

AVOIDING THE SECOND YEAR BLUES: A TRANSITION FRAMEWORK ASSISTING STUDENT PROGRESSION AT DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Second year students can face difficulties returning to study after successfully completing year one. Many students experience a loss of engagement and do not make a smooth transition into second year as a result of stress from academic pressure and personal development issues (Gump, 2007). Much effort is put into welcoming students to their first year of University but little has been previously done in Australia to assist the transition into second year (Hunter, Tobolowsky, Gardner, Evenbeck, Pattengale, Schaller & Schriener, 2010). Second year students are not necessary second year at University students but may include students articulating from MIBT or TAFE. These students need to form and build networks with students at the same level, not with “first year students”.

We identified a “slump” in the grades of second year students completing science courses at Deakin University with the greatest decline occurring between 1st and 2nd trimester. Since 2009 we have run a “Welcome to Second Year” program during orientation week for students entering second year of their science course. Student evaluations have indicated that the activities presented in the program made them feel more prepared, assisted them to re-establish connections with the student cohort and academic staff.

REFERENCES

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