



Intensive on the First-Year Seminar:

Designing or revising a seminar course to transform the beginning college experience

June 6-7, 2024 Asheville, NC

Digital Copy :



Agenda

Thursday, June 6, 2024

8:00 - 9:00 am	Registration and Breakfast- Blue Ridge Ballroom & Foyer Beverages will be available all day in the foyer
9:00 - 9:30 am	Introductions
	Who Are You and Why Are You Here? Sara Stein Koch & Betsy Barefoot
	Review of the Day(s) Sara Stein Koch
9:30 - 10:30 am	History and Context Dan Friedman, John N. Gardner, Betsy Barefoot, Sara Stein Koch, & Kimberly Koledoye
10:30 - 10:45 am	Break- Foyer
10:45 am - 12:15 pm	First-Year Seminar Relevance and Excellence Dan Friedman, Betsy Barefoot, & Kimberly Koledoye
12:15 - 1:15 pm	Lunch- Blue Ridge Ballroom
1:15 - 2:45 pm	Recruitment, Selection, and Ongoing Development of Instructors Kimberly Koledoye & Dan Friedman
2:45 - 3:00 pm	Break- Foyer
3:00 - 4:15 pm	Reflection and Application Blue Ridge Ballroom - John N. Gardner & Sara Stein Koch French Broad 1 & 2 - Dan Friedman & Betsy Barefoot French Broad 3 - Drew Koch & Kimberly Koledoye
4:15 - 5:00 pm	Report Out Sara Stein Koch & John N. Gardner

Friday, June 7, 2024

8:00 - 9:00 am	Breakfast- Blue Ridge Ballroom & Foyer Beverages will be available all day in the foyer
9:00 - 9:05 am	Welcome Back and Agenda Sara Stein Koch
9:05 - 10:00 am	Evidence-Based & Equity-Minded Pedagogical Approaches using an LMS in Blended and Online Courses Kimberly Koledoye
10:00 - 10:45 am	Building Community: Establishing a Sense of Belonging through a First-Year Seminar Dan Friedman & Kimberly Koledoye
10:45 - 11:00 am	Break- Foyer
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Assessing and Evaluating the First-Year Seminar Dan Friedman
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Lunch- Blue Ridge Ballroom
1:00 - 2:00 pm	Organizing and Sustaining the First-Year Seminar John N. Gardner, Kimberly Koledoye, & Dan Friedman
2:00- 2:15 pm	Break- Foyer
2:15 - 3:00 pm	First-Year Seminar as a Transformative Innovation Drew Koch
3:00 - 4:15 pm	Reflection and Application Blue Ridge Ballroom - John N. Gardner & Sara Stein Koch French Broad 1 & 2 - Dan Friedman & Betsy Barefoot French Broad 3 - Drew Koch & Kimberly Koledoye
4:15 - 4:40 pm	Report Out and Next Steps John N. Gardner & Sara Stein Koch
4:40 - 4:45 pm	Closing Comments Drew Koch

Facilitators



Betsy Barefoot was Co-Director for Research and Publications for the University of South Carolina's National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. She has extensive university teaching experience at undergraduate and graduate levels. Her special area of expertise is the scholarship of efforts to improve the beginning college experience. She is widely published and is universally regarded as a leading scholar in her field.

She is also highly regarded for her editorial and management skills in the production of higher education publications. She has thirty-six years of experience working on issues of first-year student success at the national level.



Dan Friedman is the Assistant Vice President of University 101 Programs and the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience at the University of South Carolina. This is an integrated unit that focuses on helping students thrive through their transitions into, through, and out of the University. In his role with University 101 Programs, Dan provides leadership for six academic courses, including 350 sections of the nationally renowned first-year seminar taught by over 300 instructors and 300 peer leaders.



John N. Gardner is an educator, university professor, and administrator, non-profit organization founder, author, public speaker, consultant, public intellectual and thought leader, change agent, student retention specialist, first-year, sophomore, transfer, and senior-year students' advocate, and initiator and scholar of multiple undergraduate education reform movements. He serves as the Founder and Executive Chair of the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. The Institute was founded by John and his wife, Betsy O. Barefoot, in October 1999.

Facilitators



Drew Koch is a child of immigrants who came to the United States in pursuit of a better life. His first language was not English, and postsecondary education was valued by his family as a means for realizing the American Dream. A recipient of need-based aid while in school, Koch is a staunch advocate for and leader of efforts that increase student access to and, ultimately, completion of postsecondary education. He has worked in and with higher education institutions for over 30 years. He has done so since 2010 at the Gardner Institute where he was named Chief Executive Officer in 2021.



Kimberly Koledoye is a professor of academic student success and serves as the program coordinator for the Houston Community College system. Additionally, she teaches developmental and credit level English. She has made tremendous impact on the institution and statewide as a leader of development teams for First Year Experience courses and Developmental English redesigns. She possesses a Bachelor of Arts in English, a Master of Education Administration, a Graduate Certificate in Rhetoric and Composition, and a Doctorate of Higher Education Leadership.



Sara Stein Koch is a Fellow and Senior Associate for Institutional Support at the Gardner Institute as well as a wife and mother of 6, traveler, hiker, caregiver, and educator. Her 30-year career has been spent in the service of students through teaching, mentoring and administration in public and private colleges and universities. She has been developing and facilitating processes at the Gardner Institute for the last 13 years. Her current work with the Institute involves advising in the various processes connected with institutional transformation to increase equitable student success. Her current work with the Institute involves advising in the various processes connected with institutional transformation to increase equitable student success including the Academy on the First Year of College.

What We Learned from You Through the Survey

Findings based on responses from:

34 institutions (58%)

56 individuals responded from those 34 institutions

- **Grading**
 - All courses were graded
- **Credit hours**
 - The most commonly reported number was 3 credit hours
 - Followed closely by courses that carry 1 credit hour
 - Followed by course carrying 4 credit hours
 - Many respondents reported courses that carry variable credit hours
- **Effectiveness**
 - The most common rating of courses was 'moderately effective'
 - 10 courses were rated 'highly effective'
 - 5 indicated 'no course'
 - (There was some disagreement between individual respondents as to level of effectiveness)
- **Required/voluntary**
 - Many more required courses than voluntary courses

Worksheet- Day 1

1. Primary goals (What do you want to accomplish as a result of being here?)

2. What are 3-5 key points from the “First-Year Seminar Variation, Relevance, and Excellence” section of the workshop that might have application or implications to your work?

3. What are 3-5 key points from the “Recruitment, Selection, and Ongoing Development of Instructors” section of the workshop that might have application or implications to your work?

4. Reflecting on your goal (question 1) and the key points you listed in questions 2- 3 :
A. What ideas for change(s) do you want to implement?

B. What barriers might you encounter when implementing the change(s) and how might you overcome them?

C. With whom do you need to communicate when you get back to make the change(s) happen?

D. What kind(s) of support do you need to make the change(s) happen?

E. How will you know if the change(s) are effective?

Worksheet- Day 2

1. How has/have your goals(s) changed since yesterday?

2. What are 2-3 key points from the “Evidence-Based & Equity-Minded Pedagogical Approaches using an LMS in Blended and Online Courses” section of the workshop that might have application or implications to your work?

3. What are 2-3 key points from the “Student Belonging” section of the workshop that might have application or implications to your work?

4. What are 2-3 key points from the “Assessment and Evaluation” section of the workshop that might have application or implications to your work?

5. What are 2-4 key points from the “Organizing and Sustaining” and the “First-Year Seminar as Transformation Innovation” sections of the workshop that might have application or implications to your work?

6. Reflecting on your goal (question 1) and the key points you listed in questions 2-5:
A. What ideas for change(s) do you want to implement?

B. What barriers might you encounter when implementing the change(s) and how might you overcome them?

C. With whom do you need to communicate when you get back to make the change(s) happen?

D. What kind(s) of support do you need to make the change(s) happen?

E. How will you know if the change(s) are effective?

F. What is the first thing you will do when you get back?

Nine Characteristics of Successful* First-Year Seminars

- They carry academic credit.
- They are centered in, rather than tangential to, the first-year curriculum, serving as an integral part of general education, core, or major requirements.
- They include academic content—often extra—or interdisciplinary content that is woven into essential process elements such as study skills, library use, writing, etc.
- Faculty are involved in all stages of program design and instruction.
- Student affairs professionals are also involved in all stages of program design and instruction.
- Instructors are trained in basic methods of group facilitation and active learning pedagogies: The course process becomes as important as the course content.
- Instructors are paid or otherwise rewarded for teaching the seminar.
- Upper-level students are involved in course delivery.
- Courses are evaluated on a regular basis, and the results of this evaluation are made available to the entire campus community.

*A successful seminar is defined as one that enjoys strong, broad-based institutional support and a long life.

From Barefoot, B., & Fidler, P. (1996). *The 1994 National Survey of Freshman Seminar Programs: Continuing Innovations in the Collegiate Curriculum* (Monograph No. 20). National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience and Students in Transition. University of South Carolina.

Promoting Equity in the Learning Environment: Possible Strategies to Ensuring Equity Within the Classroom

The concept of equity includes giving everyone in a situation the specific tools they need to be successful. Promoting equity is about how educators choose to embrace the unique backgrounds, identities, needs, and experiences their individual students bring to the classroom. These practices—alongside each instructor’s own experiences, background, and personal strengths—will help to create an equitable environment in which students can become more successful.

Please take a moment to reflect on the following topics:

Faculty Engagement	Yes	No
<p>Reflecting on Your Own Beliefs</p> <p>Before you can create a more equitable learning environment in the classroom, consider the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructors, like anyone else, may be unaware of the biases that exist in their training and upbringing. • Understanding your own positionality, or the circumstances that create your identity in terms of race, gender and ability, can help you become more conscious of issues related to racial equity and gender equity, and help you support students in your class. <p>1. Do you regularly reflect on your own beliefs and potential biases?</p>		
<p>Reducing Race and Gender Barriers to Learning</p> <p>By setting a high bar for achievement for all students, you encourage them to engage with you and their peers; and you avoid any stereotypes of what they’re capable of accomplishing.</p> <p>2. Are you challenging all students to rise to their highest potential?</p>		
<p>Acknowledging Unique Circumstances</p> <p>It may be tempting to assume that your students share similar life experiences. Please take a moment to reflect.</p> <p>3. Do you recognize that everyone’s circumstances are unique?</p>		
<p>Establishing an Inclusive Learning Environment</p> <p>Class discussions should represent a variety of views, and students should feel comfortable expressing themselves. It is important to respect preferred names and pronouns as an acknowledgement of identity.</p> <p>4. Early in the term, do you clarify that your classroom is an inclusive, respectful, and safe space for all students in addition to asking about identity preferences?</p>		

Faculty Engagement	Yes	No
<p>Maintaining a Dynamic Classroom</p> <p>Whether it's group, paired or individual work, when you arrange students in different formations, you may increase their engagement with each other and the class material.</p> <p>5. Do you include activities that require students to collaborate while teaching?</p>		
<p>Accommodating Students with with Various Learning Styles & Strengths</p> <p>Learning styles vary from student to student. To create equity in the classroom for everyone, here are a few methods to try:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variance – Present the same information in different ways for visual, aural and verbal learners. • Use a variety of media (e.g., audiobooks, movies) • Include transcripts for multimedia materials. • Provide supplemental materials to the lesson plan (e.g., glossaries, illustrations). • Make technology accessible (e.g., give students the ability to increase text size or adjust brightness) • For presentations, use dyslexia-friendly fonts. • Read test instructions aloud, even if they appear in print. <p>6. When teaching, are you mindful of the various learning styles? Do you give students opportunities within their assignments to play to their learning strengths?</p>		
<p>Being Mindful of How We Use Technology</p> <p>When planning a lesson, keep the following in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all students may have access to stable internet. • Not all students may know how to use technology proficiently. • Not all online students may be in an environment in which they feel comfortable with others seeing (be mindful of this before asking students to turn on their webcam). <p>7. As you prepare for class, are you considering the aforementioned points?</p>		
<p>Classroom Assessment Practices</p> <p>Assessments need to be equitable to all student learning styles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you plan with the end goals in mind? • Are students assessed multiple times outside of the midterm and final? • Do ongoing assessments use various assessments (e.g., objective evaluations, short essays, discussions, projects, peer reviews etc.)? <p>8. As you prepare your syllabus, do you consider different assessment strategies?</p>		

Faculty Engagement	Yes	No
<p>Being Aware of Religious Holidays</p> <p>When planning your course, remember to account for religious holidays and observances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may need to miss class on certain days and make up assignments, quizzes or exams. <p>9. Have you thought of how a religious holiday or a religious celebration may impact a student's ability to participate or succeed in your class?</p>		
<p>Sharing Resources</p> <p>Do you have a list of resources you can share with your students should they need more information or help?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Videos in modules • External links • Supplemental Exercises • Links to tutoring services and other college resources <p>10. When preparing your class, have you considered the additional resources your students will need to thrive?</p>		
<p>Communication</p> <p>Communication is key to success. The following are some suggestions in taking additional steps to communicate with students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending reminders before an assignment is due • Following up with students who have missed a class or when they have not been successful on an assignment <p>11. Do you consider communication with your students to be one of your top priorities?</p>		

Produced by the Houston Community College Academic Student Success Department adapted from:
 Soika, B. (2020, March 19). Seven effective ways to promote equity in the classroom. USC Rossier School of Education. <https://rossier.usc.edu/news-insights/news/seven-effective-ways-promote-equity-classroom>

https://www.nctm.org/conferences-and-professional-development/Tips-for-Teachers/Tips-on-Supporting-All-Students_-Equity-and-Diversity/

Upcoming Opportunities to Transform the First College Year

The first year of college sets the tone for the rest of a student's academic experience. With deep experience in the field, we offer comprehensive processes to transform the first and second years of higher education so that all students can graduate.

▶ Teaching and Learning Academy

The Teaching and Learning Academy is a course redesign community that helps participants develop and apply evidence-based and equity-minded teaching practices to improve student learning in gateway courses. Offered online with optional in-person components, the Academy is open to both individuals as well as institutional teams. **Academy begins July 8, 2024.** For more information, visit: gardnerinstitute.org/teaching-and-learning-academy.

▶ Academy on the First College Year

The online Academy on the First College Year draws on research, practice, data, and expertise from Gardner Institute scholars to help institutional teams conduct an audit of efforts and policies for first-year students. **Academy begins October 22, 2024.** For more information, visit: gardnerinstitute.org/academy-on-the-first-college-year

▶ Building and Sustaining a Data-Informed Organization

Building and Sustaining a Data-Informed Organization is a year-long community of practice where institutions will walk through the steps necessary to create a data-informed culture. This includes ensuring an infrastructure exists to provide faculty and staff with real-time operational data and key performance indicators and establishing ongoing governance and training to use the data to increase student success. **Applications Due July 19, 2024. Academy begins August 1, 2024.**

For more information, visit: gardnerinstitute.org/service/building-and-sustaining-a-data-informed-organization/

▶ Emergency Aid for Basic Needs

Emergency Aid for Basic Needs is a 5-week opportunity aimed to investigate trends associated with offering emergency aid to students. This service is specifically structured to increase the internal capacity of institutions to build sustainable emergency aid programs, leverage best practices for strategic resource allocation, and maximize educational experiences for traditionally marginalized and under-resourced students. **Academy begins October 22, 2024.**

For more information, visit: gardnerinstitute.org/service/emergency-aid-for-basic-needs/

▶ **Transforming the Foundational Postsecondary Experience™**

Transforming the Foundational Postsecondary Experience is a five-year process to support partner institutions in creating and implementing a plan for system redesign that closes equity gaps while supporting teaching, learning, success, completion, and retention. Participating institutions will work toward eliminating race, ethnicity, and family income as the greatest predictors of who earns a postsecondary degree.

For more information, visit: <https://gardnerinstitute.org/service/transforming-the-foundational-postsecondary-experience/>

▶ **Retention Redesign**

Retention Performance Management is a two-year, task force-based assessment model that focuses on shared decision-making. The broad involvement of faculty, staff, and students in your structured planning and implementation processes improves both institutional commitments to equitable retention of all students and the student success outcomes of the plan.

For more information, visit: gardnerinstitute.org/service/retention-redesign

▶ **First-Year Redesign and Transfer Redesign**

First-Year Redesign and Transfer Redesign enables institutional transformation that improves first-year or transfer-student success and retention through comprehensive, evidence-based, guided self-study, planning, and implementation.

For more information, visit: <https://gardnerinstitute.org/services/>

▶ **Gateway Course Redesign**

Gateway Course Redesign is an evidence-based, three-year process that helps institutional teams create, implement, and refine plans for improving student learning and success in high-enrollment courses that have historically resulted in high rates of failure and attrition especially for first-year students.

For more information, visit: gardnerinstitute.org/gateway-course-redesign

For more information on all of our services, scan here:



Academy on the First College Year

Fall 2024 Cohort October 22- November 19, 2024



WHY FOCUS ON THE FIRST COLLEGE YEAR?

The first college year shapes students' entire postsecondary experience and subsequent outcomes including retention and completion. The Academy on the First College Year draws on a broad array of research, practice-based literature, data, and expertise from Gardner Institute scholars specializing in the first year of college. Participants will gain insight into what makes the first-year experience successful and what they can do to improve. With evidence-based and data-driven learning, your institutional team will conduct an institutional audit and develop a plan aimed at improving the first year of college so every student can succeed.

WHAT IS THE ACADEMY?

Facilitated by Gardner Institute scholars with over 50 years of experience in the first college year, this opportunity is:

- A 4-week academy
- Facilitated through the Gardner Institute's online learning management system
- Designed for institutional teams of 3-8
- Developed to create or refresh your institution's first-year experience

Resulting in a plan aimed at improving and transforming your first-year student success.



APPLICATION

Applications will be evaluated on a rolling basis.

Apply at: <https://my.jngi.org/>

Applications are due by:
October 7, 2024



SCHEDULE

Online, 4-week Academy

October 22-
November, 19 2024



FEES

Fees are based on undergraduate enrollment as determined by College Navigator.

Fees are assessed per institution, not per individual.

For more information visit gardnerinstitute.org



First-Year Redesign



HARMONIZE AND TRANSFORM THE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE.

First-Year Redesign (Foundations of Excellence) gives your institution a greater understanding of your first-year students, a strong plan of action that enhances learning, and a broad-based collaboration to execute the plan.

Through the guided evidence-based planning process, your institution can create a more effective experience for first-year students, gain more efficient institutional resource allocation, and lead to greater gains in IPEDS first-to-second-year retention and higher graduation rates.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

An experienced and dedicated Gardner Institute advisor assigned to your institution will guide and monitor your institution through:

- Development of a data-driven, and strategic first-year action plan.
- Cross-institutional review of entire first college year in order to increase graduation rates.
- Identify and enhance resources for first-year students

APPLICATION AND FEES

Now accepting applications on a rolling basis. Your start date will be customized for your institution.

Apply at: <https://my.jngi.org>

Email Info@gardnerinstitute.org for more information.

For more information visit gardnerinstitute.org



Transforming the Foundational Postsecondary Experience™

Now accepting institutions for Cohort 2



Transforming the Foundational Postsecondary Experience™ is a five-year process to support institutions in creating and implementing a plan for redesign of the first two years of college – the period where over 75% of all attrition occurs. The effort is focused on helping institutions design and deploy customized approaches that help them move towards eliminating demographics as the best predictors of who gets to graduate.

Through this process you will receive:

- The Gardner Institute™ deep postsecondary education redesign experience and thought leadership garnered through nearly 25 years of work with over 600 institutions
- Guidance to identify and address inefficient and ineffective design
- An institution specific experience with focus on the first two college years

Intended Outcomes:

- Higher graduation rates
- Higher retention rates
- Reducing performance gaps
- Eliminating demographics and zip code as the greatest predictor of who can earn a degree

Participating Institutions- Cohort 1



This initiative has been made possible in part through the generous support of: Ascendium Philanthropy, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, ECMC Foundation, and the Kresge Foundation.

Ascendium®

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NOW ACCEPTING INSTITUTIONS FOR COHORT 2

Email info@gardnerinstitute.org to determine the best next steps for your institution.

gardnerinstitute.org





A Symposium on Transforming the Postsecondary Experience

October 10-11, 2024 Pittsburgh, PA

Gain New Knowledge to Apply to your Work!

The symposium is an in-person experience focused on gaining new knowledge that you can apply to your work immediately. Participants will join plenaries, and concurrent sessions and have the option to select one of six deeper learning tracks, led by experts from the Gardner Institute.

Select one of six deeper learning tracks:

- Gateway Course Experience™
- First Year
- Second Year
- Advising
- Transfer
- Curricular Analytics

Register by July 15, 2024 for Early Bird Fee – \$715

▶ Pre-Conference Workshops

October 9, 1-5 p.m.

- The Roles of Deans and Department Chairs in Student Success Workshop- \$190
- Student-Centered Teaching Approaches Workshop- \$190
- Toward Disability Inclusion- \$190
- Transformation Workshop- \$120
 - (This session is for Transforming the Foundational Postsecondary Experience™ Institutions Only)

Scan for more information:

