

Faculty Dimension Report  
Stony Brook University

*Foundations Institutions make the first college year a high priority for the faculty.* These institutions are characterized by a culture of faculty responsibility for the first year that is realized through high-quality instruction in first-year classes and substantial interaction between faculty and first-year students both inside and outside the classroom. This culture of responsibility is nurtured by chief academic officers, deans, and department chairs and supported by the institutions' reward systems.

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*(Three Faculty Dimension subcommittees: <sup>1</sup>Focus on large enrollment classes in FY; <sup>2</sup>Focus on UCG/101-102 seminars; <sup>3</sup>Focus on infrastructure/institutional matters.)*

## I. Overview:

Our charge was to see how Stony Brook measured up to Foundations of Excellence standards for the FY:

*"These institutions are characterized by a culture of faculty responsibility for the first year that is realized through high-quality instruction in FY classes and substantial interaction between faculty and FY students, both inside and outside the classroom. This culture of responsibility is nurtured by chief academic officers, deans and department chairs and supported by the institutions' reward systems."*

This was done in two stages. First, a campus-wide survey (as provided by FoEtec) was administered to faculty/staff campus-wide. Second, we developed three sub-committees to explore Stony Brook specific issues pertaining to the faculty dimension to supplement the FoEtec survey.

A. Survey results and analysis. The Faculty Survey (distributed in Fall 07) measured four Performance Indicators (PIs): (1) campus level encouragement from senior institutional administrators/leaders, (2) from unit level administrators or department chairs; (3) faculty expectations; and (4) faculty incentives/rewards. Though the Faculty/Staff Survey appeared to be designed for primarily undergraduate institutions rather than Class I research universities, Stony Brook's overall response rate was 36.4%; 44.4% of respondents (705 of 1577) were faculty. Of these, many have little or no contact with FY students and have primary affiliations with graduate students/programs. This required that some survey responses be filtered for FY instructors and convinced our committee members that additional follow-up interview/survey work would be necessary for us to provide useful feedback/recommendations on the Faculty Dimension.

Our discussion and analysis of the survey results, our own follow-up interviews with faculty, informed by the committee members' combined experience and campus knowledge, opened up a wide range of discussion related to FY matters and the Faculty Dimension. We all agreed that at Stony Brook, there are many dedicated faculty and staff serving the FY cohort, and many positive measures that have been taken at SB including: the development/implementation of the UGC system, successful honors/research programs, as well as other initiatives that invite fresh technological approaches to classroom teaching including specific course redesigns.

Yet concurrently there is a widespread perception amongst faculty/staff that, overall, SB merits a "low" (C-) grade when it comes to the FoEtec standard. In the opinion of the committee, this perception has a real basis. Here's why.

Â. Campus resources - classrooms & staff. A *major* issue for faculty relates to the university's offering predominantly large-enrollment FY courses. A perception exists that FY enrollments are growing at SB without an accompanying growth in the faculty to teach these FY student cohorts and in institutional resources - in particular, classroom space. Another issue that came up repeatedly, also in the category of institutional resources, is the writing program (see below) which is seen as being unable to cope with the strenuous demands/challenges of teaching writing to Stony Brook's FY cohort due to administrative turn-over, uncompetitive staff salaries and other challenges (ESL needs, contract terms for adjuncts, etc.). (These issues were commented on by faculty in the campus-wide FoEtec survey where high-enrollment intro/FY courses were repeatedly cited as an institutional weakness. Faculty seemed aware of the trend in recent years of steadily increasing enrollments at this institution: in the past 5 years, FY enrollment has increased ~ 575 students; and overly large FY courses and TA shortages are seen as negatively impacting the students' educational experience).

Â-Communication to and from faculty is a secondary issue that merits thoughtful planning/improvement. One area highlighted by the faculty/staff survey was the need for an institutional "FY philosophy." (A topic of another dimension committee). But more generally, most faculty/staff do not know what initiatives are currently taking place to improve the quality and experience for FY (or undergraduates, more generally). Many of the faculty survey respondents, for example, indicated that they had no idea what the UGC colleges wereâ€"even though this has been a major initiative on campus in the last few years with substantial institutional support (staff/resources). This suggests a lack of dissemination of overall institutional goals/philosophies and presents issues for recruiting quality instructors for the FY as well (even in the apparently successful Undergraduate Colleges/UGC programs).

B. Focused analysis: 3 subtopics. Early on, to enhance our campus-wide perspective, and to be able to include broader

discussion of some elements of the Faculty Dimension specific to SB, we subdivided our committee to focus on three target areas:

• Large-enrollment classes. A particular issue of concern is the impact of large classes in the freshman year—a repeated critique in the qualitative comments part of the FoEtec Faculty/Staff survey of “what we are not doing well” (per Faculty/Staff survey distributed in fall 07). This subcommittee looked at some of the courses which had large enrollments of FY Cohort students (see Current Practices Inventory, Table E), including those with significant percentages of DFWI performance (i.e. low grades of D, F, withdrawal or incomplete). These include: WRT 101/102 (11% DFWI); PSY 103 (24% DFWI); PHY 125 (41% DFWI—annual cohort of 140 FY); PHY 131 (31% DFWI—annual cohort of 233 FY); and MAT 131 (31% DFWI—annual cohort of 352 FY). Faculty teaching these courses were interviewed and asked for their input/perceptions on FY performances. They provided input on what steps could be taken to enhance FY student performance and satisfaction. (Sample interview questions are provided in V.1). Although each faculty interviewee had particular needs/issues, some specific to a particular course or discipline, several general themes emerged from the interviews regarding institutional shortcomings in resources (classroom space, staff/personnel) and programmatic needs (for example, the campus-wide writing program). Recommendations are outlined below.

• The Undergraduate Colleges (UGC) and 101/102 classes—a recent initiative which ensures a “small community” interchange between faculty and FY students, particularly in the 102 seminars (spring semester) taught by faculty. Although the UGC program was first implemented in 2003, and instructor/course evaluations of students have been done, there had never been a survey of the faculty who teach these courses. This subcommittee developed a survey (see V.2) and was able to obtain a faculty point of view on various UGC issues/concerns. Although faculty responses are overall positive, the survey elicited some responses which could be used to further enhance the FY UGC experience via the faculty dimension (e.g. providing training to faculty teaching 102 seminars, developing faculty incentives/rewards to address issues of recruitment; enriching courses with more academic content, etc.). See findings/recommendations below.

• Institutional framework/infrastructure matters. This subcommittee surveyed academic chairpersons to obtain a more detailed understanding of unit-level /departmental philosophies and practices regarding FY teaching, reward systems. See attached survey (V.3). Data was gathered on the extent to which faculty members in their department teach first-year students; how faculty members of various ranks are assigned to courses with high enrollment of first-year students; and the importance of teaching first-year students (relative to other undergraduate students) from the viewpoint of academic chairs. Recommendations are outlined/summarized below.

## II. Findings: Current Situation, Opportunities and Challenges

The Faculty Dimension is a large, comprehensive area. Most topics listed below could be elucidated at length.

### *“What we do well”:*

The dedication of faculty serving the FY cohort, and a healthy faculty culture of responsibility for the FY and other undergraduates is readily apparent from the various interviews/surveys administered by our committee, as well as the overall campus faculty/staff survey. Furthermore, the follow-up surveys of unit level leaders indicate that most responding department chairs (11 of 16) regard teaching first-year students as equally important to teaching other undergraduate students; most departments (9 of 16) provide new faculty members with both written materials and oral guidance regarding first-year students, and effective teaching of first-year students in departmental courses is considered “moderate to very important” in the tenure/promotion process in almost all (14 of 17) responding departments to our survey. In addition, honors programs (such as the Honors College) and the FY interaction provided by UGC 102 seminars for faculty are also a bright light in faculty perceptions of what we are doing well. Again, the positives in the current campus climate include:

• Dedicated faculty/staff (based on the survey)

• Honors Programs

• Undergraduate Colleges: 102 Seminars (1-credit) taught by faculty in the spring to FY

### *“What needs improvement”:*

In looking at the Faculty Dimension overall perspective, areas calling for improvement can be broadly categorized as follows:

• Resources (Classroom space; Faculty/staff personnel needs; and program resources: FY writing program)

• Communication issues

• Rewards

### A. Resources:

*Challenges: 38.7% (or higher if you filter for faculty who teach first year) respond “1” or “2” re the institution “assur(ing) that all FY students experience individualized attention from faculty/staff” (Q.47). Note also that 38.7% (43.7% of faculty teaching first year) respond “1” or “2” to Q.24 that “(personnel and fiscal) adequate for courses that enroll first-year students.”*

1. Faculty members interviewed by our subcommittees (as well as many faculty respondents in the fall 07 faculty/staff survey) uniformly report a need for greater resources - both classroom availability/quality of space and staff. In many departments, notably Math, the yearly increases in enrollment are not being matched by faculty hires. In some disciplines (such as FY physics courses, which have a fairly high DFWI (>30 %) for FY, the inadequacy of classroom space for the demands of the FY students has meant a loss of visual/hands on demonstrations in the classroom. Faculty surveyed in the fall also report how no FY courses are possible for freshmen in the field of biology. The perception also persists that there is too often miscommunication

or sub-par planning (i.e. predicting flat enrollments rather than anticipating staff needs). This issue has recently been addressed in comprehensive, rational planning which projects enrollments with reasonable reliability (though does not necessarily address issues of faculty/staff shortages). Another prevailing comment heard from multiple sources was that there were not enough TAs for classes or that TA stipends were not competitive with comparable research institutions.

2. The subcommittee conducting surveys of academic department chairpersons also found that -- of the 17 responses to our on-line survey, 14 from the College of Arts and Sciences and 3 from the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences -- that large enrollment courses are generally not assigned to a tenure-track faculty member. The survey indicates:

- only 3 departments assigned a tenure-track faculty member to a course with more than 200 first-year students,
- 9 of the 16 departments assigned full-time non-tenure track lecturers to such courses,
- 10 of the 16 departments assigned adjunct instructors to such courses,
- 13 of the 16 departments assigned graduate students to such courses with 9 departments assigning graduate students to teach courses with more than 100 first-year students (5 of the 6 departments with more than 500 first-year students assigned those sections to graduate students).

These data strongly suggest either faculty shortages, or an over-reliance on graduate student teaching FY at Stony Brook. With increasing enrollments, faculty report that we are getting further and further away from such educational ideals (as those posited by FoEtec Institutions) of having an institutionally nurtured culture of faculty responsibility for the FY (i.e. having smaller academic classes with faculty) because of our over reliance on the role of graduate students/TAs and insufficient numbers of FY faculty instructors. Several respondents to the FoEtec survey report how "Students are over-enrolled in enormous classes and then some fraction (1/4 - 1/3) are intentionally flunked out....routinely violate the terms of TA contracts. This makes for over-worked TA's and under-served students."

3. Writing Program. The writing program (mandatory for FY and administered through 101-102 classes) was a major area of complaint targeted by respondents to the FoEtec administered - faculty/staff survey (particularly in the qualitative comments sections). Although it might not at first seem obvious why discussion of the FY writing program belongs in the Faculty Dimension committee report, the low standards of writing as seen in the classroom were perceived as a hindrance to good teaching ("why must I be the one to correct basic grammar?"), and overall contributed to a perception from faculty that the institution is under-serving or failing its FY student population. Survey results and our own interviews with the interim writing program director point to several issues--including pay scale/contract term issues (3 year adjunct teaching contracts), difficulties in oversight of adjunct lecturers, not being able to retain good writing faculty with non-competitive salaries, need for ESL tutors/resources, issues regarding the lack of upper-division writing coursework/follow-up -- all of which are beyond the scope of this committee. There may be several grants involving the writing program which may bring about change/improvement and a new director will be starting in the next academic year. Nevertheless, the FY writing program overall seems to be an area which will likely not improve without its own task force planning, and will likely require larger dedication of institutional resources and attention to the matter.

#### B. Communication Issues:

*Challenges: Question 28 indicates that most faculty/staff (55.1% of faculty) report "1" or "2" to have a "voice in decisions about FY issues (Q.28).*

In the area of communication issues, the results particularly of the faculty staff survey (where faculty seem to be disconnected regarding FY goals/initiatives) led our committee to ask: How can we improve? What can we do better? Several key areas include but are not limited to:

• FY Philosophy. The Faculty/Staff survey suggests a need for a FY institutional philosophy. This is the province of another dimension committee and is not further addressed here.

• Faculty - Communication issues. While the lack of knowledge about FY initiatives/philosophy may suggest a communication lapse between faculty and senior level administrators; there are additional areas in which faculty seem to be out of the loop of communication--including the nexus between faculty and FY advising. Although there are various ways of measuring course outcomes, and students are routinely asked for their feedback about courses/professors, advisors rarely if ever talk to the faculty who teach the FY cohort, and are unlikely to have *specific content knowledge of the courses and curriculum on which they advise*. In one of our subcommittees, we learned that two FY courses which routinely have high percentages of DWF1 for large enrolled classes of FY students, Physics 125 and Physics 131, typically have a scenario like this: many students begin taking the advanced level 2-semester calculus-based physics course sequence, to find they are woefully unprepared for such a course and then 10-15 % drop down to the 3-semester 125-126-127 sequence (large numbers still are DWF1--31% in both). This repeated scenario, year to year, is discouraging to both students taking the classes and faculty teaching the classes. And the less than optimal outcomes by students apparently occur, year after year, despite the large number of (vastly underutilized!) office hours offered by full-time faculty professors. Instructors of these courses offered the suggestion that well-informed advisors might be able to play a more proactive role by discouraging students to take courses they are unprepared for and trying to assist students in being more realistic in estimating their chances of success in these courses (e.g. their ability to take a full course load). Perhaps FY advisors faculty and academic departments/or curricular committees need to collaborate better in evaluating why students are failing and proposing other options/solutions: could there be more stringent prerequisites enforced by the department/institution? What other institutional measures could be taken to provide greater student success (e.g. time of day FY courses are scheduled, class size). In general, our goal is not to assign blame to faculty or advising but to suggest ways these groups can work together to improve communication and facilitate better FY experiences. Other strategies for improving student performance might include making more available tutoring/academic support services to students or providing supplemental instruction.

The larger issue is that with all the emphasis on assessment (end of semester course surveys, plus institutional surveys) - and

all the data/information readily available waiting to be analyzed and put to use (e.g. the DFWI data which targets known FY pitfalls/problem areas, institutional data regarding success/failure profiles of students at risk -such as transfer students)--more often than not, such feedback is not put to use: we fail to complete the necessary feedback loop/step of using the information to make improvements.

### C. Rewards.

*Challenges: In Q. 58, 59 and 60 regarding excellence in teaching as recognized by faculty colleagues, department/unit leaders (chairs) and institution leaders, the responses indicated a majority responding "(1)-slight" and/or "(2)-not at all" to the question of excellence being rewarded, in percentages of 49.7%, 38%, and 48.7%, respectively.*

It was interesting to note that in our surveys of academic chairpersons that while effective teaching of first-year students in departmental courses is considered "moderately to very important" in the tenure/promotion process in almost all (14 of 17) responding department chairs, other activities with first-year students are of "no or slight importance" in the tenure/promotion process [teaching University 102 courses (15 of 17 departments), research with (13 of 17), advising of first-year students (8 of 17), and advising co-curricular clubs (11 of 17)]; and that other activities with first-year students are of "no or slight importance" in awarding discretionary salary increases [teaching University 102 courses (16 of 17 departments), research with (14 of 17), advising of first-year students (11 of 17), and advising co-curricular clubs (13 of 16)]. Also, none of the responding departments extend any other rewards or recognition for teaching first-year students other than those for teaching undergraduate students more generally. This suggests that faculty involvement with FY students is likely not sufficiently acknowledged, recognized or rewarded. Another area where inadequate incentive/rewards may be an issue involves the UGC, which has experienced difficulties in recruiting sufficient numbers of faculty to teach 102 seminars.

### III. Findings: Focus on the UGC initiative

The UGC Colleges are a fairly recent initiative at Stony Brook. As mentioned previously, the overall impression is positive, but little effort had been made to gather feedback *from faculty* up to now on this important FY initiative. Our subcommittee thus made it a goal to gather feedback from the 102 faculty members over the last five years who are familiar with the UGC Program and have taught the UGC College 102 seminars. The survey data was compiled and the following highlights were identified:

Â. Out of 59 people (out of 241 asked to respond to the survey), 38 rated their overall experience as good/excellent (64%); 39 would teach the course again. (66%); 45 people feel that the A, B, C, or U grading structure is an effective way to evaluate the student for the course. (76%)

Â. Out of 59 people who took the survey, 36 people do not feel the \$1000 research stipend is enough of a financial incentive. (61%)

Â. 27 out of 59 respondents felt that a larger research stipend would make teaching an Undergraduate College 102 course more attractive. Also, smaller class size and formalized meeting with 102 course instructors to discuss strategies, techniques, and help tips would make teaching more attractive.

Â. 22 out of 59 respondents felt that more readily available technology for class lessons (i.e. use of media equipment, wireless classrooms, etc.) would be beneficial to teaching an Undergraduate College 102 course.

Â. Many respondents commented that teaching a 102 course increased their interaction with freshmen.

Issues of concern for faculty related to UGC include:

Â. A number of faculty reported that teaching 102 required a larger time commitment than expected.

Â. The majority of the faculty felt that the current financial incentives were not adequate and that some departments made it difficult for the faculty to access these funds.

Â. *Challenges: The UGC program has experienced recurring recruitment issues, including not only difficulty in recruiting faculty to teach 102 seminars; but also, a long-term lack of a faculty director for one of the UGC Colleges in 07-08. Also, no women faculty have yet served as UGC faculty directors since the program's inception.*

In addition, some faculty express concerns regarding a lack of clarity of academic goals within the 102 seminars as being a source of confusion and discomfort for both students and faculty. The format of the course is perceived to contribute to the lack of motivation of the students; many of the students who attend the course appear to be unengaged or sign up for classes based on scheduling needs rather than subject interest. While the majority of respondents report that the current grading structure is sufficient, others point out that the absence of "real grading" communicates to the students that the content is not important and the course is of little value. Other academic opportunities are missed in the UGC coursework: for example, all students are required to join in a common FY reading experience, yet the followup discussion and integration of writing/academic content into this experience is minimal.

In addition to the subcommittee survey, the Faculty/Staff survey also suggests that better communication of faculty goals/expectations to FY students in the UGC 101 courses (or in orientation events) would be of value. The perception exists that many students come to college unprepared, and could benefit from advice on basic-level practices (attending class, learning how to study, how to take notes at lectures; etc.) as well as other basic guidelines (even, for example, knowing how

to address faculty as "Dr." or "Prof.", etc.), Although the 101 courses do address many issues regarding the adjustment to college life, more emphasis on academics (including course writing components) might serve to foster the academic success of the FY students.

#### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS: Action Items

Campus wide Recommendations: Below are listed several recommendations for improving the quality of the first-year teaching experience.

##### *Primary recommendations include:*

- Smaller classes ; more sections and/or course offerings
- More classroom space , better classrooms (i.e. technology-supported classrooms, functional space) and laboratories
- More faculty members, fewer FY courses taught by graduate students and adjunct instructors
- A task force to reassess the writing program; and follow up with resources/improvements

##### *Secondary recommendations include:*

- Greater availability of SINC sites (computer labs for scheduled TA sessions and recitations)
- Advise new faculty members regarding the nature of our first-year students
- Rewards: Increased salary for lecturers; faculty awards recognizing the significance and contributions by faculty for effective teaching of first-year students. In encouraging the teaching of FY students, it is the committee's view that recognition awards as well as financial incentives would be helpful, and would go further than using threats to remove existing privileges for lack of faculty participation in these type of program initiatives.

Recommendations for the UGC (particularly 102 courses) include:

- The 102 faculty instructors need more training, resources, guidance about working with and engaging freshmen (professional development workshops, held conveniently on campus).
- Purpose/goals of the 102 courses (as well as a FY philosophy) should be better communicated to faculty.
- Other faculty incentives could include: teaching credit, providing stipends directly to faculty member, formal organized meetings to discuss teaching strategies, social gatherings with refreshments, smaller class size
- Increase available resources such as space, technology, and funding for class trips.
- Larger research stipend for faculty teaching a 102 course (\$2000);
- Call for proposals for innovative interdisciplinary collaboration in the teaching of the 102 courses (using existing mini-grant structure that identifies interdisciplinary collaboration. This type of approach might strengthen specific content areas or skills while providing small class experiences)
- Incorporate faculty feedback for improving UGC seminars; and continue to incorporate faculty feedback each year to enhance UGC program.

It should be noted that many faculty report teaching a UGC 102 course for the first time because of personal invitation or by request from a UGC faculty director or a College dean; thus the long-term vacancy of a faculty director (07-08) is a concern. Because we know that faculty members' primary affiliation and responsibilities are to their departments, *it is critical that overall institutional goals regarding FY teaching (UGC needs for 102 instructors/course goals) be communicated at this level: efforts by senior leaders to resolve persistent/recurring issues of recruiting faculty to teach 102 seminars (or UGC Directors) cannot occur without providing adequate incentives/rewards for academic units.* And better collaborations with departments and/or deans so that academic units/departments are invested in the goal/mission of providing quality FY experiences through 102 seminars must be a shared responsibility---and should not overburden only one or two individuals within a department, or ignore the already heavy time demands/responsibilities of faculty at a research university. One suggestion for improving the involvement with the FY cohort at the unit/ department level was also to include new hires in FY initiatives in a time-limited, non-burdensome way (giving a guest appearance/lecture to a 102 class, for example).

##### *Concluding Note:*

The overall assessment is mixed; and in some ways it would be difficult for any committee to come to consensus as to which "action item" is higher priority than another. Although many initiatives (UGC 102 seminars) are overall positive as regards the FY experience, it is the committee opinion that senior institutional leaders wishing to nurture the quality of FY academic experiences must go beyond words alone (better dissemination of FY philosophies/initiatives) and also provide faculty with sufficient incentives/rewards for engaging FY students, and even more importantly, provide adequate resources (classroom space, faculty personnel).

#### V. Sources of evidence beyond the faculty/staff survey (Appendices)

Further support is found in the appendices (attached)

- V.1. Interviews (form attached) of faculty responsible for large enrollment courses
- V.2. Survey (form attached) of faculty who have taught 102 seminars in the UGC
- V.3. Survey (form attached) of academic unit leaders/chairs

V.1. Interview of faculty responsible for large enrollment courses (Sample format).

- 1) How long have you been teaching a first year course(s)? What course? Enrollment #s?
- 2) Is teaching a first year course very different than teaching other undergraduate classes? (Why or why not?) Are there specific challenges to teaching freshmen?
- 3) Are the facilities adequate? Do you have enough support? What in your opinion would improve the success of your students?
- 4) Do you use any tools/techniques to increase the "active learning" component or your class? Or to increase interaction with students? (for ex.--group work, clickers, etc.)
- 5) How is your teaching evaluated? (Students? Peer mentors?... if you have TAs, how are they evaluated?)
- 6) Did teaching a first year course help/hinder the tenure process in any way for you? Was it a factor in your tenure assessment? Explain.
- 7) How does your department handle the assigning of teaching load--particularly reg. first year courses? (Rotating faculty? Assignment for life, Etc.) Do you feel your first year teaching contributions are valued by your colleagues, your Chair and senior administrators? Why or why not?
- 8) Evaluating your interactions with first year students, please rate the strength of your connection to students in the following groups. [Rate 1-5, where 1=little to no connection; 5= a very high degree of connection; NA=Don't know/unfamiliar with program] Collegiate Science & Technology Entry Program (CSTEP) & Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) students; Educational Opportunity Program-Advancement on Individual Merit (EOP/AIM) students; Honors College students; International students; Learning Communities students; Pre-professional students (predental, premed, etc.); Students involved in athletics; Students involved in clubs (e.g. student clubs relating to a discipline, with faculty advisors); Students involved in research (e.g. URECA, LIGASE); Undergraduate Colleges (Arts, Culture & Humanities; Global Studies; Human Development; Information & Technology Studies; Leadership & Service; Science and Society); University Scholars students; Women in Science & Engineering (WISE) students; Other: Please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) To what degree of importance do you consider the following goals/objectives for first year courses? (Rate 1-5, where 1=not at all; 5=to a very high degree)
  - a) to provide basic building blocks or fundamentals of a discipline so that the students are prepared for 200-level /upper level courses?
  - b) to get students excited about a particular discipline and the latest developments in the field?
  - c) to weed out students who are weak or who are not serious about the discipline?
  - d) to provide academic socialization to college-level coursework (e.g. note-taking, study habits, test taking, etc.)
- 10) If you were asked to engage in initiatives to improve the quality and experience of first year students, please rate the following factors [Rate 1-5, where 1=no importance; 5= a very high degree of importance).
  - a) Time commitment
  - b) Compensation/incentives
  - c) Recognition
  - d) Degree of connection to your field of interest

V.2 Survey of faculty who have taught 102 seminars in the UGC (Sample of cover letter/survey format)

The University has launched a year long assessment of the first year experience called "First Year Matters". There have been nine committees established to assess the nine dimensions of our first year program. Once all of the data is collected in each area the University will be better able to make decisions as to what should be the next step for first year student program.

As members of the Faculty Dimension Sub-committee, part of our task is to assess the Undergraduate Colleges Freshman Seminar 102 course. You have been selected to participate because you have taught this course.

Below you will find a link to a survey that should take you no longer than 10 minutes to complete. Similarly to the entire First Year Matters assessment, we are hoping this survey will provide some insight into how this course is structured, perceived, and taught. From here, the hope is that the information gathered will allow us to move forward with the Freshman Seminar 102 course as appropriate.

The information collected below will be completely anonymous so we do ask for your feedback and honesty. We thank you again for your time and look forward to reviewing your thoughts.

Sincerely,

Faculty Dimension Sub-committee, First Year Matters Assessment

Faculty Survey: Freshman Seminar 102 Course

1. What was your overall experience teaching a 102? Please provide comments?

1 (Poor) 2 (fair) 3 (good) 4 (excellent)

2. How many times have you taught an Undergraduate College 102 course?

3. Would you be interested in teaching an Undergraduate College 102 course again?

YES NO

If yes, why?

If no, why?

4. What initially interested you to teach an Undergraduate College 102 course?

5. How have you had other contact with freshman students aside from teaching the Undergraduate 102 course (please check all that apply)?

Collegiate Science & Technology Entry Program (CSTEP) & Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) students

Educational Opportunity Program Advancement on Individual Merit (EOP/AIM) students

Honors College students

International students

Learning Communities students

Pre-professional students (pre-dental, pre-med, etc.)

Students involved in athletics

Students involved in clubs (e.g. student clubs relating to a discipline, with faculty advisors)

Students involved in research (e.g. URECA, LIGASE)

University Scholars students

Women in Science & Engineering (WISE) students

Other: Please be specific \_\_\_\_\_

None at this time

6. Does the current financial incentives (\$1000.00 research stipend) seem adequate for the work required for teaching the Undergraduate College 102 course?

7. What additional incentives would make teaching an Undergraduate College 102 course attractive?

Smaller class size

A larger research stipend

Social gatherings with refreshments provided

Formal organized meetings with other Undergraduate College 102 course instructors to discuss strategies, techniques, and help tips

Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. Of the following, what additional support items would be beneficial to teaching an Undergraduate College 102 course?

Formal organized meetings with other Undergraduate College 102 course instructors to discuss strategies, techniques, and help tips

A manual

A conference

Teaching strategies

Learning styles guide

- A teaching assistant (graduate or undergraduate, self selected or provided by the Undergraduate Colleges)
- Technology integration strategies
- Funds for occasional class snacks
- Funds for supplies
- Funds for trips
- Regularly available technology to borrow for class lessons and projects
- Other: please specify\_\_\_\_\_

9. What is your position here on campus? (Choose all that apply)

- Term
- Tenure
- Lecturer
- Assistant Professor
- Associate Professor
- Full Professor
- Other: please specify\_\_\_\_\_

10. What do you see as the goals of the UGC 102 courses?

11. The grading structure for the UGC 102 course allows the instructor to award a grade of A, B, C, or U. Do you feel that this structure is effective when evaluating student performance for the course?

YES NO

12. Do you have any suggestions for making the UGC 102 course more effective? Please be specific.

13. How do you keep in touch or plan on keeping in touch with your students after the Undergraduate College 102 course is complete? Please select all that apply.

- E-mail
- Academic Advising
- Telephone
- Lunch
- Casual meetings
- Not at all

V.3 Survey (form attached) of academic unit leaders/chairs: First Year Matters" Department Chair Survey

Dear Department Chair: This survey comes from the Faculty/Campus Culture Committee as part of the campus-wide and year-long initiative known as "First Year Matters." The overarching goal of this initiative is to identify and implement ways to improve the experience of all first-year students at Stony Brook University. Our committee is focused on the faculty and campus culture dimension. All faculty members have already been surveyed. The purpose of this survey is to obtain the unique and important perspectives of department chairs. We hope that you will take a few moments to help us. We have made every effort to keep the survey brief. We will be most grateful to receive your response by Friday, February 29. Thank you for your valuable time.

1. Approximately how many first-year students, in total, were enrolled in all sections taught by members of your faculty in the Fall 2007 semester?
  - None
  - Some but fewer than 50
  - More than 50 but less than 100
  - More than 100 but less than 200
  - More than 200 but less than 500
  - More than 500
  
2. Approximately how many first-year students, in total, were enrolled in all sections taught by tenured professors on your faculty in the Fall 2007 semester?
  - None
  - Some but fewer than 50
  - More than 50 but less than 100
  - More than 100 but less than 200
  - More than 200 but less than 500
  - More than 500
  
3. Approximately how many first-year students, in total, were enrolled in all sections taught by tenure-track professors on your faculty in the Fall 2007 semester?
  - None
  - Some but fewer than 50
  - More than 50 but less than 100
  - More than 100 but less than 200
  - More than 200 but less than 500
  - More than 500
  
4. Approximately how many first-year students, in total, were enrolled in all sections taught by full-time lecturers on your faculty in the Fall 2007 semester?
  - None
  - Some but fewer than 50
  - More than 50 but less than 100
  - More than 100 but less than 200
  - More than 200 but less than 500
  - More than 500
  
5. Approximately how many first-year students, in total, were enrolled in all sections taught by adjunct instructors in your department in the Fall 2007 semester?
  - None
  - Some but fewer than 50
  - More than 50 but less than 100
  - More than 100 but less than 200
  - More than 200 but less than 500
  - More than 500
  
6. Approximately how many first-year students, in total, were enrolled in all sections taught by visiting faculty members in the Fall 2007 semester?
  - None

- None
- Some but fewer than 50
- More than 50 but less than 100
- More than 100 but less than 200
- More than 200 but less than 500
- More than 500

7. Approximately how many first-year students, in total, were enrolled in all sections taught by graduate students in the Fall 2007 semester?

- None
- Some but fewer than 50
- More than 50 but less than 100
- More than 100 but less than 200
- More than 200 but less than 500
- More than 500

8. How important is the education of first-year students relative to that of other undergraduate students?

- Much less important
- Less important
- Equally important
- More important
- Much more important

9. Which statement best describes the information that your department transmits to new faculty members regarding first-year students?

- We provide both written materials and oral guidance.
- We provide written materials but no oral guidance.
- We provide oral guidance but no written materials.
- We provide neither written materials nor oral guidance.

In your department, how important is each of the following in the tenure/promotion process?		Not at All	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
10.	Effective teaching of first-year students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11.	Effective teaching of a University 102 first-year seminar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12.	Working with first-year students in a research capacity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.	Academic advising of first-year students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14.	Advising co-curricular clubs that may include first-year students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In your department, how important is each of the following in awarding discretionary salary increases?		Not at All	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
15.	Effective teaching of first-year students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16.	Effective teaching of a University 102 first-year seminar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17.	Working with first-year students in a research capacity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18.	Academic advising of first-year students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19.	Advising co-curricular clubs that may include first-year students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What percentage of each of the following groups taught 100-level or 200-level courses offered by your department in the Fall 2007 semester?		None	Some but <=10%	More than 10% but <=25%	More than 25% but <= 50%	More than 50% but <= 75%	More than 75% but <100%	All
20.	Tenured professors	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
21.	Untenured tenure-track professors	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
22.	Full-time non-tenure-track faculty members	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
23.	Part-time faculty members	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

24. Please list and briefly describe any other rewards or recognition extended by your department to faculty members because of their scholarly interactions, such as teaching, advising, or research) with first-year students.

25. Please indicate your affiliation.

- College of Arts and Sciences
- College of Engineering and Applied Sciences
- College of Business
- School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences
- School of Journalism

26. Please share with us any other comments you have about first-year education in your department and at Stony Brook more generally.

Recommended Grade: C-

Recommended Action Items:

- Better communication with faculty (FY philosophy, initiatives, planning). *(High priority)*
  - 1) Improve communication regarding technology resources/tools available to faculty through Teaching, Learning & Technology.
  - 2) 102 seminar workshops: implement faculty development workshops on teaching first year seminars (including communication of learning goals, first year student characteristics, issues, & trends, an institutional philosophy for FY.) This has been done in ITS for example.
  - 3) Q.24, and faculty perception of the increased demands on the institution's resources, promote a need for long-term analysis of institutional classroom needs / resources as freshman classes expand.
- Resources (classrooms, faculty). *(High priority)*

Faculty overall report that personal and classroom space are not adequate for FY teaching needs. More institutional investment (as well as communication of current efforts/plans) might benefit the overall perception of "campus-wide encouragement by senior academic leaders."
- Improve communication within academic departments. *(High priority)*
  - 1) Recommend that Chairs become increasingly familiar /knowledgeable with campus wide learning goals and communicate these goals regularly in faculty meetings.
  - 2) Chairs/unit level academic administrators could play a more active role in organizing committees (curriculum, etc.) to discuss first year matters, develop departmental mechanisms to evaluate first year initiatives in larger classes, evaluate them and communicate results/findings to both the unit faculty and to senior level administrators. The importance of staffing 102 seminars is also a priority.
- Create optimal interactions for newly hired faculty with undergraduates *(High priority)*

Improve communication regarding importance of teaching first year & undergraduates: take steps to involve new faculty and improve communication regarding new hires to campus community (including Undergraduate Colleges, programs that work with primarily undergraduates). For example, giving a guest lecture to a 102 class could be a way of involving a new hire with FY/undergraduate communities.

- Improve advising first year students: greater interface between faculty & advisors. (*High priority*)

Provide mechanism for greater interface/involvement between those who teach and those who are charged with responsibility for student advising (particularly FY courses)

- Recognize faculty efforts (*High priority*)

1) Develop or enhance campus-wide recognition of faculty who have taken initiatives or have outstanding ways of interacting with FY students/undergraduates; evaluate reward structure for faculty who teach large courses (including FY).

2) Develop institutional mechanisms to recognize adjunct/part time faculty efforts with FY teaching.