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Innovating the FYE Proposal: Moving Beyond "Library Week"

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Denise A. Wetzel & Justin Kani | Mississippi State University

Overview

- A Brief History
- FYE at MSU
- Student Demographics
- FYE Proposal Process
- FYE Promotion Strategies
- Preparing for an FYE
- Conclusion

But first, some questions!

A (Very) Brief History of the First–Year Experience Program

- Late 1800's - First-Year Experience seminars used as extended orientations to institutions and aid in student adjustment

- 1970's - resurgence due to an increased diversity in the Baby-Boomers generation and financial aid policy changes*

- 2011 - 94% of four-year colleges and universities offer programs, offered in two-year colleges as well*

* (Keup & Petschauer, 2011)

FYE at Mississippi State University

"The First-Year Experience program at MSU allows first-year students to earn one hour of course credit by taking a chosen course from a list of seminar topics ranging from a wide variety of disciplines. First-Year Experience courses feature small class sizes and faculty who are dedicated to connecting with students through engaging activities and mentorship."

(MSU CTL, 2017)
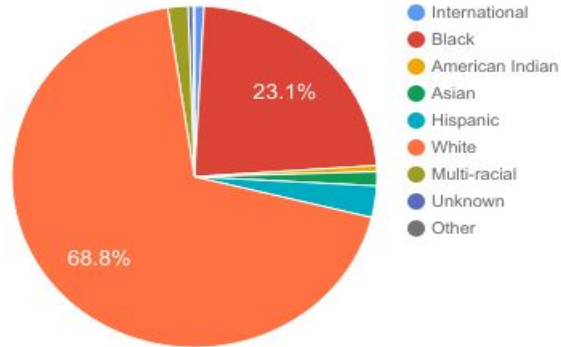
Our FYE Course

Cowbell Yell:
Exploring the History and Traditions of MSU

The aim of this course it to investigate the history of Mississippi State University through the MSU Libraries. Students will have the chance to explore history, stories, myths, legends, etc. as they delve through various themes.

The overall plan for the class is to introduce students to Information and Digital Literacies using the Association of College and Research Libraries Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. Students will be introduced to information literacy skills through short interactive activities throughout the course.

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FYE Student Demographics at Mississippi State

First Time Freshman 2016

Pie chart legend:
- International
- Black
- American Indian
- Asian
- Hispanic
- White
- Multi-racial
- Unknown
- Other

23.1% (Black)
68.8% (White)

First-time Freshmen Average ACT Scores

Year	MSU Main Campus
Fall 2016	24.4
Fall 2015	24.0
Fall 2014	24.4
Fall 2013	23.9
Fall 2012	23.6
Fall 2011	23.6
Fall 2010	23.4
Fall 2009	23.7
Fall 2008	23.6
Fall 2007	23.6

ACT Information

FALL	Black, African Amer			Am Indian/Alaskan Nat			Asian			Hispanic			White, non-Hispanic			Nat Hawaiian/Pacific Isl			Multiracial		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2010	19.8	19.7	19.7	23.6	29.7	21.6	25.7	24.1	25.3	22.4	22.2	22.3	24.8	24.6	24.7	18.0	23.3	22.2	26.0	23.7	24.7
2011	19.9	19.5	19.7	23.8	21.3	22.6	25.2	24.5	24.8	22.9	24.2	23.5	25.5	24.8	25.2	---	27.0	27.0	23.5	22.9	23.3
2012	19.7	19.3	19.5	21.6	22.5	22.3	26.2	23.7	24.8	24.7	23.4	24.0	25.3	24.9	25.1	31.0	27.0	29.0	24.2	21.3	22.3
2013	20.0	19.6	19.8	26.3	22.5	24.4	26.1	26.6	26.3	24.6	23.4	23.9	25.6	25.1	25.4	29.0	22.0	23.8	25.7	22.5	24.0
2014	20.2	20.1	20.1	23.3	19.5	22.0	25.8	25.8	25.8	24.7	23.4	24.1	26.1	25.2	25.7	27.0	27.0	27.0	23.8	23.8	23.8
2015	20.2	20.0	20.1	22.4	23.0	22.8	27.4	24.7	26.2	24.5	23.5	24.0	25.8	24.9	25.3	20.0	20.5	20.3	24.4	22.6	23.4
2016	20.9	20.5	20.6	23.2	20.8	21.3	27.3	24.2	25.8	23.7	23.5	23.6	26.0	25.5	25.7	29.5	30.0	29.8	24.3	24.3	24.3

MSU Graduation Rates

6-Year Graduation Rates

Cohort	Cohort Size	Degrees	Graduation Rate
1997	2,016	1,159	57.5
1998	1,929	1,113	57.7
1999	2,033	1,135	55.8
2000	2,055	1,190	57.9
2001	1,826	1,062	58.2
2002	1,736	1,040	59.9
2003	1,659	1,018	61.4
2004	1,738	1,007	58.0
2005	1,951	1,174	60.2
2006	1,896	1,097	57.8
2007	2,262	1,381	61.1
2008	2,474	1,495	60.4
2009	2,447	1,469	60.0
2010	2,688	1,609	59.9

(MSU IR, 2017)

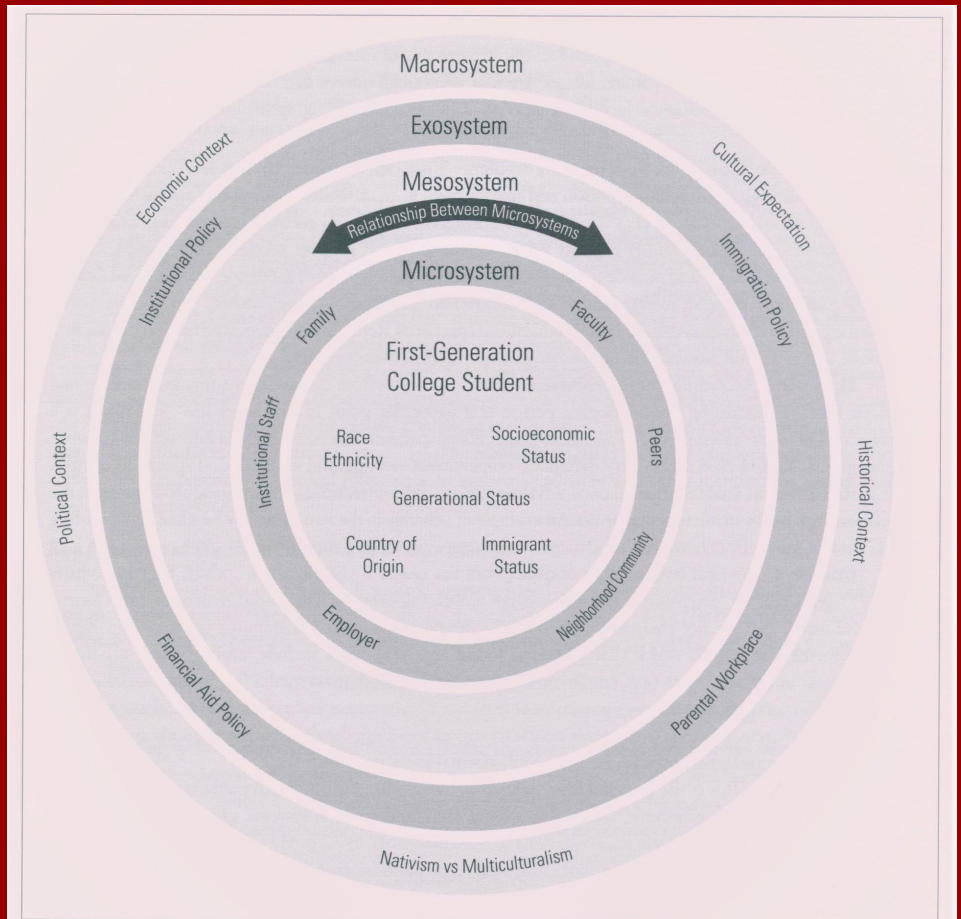# Bronfenbrenner's Developmental Ecology Model and MSU

Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner's developmental ecology model. Adapted from *Immigrant Students and Higher Education* (ASHE Higher Education Report No. 38:6) by E. Kim and J. Diaz, 2013, p. 29. Copyright 2013 by The Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE).

(Jehangir, R. R., Stebleton, M. J., & Deenanath, V., 2015)

Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) Relationship

- Previous Relationship
    - Participated in "Library Week" for University themed FYE classes with scavenger hunts and/or tours
    - Provided library instruction for special topics classes on an as-needed basis
    - Input into the optional online library module for FYE

- Relationship Building
    - Attending/Participating in CTL events
    - Participating in feedback sessions from FYE instructors

FYE Proposal Process

- Developing the idea
- Partnering with library stakeholders
- Proposal Submission
- Proposal Acceptance!

Developing the Idea

- Think about *your* Institution of Higher Learning
  - Who are you as a college or university?
  - What is special about your college or university?
  - How can you support your institution?
- Think about *your* library
  - What does your library do well?
  - What is unique about your library?
  - Can you get buy-in from other library units and administration?
- Think about *your* students
  - Go back to your demographics
  - What would interest freshmen?
  - Will this be a user/student-centered experience?

Now it's your turn.
Let's do a group activity.

Partnering with Library Stakeholders

- When you propose a topic, you need buy-in
  - Buy-in from administrators
    - Is there a Strategic Plan Goal that your FYE would fit into?
  - Buy-in from other library units
    - Think teamwork
  - Buy-in from students

- Meetings with Stakeholders
  - This number can vary depending on your library structure
  - We had approximately 10 meetings over 3 months before the proposal submission

Partnering with Library Stakeholders (cont.)

- Creating a working document
    - Make it available to all stakeholders before submitting the official proposal
    - Google Docs is a great tool for this
    - Allows stakeholders to contribute or comment

- Creating outcomes together
    - Outcomes should be effective
    - Remember, outcomes not objectives for the FYE

Proposal Submission

- Know your deadline(s)
- Work with institution FYE coordinators to get pre-approval
- The hardest part….WAITING!
  - We waited for 2 ½ months between submission and acceptance

Proposal Acceptance

- Notify stakeholders
- Celebrate!

Strategies for Promoting First-Year Experience

- Assessing the targeted audience and their needs

- Developing innovative collaborations and partnerships

- Enhancing the discoverability and accessibility of key collections

- Marketing the program
  - Student Orientation Tour Ambassadors
  - Social Media (Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook)
  - Announcement on the Library Website

Marketing the Program

COWBELL YELL: EXPLORING MSU HISTORY AND TRADITIONS THROUGH MSU LIBRARIES' HISTORICAL ARCHIVES
M 10:00-10:50 a.m. | Instructor: Denise Wetzel and Justin Kani
Course Number: FYE 1001, Sec. F01

Description: Cowbells, Bully, and Revelry! Oh, My! Learn about the traditions, myths, and history of Mississippi State University. Explore the changes in students' fashions from 1880 to 2017. Where did the cowbell come from? Why is Bully our mascot? Enhance your sense of community, curiosity, and whimsy through an introduction to research skills and hands-on experience with MSU Libraries' vast collection of treasures and artifacts. What a great and enjoyable way to learn how to use the MSU Libraries, by learning all about our beloved University!

CHAMPION ATHLETES: WHAT MAKES THEM BIOLOGICALLY SPECIAL?
R 11:00-11:50 a.m. | Instructor: JonEric Smith
Course number: KI 1001, Sec. F02

Description: What do champions like Steve Prefontaine and Frank Shorter (distance runners), Lance Armstrong (cyclist), Michael Phelps (swimmer), Simone Biles (gymnast), Ben Pakulski (body builder), Usain Bolt (world's fastest man), Brian Shaw (world's strongest man), scuba divers, free divers, high altitude mountain climbers, and even Secretariat (elite racehorse) have in common? The answer lies in anatomy and physiology. Based on rapidly advancing science, in this course you will learn how small changes in anatomy and physiological function can lead to championship athletic performance.

Preparing the FYE Course

- Go back to the learning outcomes
  - How will you measure those outcomes?
  - Examples of our outcomes:
    - Examine the history of information, and identify the evolution of technology channels used to communicate research findings.
    - Develop effective search strategies to construct efficient search queries.
    - Demonstrate an understanding of the culture and history of Mississippi State University.

- Remember the student demographics

- More meetings with stakeholders

FYE Syllabus Creation

- Figure out class flow
  - Is there a capstone project for the FYE?
    - What is the capstone project?

  - What are the overarching themes of the class?

  - Work out weekly themes
    - Syllabus developed from here

  - Do you have a book for the class?
    - Maroon Edition - <u>The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates</u>
    - MSU Colleague Created "Insider's Guide"

Our FYE Weekly Structure

1. Course Introduction, Information Literacy activity, and pre-course assessment
2. Library Scavenger Hunt, include Ulysses S Grant Library, Templeton Museum, and Grisham
3. Information Literacy activity and Maroon Edition Discussion
4. Information Literacy activity and Introduction to Library Resources
5. Information Literacy activity
6. Intro to Special Collections and researching recipes
7. MSU Recipe Potluck ((Special Collections cookbooks) and Mississippi Foods)
8. Special Collections Research Topics (Meet in Special Collections) and behind the scenes look
9. Introduction to IMC and begin developing capstone proposals
10. Information Literacy activity and working on capstone project
11. Information Literacy activity and working on capstone project
12. Information Literacy activity and service project
13. Information Literacy activity and working on capstone project
14. Information Literacy activity, course wrap up, and post-course assessment
15. Capstone presentations reception

FYE Syllabus Creation (cont.)

- The Syllabus
  - Do you have a course template you want to emulate?

  - Think about the Academic Calendar for your semester
    - When do classes statrt?
    - When is Fall Break during the Fall semester?
    - When is the Thanksgiving Break?

  - Keep it clean and readable

Integrating the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education

- Gamification
  - Plickers
  - Kahoot
  - GooseChase
  - Go SoapBox

- Weekly activities that span the entire semester

- No matter the activity, the key is to create a "fun" environment

Resources to Support Your FYE Proposal

- National Resource Center: First Year Experience and Students in Transition
  - Based at The University of South Carolina
  - Listserv
  - Books
    - The Role of the Library in the First College Year with ACRL, 2007
    - Building Synergy for High-Impact Educational Initiatives: First-Year Seminars and Learning Communities, 2016
  - Annual National Conferences
  - Journal of The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition
- Your Institution's Center for Teaching and Learning, or equivalent office

Conclusion

Any Questions?

Image from:
https://goo.gl/t3Yo58

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