming to:
 1. produce the *New Student Guide* each spring
 2. create the Student and Family Orientation programs with the Orientation committee
 3. coordinate the FYP-related sessions at Family Weekend
 4. coordinate the FYP reunions during Senior Week.
- Sit on the Residential Education Committee and work with the Chief Judicial Officer, Director of Health and Counseling, and the Dean of Student Life to formulate plans of action for first-year students in judicial trouble or with medical/psychological conditions affecting their academic performance
- Represent the FYP on the Wellness Initiative and its First-Year Cup subcommittee
- Participate, as requested, in the staff meetings of the Vice-President and Dean of Student Life

Academic Advising:

- Work with the Associate Dean for Academic Advising Programs and his/her staff to:
 1. Assign new students to academic advisors
 2. Help first-year students to develop academic skills and to increase retention rates of first-year students

3. Attend to the needs of first-year students with academic difficulties, including those on academic probation and suspension, collaborating as needed with the relevant Student Life staff

Responsibility for External Affairs:

- Represent the FYP/FYS to external constituencies including prospective students and parents, college counselors, and professional organizations
- Represent the FYP/FYS to internal constituencies including the trustees, the faculty, admissions and development staff, alumni, and parents of current students

Responsibility for Budget:

- Prepare and administer the budget of the FYP/FYS, including the instructional budget of the FYP/FYS and each FYP College