

## FRESHMAN INQUIRY FACULTY HANDBOOK FOR THE 2007-2008 ACADEMIC YEAR

### **Introduction**

Handbooks are like dishwasher manuals. They are very good at telling you where the start buttons are and where the soap goes. But they are quite poor at telling you how to load the dishes. However, even if the manuals did provide loading instructions, it wouldn't matter. Each person seems to load the dishwasher differently. Some people think they know "the way," and other people are more creative. This handbook is like the dishwasher manual. It provides you with some instructions that must be followed faithfully, but with many guidelines for creative efficiency. Teaching, as we all know, is an art, and Freshman Inquiry will look different in the hands of each of us who teach it.

This handbook is a work in progress, and we hope that this will always be so. A program such as University Studies grows and changes, readjusting to each new wave of faculty who come in to teach.

Reading through this handbook, you may find policy issues that you think need attention. We invite you to become involved. Serve on the Freshman Inquiry Faculty Council. Be an involved citizen of University Studies. We have plenty of work for extra hands.

### **General Course Description of Freshman Inquiry**

Freshman Inquiry is a year-long course developed by a team of faculty from different disciplines. Freshman Inquiry has a maximum class size of 36 students and each class is divided into three small-group, peer mentor sessions led by specially selected upper-division students. Class material is introduced and explored during the full class sessions and then assignments are developed and discussed in peer mentor sessions.

While the themes and content of the Freshman Inquiry courses differ, the overall objectives are the same. Each of these classes emphasizes the building of a foundation of communication skills for learning and expression. Writing is the core, but communication also includes emphasis on improving oral, quantitative reasoning, and graphic/visual modes of communication. Freshman Inquiry is also designed to help students learn and effectively use current information technologies. Students will learn how disciplines from the sciences, humanities and professional schools approach problems in different ways and how people in different disciplines work together to improve understanding of complex issues. When students complete Freshman Inquiry they will be expected to be able to apply writing, quantitative reasoning, speech, and visual/graphic skills to problems requiring analysis and discovery.

Freshman Inquiry will expand awareness of academic potential and prepare students to move on to increasingly rigorous and sophisticated levels of inquiry.

## **Expectations for Freshman Inquiry Faculty**

The Freshman Inquiry program welcomes faculty from a variety of backgrounds to teach in our program. New faculty will bring many different and useful perspectives on course development, teaching, and addressing the needs of students. Many of the basic responsibilities of any faculty member remain the same in our program: meeting faithfully with classes, giving students a carefully designed class syllabus, having a clear plan of evaluation for students, holding students accountable for completing class assignments, and the like.

However, some responsibilities of Freshman Inquiry faculty differ from the traditional responsibilities of university faculty. Teaching in any program with explicit goals means carrying those goals forward. In Freshman Inquiry, we hold to a set of goals and a general program design approved by the Portland State University Faculty Senate.

### **Program-Specific Expectations**

Freshman Inquiry faculty teach to the program goals, work on faculty teams, work in an interdisciplinary framework, work with peer mentors and particularly during their time in the program, work on improving their own teaching.

### **The Goals**

The University Studies curriculum has a clear set of program goals, which all faculty teaching in the program are expected to address in course design. Faculty are expected to address the Freshman Inquiry goals for critical thinking, communications (written, numerical, visual, graphic, oral, and electronic), ethics and social responsibility, appreciation of diversity, and ability to work in groups. We also teach specific computer skills. Faculty members may address these goals in various ways, but they must be addressed in every Freshman Inquiry course.

The third-term portfolio assignment for Freshman Inquiry is mandated. The assignment was developed by a group of Freshman Inquiry faculty and is used for program assessment. At the end of the academic year, student portfolios are randomly sampled and reviewed.

### **Teams**

Teams are at the center of freshman inquiry courses. Successful freshman inquiry courses are created and delivered by faculty who have formed a creative, cooperative, and supportive environment. In Freshman Inquiry teams, faculty have the opportunity to work with faculty from other disciplines to create a common core curriculum. Freshman Inquiry faculty do not design or teach their courses alone. By working in teams, faculty work together to create a meaningful relationship between disciplines, subjects, and skills. The team model provides faculty with immediate pedagogical support for engaging

students in a common experience across individual themes.

Teams provide an important support system for intellectual inquiry. Additionally, teams are a central support network for all faculty and for new faculty in particular. While teams are generally composed of faculty from different programs in the university and different professional ranks, every member of the team has a voice in curriculum development.

At minimum, team members are expected to design the team syllabus with one another, identify thematic content for each term, choose core texts and articles that all team members will use, and agree upon reading and writing assignments per term. Courses should share common content learning goals as well as be directed toward accomplishing University Studies goals. Teams should meet weekly to discuss course design and implementation issues.

### **Interdisciplinary Framework:**

Freshman Inquiry teams are expected to take advantage of the expertise of all team members. Normally, each member of the team will meet every term with each class in the theme. There may be some variation from this model, but the principle holds that team members are expected to teach in each other's classes. This allows Freshman Inquiry faculty to depend on each other's scholarly strengths. However, faculty must also expect to do some teaching outside their area of expertise.

### **Peer mentors:**

Each Freshman Inquiry faculty member will work with a peer mentor, a successful upper-division undergraduate, in the implementation of his or her course. Faculty are expected to work in collegial fashion with their peer mentors. Each faculty member is expected to meet weekly with his or her peer mentor. Peer mentors are not to be required to fill in for faculty members, nor, following well-established university practice, are they to do any grading. They are not to be charged with the major responsibility for teaching to the University Studies goals. Faculty are expected to keep peer mentors informed regarding plans for the full class meetings, and to plan with peer mentors how the Mentored Inquiry sections can complement and supplement the faculty member's teaching. Faculty are expected to guide and support the mentors in their lesson planning and with regard to their relationship to students. Faculty are also expected to procure copies of assigned texts and other materials at no cost to the mentors.

Most mentors describe working with and getting to know faculty as one of the greatest rewards of working in Freshman Inquiry. In the most effective faculty-mentor relationships, faculty assume the responsibility to "mentor their mentor." Faculty members are expected to take the initiative in maintaining open communications with peer mentors, to be responsive to the comments and insights of peer mentors, and to seek the advice of the Director of Mentor Programs in the event of any problems in the

faculty-mentor working relationship.

Mentors provide an extremely valuable window into the world of the Freshman Inquiry students. Because of their close relationship to the students, mentors often have insights about student reactions to the course and to the professor, and ideas about how to change the course for the better. While the faculty has full responsibility to make final decisions regarding the Freshman Inquiry course, faculty are expected to appreciate and value the insights of the mentor, and to depend on those insights as appropriate.

### **Faculty development:**

The University Studies program encourages faculty to see teaching in Freshman Inquiry as an opportunity to grow as a teacher. Teaching Freshman Inquiry can be challenging, no matter what successes and experiences a faculty member brings to the program. Based on experience and careful study of numerous Freshman Inquiry classes, the University Studies program has developed resources to support faculty in meeting the common challenges of teaching in the program. Freshman Inquiry faculty are expected to take advantage of these and other resources to develop their teaching.

An essential component of this is that each Freshman Inquiry faculty must work to forward his or her understanding of student learning. Freshman Inquiry students are, obviously, freshmen. Most of them have no college experience, are not independent learners, and do not have a realistic understanding of what academic work on a college level entails. Freshman Inquiry faculty are expected to meet these students at their beginning point, and move them forward from there. Faculty are expected to take on greater responsibility for student learning than is necessary in many other teaching environments.

There is no “one right way” to teach Freshman Inquiry, and the program benefits greatly from the inclusion of faculty with many different teaching styles and strengths. Program experience, however, along with much of the literature on college student learning, does suggest that certain teaching strategies strongly promote independent student learning. These strategies include active learning in the classroom, including frequent large-class and small-group discussion; the creation of a supportive classroom community; the use of continuous and integrated classroom assessment; foregrounding program goals to students; and the gradual and careful ceding of certain forms of authority to students.

### **Program-Specific Support for Faculty Teaching**

To support faculty in addressing program expectations regarding teaching, University Studies offers a variety of faculty development opportunities. All Freshman Inquiry faculty are expected to attend University Studies retreats in both spring and fall. New, incoming Freshman Inquiry faculty are required to attend Frinq New Faculty Orientation, as announced. Each Freshman Inquiry faculty member is also expected to attend one additional faculty development event each year. University Studies offers technical training on a variety of topics, and workshops on topics of interest and importance to

Freshman Inquiry faculty. Workshops on teaching and on student development are also offered through the Center for Academic Excellence.

In addition to these faculty development activities, University Studies undertakes formal assessment of all Freshman Inquiry classes. A faculty assessment committee designs and provides standardized assessment instruments for all classes. Faculty are expected to make good use of both qualitative and quantitative assessment data in the continuous evaluation of their own teaching.

Freshman Inquiry faculty are also expected to work with their team colleagues and with University Studies administration to meet any special teaching challenges that arise. Faculty facing difficult challenges are expected to first discuss those challenges in team meetings, and, if appropriate, to seek the feedback of their peer mentor. Faculty facing continuing challenges are expected to request assistance from the University Studies Program Director, the Freshman Inquiry Coordinator, or the Director for Mentor Programs. The University Studies Program Director has the final responsibility for assisting faculty members facing intractable problems. In such cases, the University Studies Program Director and the Freshman Inquiry faculty member share the responsibility of working cooperatively towards the best resolution of the situation.

### **A Note on Leave/Vacation**

Because Freshman Inquiry is a team-based learning community that relies upon collaboration, it is important to keep in touch with team members and administrative staff. Please leave contact information if you are on leave or vacation if at all possible with Denise Schmidt or the Freshman Inquiry Coordinator.

### **Conclusion**

Faculty who have taught Freshman Inquiry often speak of it as being among the most rewarding teaching and learning experiences of their career. New energies come to us through the camaraderie of the teams, the excitement of new learning, and the opportunity to watch at close range as our students grow.

However, it can be uncomfortable sometimes to range out of our comfort zones. In Freshman Inquiry, we teach outside our disciplines, welcome colleagues and program assessment staff into our classrooms, develop collegial respect for our peer mentors, and grow to understand our students' lives in great and sometimes painful detail. The University Studies administration and staff share with Freshman Inquiry faculty the responsibility to break this new ground successfully. We welcome every faculty member in a spirit of collegial support, and enjoin you to use the resources we have put together to improve the Freshman Inquiry experience for both your students and yourselves.

## **Active Learning or Student Centered**

University Studies is based in constructivist educational philosophy, which encompasses active learning models. Many faculty draw on the work of Paulo Friere, Alexander Astin, John Dewey, and William Perry.

These are some quick strategies for incorporating active student learning in the classroom:

**Clarification Pause:** A quick way to add some active learning to a classroom is to take a lecture break every 15-20 minutes. This means the faculty stops talking for about 2 minutes while students discuss the ideas with each other, check and clarify their notes, and ask questions. The faculty circulates about the room and helps them review the ideas. This is a quick way to add student-centered learning that does not require prepared worksheets or other materials.

**Shared Paragraph:** During class or at the end of class, students are given a few minutes to write a short paragraph in their own words that explains that major ideas discussed that day. They share their paragraphs with other students, and give feedback to each other. They may turn the paragraphs in as they leave class. Faculty returns them the next day and discusses any topics that were not clear. Faculty obtains instant feedback in their thinking and students learn to summarize information.

**Fish Bowl:** At the beginning of class, each student writes a question pertaining to class content on a 3" x 5" card and places the card in a container. Faculty draws out some cards and read the questions to the class. Students are expected to provide answers. The discussion reviews topics that were unclear and gives students who would not ask a question in front of their peers a chance to present a question to the instructor. Students learn to assess and articulate what they don't know.

**One-Minute Paper:** Students are asked to write a short paper or paragraph for one minute. This might be about a section in the chapter or about a concept they just worked on. They are turned in and the faculty quickly looks them over. Students learn to clarify the ideas in the reading or lecture material. The paper provides feedback to the instructor on student's ability to understand the concepts in the text.

**Case Studies:** These can be great resources for interdisciplinary learning, teamwork as well as bringing active learning to the classroom. Cases can be simple or complex and usually draw on interesting and engaging problems in the 'real world.'

**Problem Based Learning:** Uses a 'case study' approach to help students learning 'active' problem solving strategies. Teaching students to analyze problems, the University of Delaware has a great evolving clearinghouse of problem-based case studies: <https://chico.nss.udel.edu/Pbl/index.jsp>

## **The Role of the Peer Mentor**

Peer Mentors are integral to the success of Freshman Inquiry. The mentors provide opportunities for smaller groups of students to interact, give increased attention to enhance student learning, coach and assist students in achieving University Studies goals, increase the sense of community within Portland State, and serve as role models for less experienced students.

Mentors do not work in a vacuum. A mentor's work is successfully carried out through a close working relationship with their faculty partner. Faculty members in Freshman Inquiry strive to teach to the University Studies goals and work with the mentor to develop mentor sessions that enhance and extend the material that is covered in the main class.

The Faculty/Mentor team has great potential for aiding students in their early learning in higher education. Mentors and faculty each have responsibilities to nurture their unique and powerful relationship. Those responsibilities are listed below.

### **Mentor Responsibilities**

1. Attend class sessions led by assigned professors (3 hours a week).
2. Assist in the class, as defined together by professor and mentor.
  - a. Model appropriate student behavior in the classroom
  - b. Actively participate in class discussions and activities
  - c. Participate in other ways as defined by faculty and mentor
3. Lead all mentored inquiry sections linked to the large class section.
  - a. Develop plans for mentored inquiry with faculty partner/team or at the direction of the faculty
  - b. Utilize resources--the Director of Mentor Programs, Mentor Liaison, and others for ideas and input for mentor section
  - c. Consult technology assistants (MRAMSs) as needed to be able to coach students for presentations, research projects, and the like.
  - d. Get approval of mentor section content from the faculty partner
4. Provide informal coaching, advising, and referral for students.
5. Provide feedback to students on their work in the course and the mentor section. Peer mentors do not assist faculty members in grading of students.
6. Meet with faculty partner and/or team a minimum of one hour per week.
  - a. an curriculum for the mentor sessions.
  - b. Discuss progress of individual students in the course
  - c. Discuss course progress
  - d. Meet with other team peer mentors a minimum of once a week

7. Participate in training activities.
  - a. Participate in mentor class in spring term before becoming a mentor
  - b. Participate in fall training (approximately 10 days) and the spring retreat (typically two days)
  - c. Participate in on-going training (approximately ten hours per term)--usually Friday mornings and afternoons
8. Consult with faculty member when you are planning to be absent for your mentor sessions. Report the absence to the University Studies office staff as well.
9. Participate in mentor program committee work as needed.
10. Represent the University Studies Program to various internal and external constituencies.
11. Deal with problems with students, faculty, team, and program in a constructive and direct manner, seeking assistance when necessary.

**Faculty Responsibilities in working with mentors:**

1. Lead class sessions (three hours per week).
2. Work with the mentor to develop curriculum for mentor sessions, doing one or more of the following:
  - a. Provide curriculum for mentor sessions
  - b. Discuss and approve mentor generated curriculum
  - c. Work together to develop mentor session curriculum
3. Assist mentors in learning to assess students' work.
4. Meet with the mentor a minimum of one hour per week.
  - a. Plan curriculum for mentor sessions
  - b. Discuss progress of individual students in the course
  - c. Discuss course progress
5. Deal with problems with mentor in a constructive and direct manner, seeking assistance when necessary from the Freshman Inquiry Coordinator and the Director of Mentor Programs.

## Goals Statements for Freshman Inquiry Faculty

### Communication: Writing

Writing is described as being one of the ‘core’ skills of the Freshman Inquiry class. When University Studies was implemented, Freshman Inquiry replaced WR 121 as a required course and students who transfer out of PSU receive credit for having taken a writing course upon completing the three quarter sequence. In order to facilitate writing instruction, we have a Freshman Inquiry Writing Liaison, Daneen Bergland, who works with individual faculty and with teams to workshop assignments and brainstorm ideas for ways of using writing to enhance student learning.

We have many useful tools for faculty and for mentors designed to make teaching writing less onerous and more fun!

*In Freshman Inquiry specifically*, students should have the opportunity to:

- 1) demonstrate understanding of the writing process (generative strategies, prewriting, drafting, revision);
- 2) produce various types of academic essays (analysis, research, interpretation);
- 3) explore creative writing avenues such as poetry and short stories.

### *University Studies Writing Goal*

Students will demonstrate appropriate rhetorical knowledge and show understanding of their own writing strengths and weaknesses. They will respond to the needs of different audiences, adopt appropriate voice and tone, understand that their ideas contribute to a larger conversation, and apply the conventions of different genres to their own writing.

Students will use writing as a tool for understanding the ideas of others and for developing their own thought in order to communicate with readers. When integrating their ideas with those of others, they are expected to evaluate, analyze, and synthesize primary and secondary sources. To support their own ideas and claims, students will select and integrate appropriate details, examples, and sources that provide reliable evidence and establish reasonable premises in a logical structure for a targeted audience.

Students will develop and use their own writing processes to create and complete texts by making use of flexible strategies for generating, revising, and editing. They will understand that writing is a recursive process and that successful writers create multiple drafts. During the revision process, students will evaluate their own and others’ work to ensure that the writing fulfills the assigned task and meets the needs of readers.

Students will understand the use the conventions of written English. They will demonstrate appropriate documentation of source materials, demonstrate increasing competence in syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. As students proofread and edit, they will be able to shift tone and register for the targeted audience. Students will be able to edit their texts to fit the conventions of particular academic discourses (e.g., science, social science, humanities).

Resources for writing:

Daneen Bergland, Writing Center Liaison.....503-516-9960

Email: daneen.bergland@gmail.com

Daneen's blog for frinq faculty: [www.univstudieswriting.blogspot.com](http://www.univstudieswriting.blogspot.com).

Daneen's companion blog for frinq students: [www.psuwritingcenter.blogspot.com](http://www.psuwritingcenter.blogspot.com).

Writing Center Resources for faculty:

<http://www.english.pdx.edu/writingstudies/instructors/resources/>

### **Communication: Quantitative Literacy**

Quantitative literacy involves numeric literacy, a command of basic descriptive statistics, rudimentary mathematical knowledge, and the capacity to use numerical and graphical methods effectively, to communicate information or to establish evidence for an argument. The quantitative literacy goal for Freshman Inquiry can be broken down into two basic objectives:

1. Understanding numbers as a natural part of organized, logical thinking.
2. Understanding that quantity matters in making decision.

### **Expected Learning Outcomes**

1. Students should be able to critically evaluate mathematics and statistics in the media, including interpreting and critiquing graphs.
2. Students should be able to communicate using descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, average, percent) in multiple settings.
3. Students should be able to display data with appropriate excel charts and graphs to communicate information.

### **Desirable Learning Outcomes**

1. Students should be able to explain the meaning of statistical significance; explain why significance does not necessarily imply importance; explain why a well-chosen anecdote can illustrate but not substantiate a general rule.
2. Students should be able to explain the meaning of correlation and how the significance test is applied to correlation – and explain why correlation does not necessarily imply causation.

3. Students should be able to describe an application of the normal curve to social and physical phenomena; give an example of a case that falls beyond the expected range of a sample distribution (i.e. an outlier); provide an example of a distribution that is not normally distributed.

4. Students should also be able to critically analyze graphic representations of data.

### **Communications: Graphic and Visual**

Understanding the language of graphics and images, like all other forms of literacy, has a component of “reading,” and another of “producing.” In University Studies, students will develop their skills in each area. They will critically interpret the meaning of graphics and images (both those illustrating texts and those existing independently), and become adept at using appropriate graphics and images to illustrate texts produced in another medium.

#### 1. Graphics:

Students will be made aware of the persuasive power of graphics (tables, charts, etc.) to represent and/or misrepresent information. They will use computer programs to create their own graphics based on quantitative (numeric) and qualitative (non-numeric) data, and use those graphics to support or illustrate their own work. They should be able to know which kind of graphic best illustrates their information. Students will also learn the limitations of graphics when it comes to communicating certain facts or ideas, and when the use of graphics is appropriate or beneficial.

#### 2. Visual Literacy:

Students should be exposed to various forms of visual material (e.g., painting, sculpture, advertising, and motion pictures) as modes of communication. They should gain insight into how images communicate, and into the layers of meaning they present, including:

- a. formal analysis (describe what is seen)
- b. narrative analysis (detail the story it tells, when applicable, and how it does so)
- c. contextual analysis (discuss the context where/when it was produced)
- d. ideological analysis (explain its comment on, or reflection of, that culture)

They should acquire some sensitivity toward the unique way that visual media function, but also understand their connection to other modes of communication. Students will also gain skill in using visual material to illustrate ideas or texts, and understand the power that images have to enhance or detract from their message.

### **Communication: Oral**

Oral communication is an essential skill addressed throughout the University Studies program. There are two main areas within oral communication that should be addressed

in Freshman Inquiry.

## 1. Presentation Skills:

Every student should present individually at least once during the course of the year. This presentation can range anywhere from 5 to 15 minutes depending on the assignment.

a. Students will be introduced to the general organizational structure of all speeches: introduction, body, and conclusion. Within this, students should learn at least one of these three types of speeches: demonstrative (the student teaches the class something related to the course material), informative (the student researches an issue that relates to the course material), and persuasive (the student researches an issue and presents perspectives on that issue in order to change or reinforce student opinion).

b. Students will receive instruction on effective delivery. Students will learn to maintain effective eye contact; use note cards discretely; use appropriate voice volume, pitch, and variation; enunciate properly; and use body movement and position effectively.

c. Students will learn when and how to integrate visual aids and audio devices successfully into oral presentations.

## 2. Group Process and Communication

All students should be involved in at least one group project that culminates in a presentation to the Freshman Inquiry class. The purpose of this project is multifaceted, but for group work to be successful, group members must learn the meaning of teamwork.

a. Students will learn the normal processes involved in working through a group project. The phases are orientation (allows the students to understand the task and varying opinions about it), conflict (allows the students to discuss and resolve different strategies for implementing the project), emergence (allows the students to produce a well thought out plan without long-term ill feeling among some members), and reinforcement (allows the students to appreciate their good work and subsequent satisfaction).

b. Each student will recognize the various roles necessary for successful group process, and recognize the role that she or he tends to play in normal group dynamics. For example, students will recognize what conflict style they gravitate towards (accommodator, compromiser, collaborator, competitor, or avoider), and learn to use or modify this style to work effectively in groups.

c. Each group will negotiate the rules/codes of conduct for the group and necessary strategies to address the violation of those codes.

## **Critical Thinking**

Diane Halpern (1996) offers this definition: “[critical thinking is] thinking that is purposeful, reasoned and goal directed--the kind of thinking involved in solving problems, formulating inferences, calculating likelihoods, and making decisions....”

Ruggiero (1998) describes critical thinking as “. . . active and dynamic, not reactive and static. Effective thinkers do not merely sit back and criticize others’ efforts; they solve problems, make decisions, and take a stand on issues . . . the creative process and the critical process are intertwined: first we produce ideas, then we judge them” (page xx).

According to Ruggiero, these four premises should be basic in teaching critical thinking, or in creating an environment in which it can be learned:

1. Critical thinking is actively aimed at solving problems, evaluating issues, making ethical judgments, and taking positions.
2. Critical thinking is creative; students “must generate arguments of their own.”
3. Critical thinking is reflexive.
4. Critical thinking involves publicly submitting one’s own ideas to the creative skepticism of others.

## **Appreciation of the Diversity of Human Experience**

The Freshman Inquiry student will understand and appreciate the varying realities of the human experience. This involves examining wider ethnic and cultural perspectives within the United States and around the world. It also involves the study of internationalization in world affairs. Some of the issues connected may be those of class, race, gender, and sexual orientation. It also involves appreciating diverse beliefs, experiences, and forms of creativity entailed in the scientific, social, cultural, environmental, and artistic components of human experience; and an appreciation of how human diversity is fundamental to the full realization of human potential on an individual, community, and global level.

In this goal, we include appreciation of at least the following aspects of human experience.

With regard to scientific and social change, students will:

- a. Understand the socially constructed nature of science and fact;
- b. be familiar with the processes of the development of scientific theory and knowledge;
- c. be aware of processes whereby social, cultural, and political structures change.

With regard to the aesthetic and intellectual components of the human experience, students will:

- a. Be familiar with the artistic and intellectual traditions of both Western and non-Western cultures;
- b. Understand the development of artistic and intellectual traditions in light of their

socio-historic contexts, and their relationship to their own and surrounding cultures

With regard to the relationship between various components of the human experience, students will:

- a. be aware of the relationships and interactions between scientific, cultural, intellectual and aesthetic issues
- b. be able to articulate multiple perspectives on complex human issues

With regard to the ability to adapt to change in self, others, and social structures, students will:

- a. be able to reflect on their own development as learners and as community members
- b. be familiar with various forms of human development, including intellectual, physical, social and emotional development;
- c. be familiar with various strategies for bringing about social change

With regard to social justice, students will:

- a. be familiar with and respect the cultures and histories of traditionally marginalized social groups;
- b. be able to work effectively with people from a variety of social groups
- c. understand the distribution of power based on social group membership, the process whereby power structures are developed and maintained, and the consequences of differential distributions of power on both dominant and target group members

### **Ethics and Social Responsibility**

The purpose of this goal is to have students become aware of the impact of individual and collective choices on society and the environment.

#### 1. Social awareness:

Students will explore the consequences of their actions on society. They will begin to practice and test their capacities to engage in ethical, interactive and organizational challenges of the present era, such as exploring the personal implications and responsibilities involved in creating a safe family, school, neighborhood, work space and society. They will gain an understanding of ethical dimensions encountered in dilemmas and conflicts confronted by individuals, groups, and communities and the foundations upon which resolution might be possible. The values and rewards associated with service to community will be realized through various projects, such as volunteering with social action agencies.

#### 2. Environmental awareness:

Students will explore the consequences of their actions on local and global ecosystems. They will begin to explore and appreciate the role of diversity in achieving environmental

health and realize the impact of individual daily decisions in terms of how they affect the livability and sustainability of the earth. The necessity and rewards of contributing to global stewardship may be investigated through related projects, such as working with environmental protection organizations.

Rather than encouraging students to adopt the attitudes of their professors and peer mentors, they will be guided to come to their own conclusions about these two key ethical aspects through critical examination of various issues related to their course theme.

## **Our Freshmen**

Our students:

The average age of our freshman students in the past two years has been 18 (the average age for the university is 27). In the fall of 2005, 1105 students were enrolled in freshman inquiry. Of these students, 944 were enrolled full-time and the remaining students were enrolled part-time. There were slightly more women than men, 53% compared to 48%. 938 students completed the first quarter with a median GPA of 2.82. Freshman inquiry students were asked to complete a “prior learning survey” online in the first two weeks of classes. 1075 students completed the survey. 67.3% of these students indicated that their immediate plans were to complete their bachelors degree at Portland State University. 54% said that they were planning to attend graduate or professional school. Only 8.7% indicated that they were planning to attend a different institution. Over 70% of these students indicated that they were first generation college students.

85.4% of these students were retained into the spring quarter.

Fall 05 to Fall 06 Student Retention for ALL freshmen: 67.75%

Following is a brief summary of some models that address issues of first-year students, and which may help us to better understand the students in our classrooms.

### **Developmental Models**

Freshman success has been defined as having six major components (Upcraft and Gardner, 1989):

1. Developing academic and intellectual competence
2. Establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships
3. Developing identity
4. Deciding on career and life-style
5. Maintaining personal health and wellness
6. Developing an integrated philosophy of life

Chickering and Reisser’s model describes seven major areas of development faced by college students. These seven “vectors” are not strictly sequential, although growth in the first four generally precedes growth in the final three. However, students revisit each of these seven areas throughout their lives. The first four vectors are particularly relevant in working with first year college students, as these are the issues that are most salient for them.

#### **1. Developing Competence:**

This concerns the development of physical, intellectual and interpersonal competence as well as confidence. This includes the ability to negotiate complex systems (such as university administrations), effectively use bodies that have been growing and changing,

work with diverse others and be academically competent.

## 2. Managing Emotions:

This is often particularly difficult for entering college students. This vector recognizes students' development in the ability to recognize and accept emotions, as well as know how to appropriately and effectively express them. Growth often occurs most significantly in the ability to manage feelings of anger, frustration, sorrow, intimacy, and attraction.

## 3. Moving through Autonomy toward Interdependence:

This concerns the development of self in relation to other people. Students, particularly traditionally-aged students, typically enter college struggling to develop independence (autonomy), from family members as well as peers. Growth in this area is characterized by increased self-direction, problem-solving ability, and persistence, and finally by recognition of the necessity of inter-dependence with others.

## 4. Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships:

This addresses how students relate to other people. Development in this vector is characterized by the ability to value and work with people of diverse backgrounds and identities, as well as the development of healthy intimate relationships.

### **A Timeline of Common Issues**

In addition to the more broadly conceived issues described above, certain issues tend to arise for first- year students at predictable times in the academic year. Because students so often share their personal issues with their Freshman Inquiry instructors, and because these issues may directly impact students' ability to focus on academic issues, it can be helpful to know what may be holding their attention.

#### October

- For those who have moved to go to school, homesickness
- Feelings of inadequacy and inferiority because of discrepancy between high school/work status/grades and initial college performance
- “In Loco Parentis” Blues--Students feel depressed because of real or perceived restrictive policies and regulations
- International students sense confusion, vulnerability and lack of any advocate in power positions
- Old problems continue and new ones added
- Sense of isolation if not quickly part of a new group
- Pregnancies from summer relationships begin to show; decisions to carry/terminate must be made
- Conflicts and confusion from dealing with people not encountered in HS/workplace

(race, religion, sexual orientation, ability, SES, values)

November

- Realization that life in college is not as perfect as anticipated--disappointment
- Mid-term workload pressures followed by feelings of failure and loss of self-esteem
- Economic anxiety as funds from summer jobs/parents begin to run out
- Conflicts for students who have no place to go for Thanksgiving/for whom home is not a good/safe space

December

- Time strain from responsibilities beyond school: family, work, seasonal events, social service projects
- Anxiety, fear and guilt increase as finals approach and papers are due
- Depression in those who cannot or prefer not to go home over break
- Financial strain because of gifts and travel costs

January

- Weather leads to less physical activity and loss of stress-release mechanisms
- Financial concerns from holiday expenses
- Concern over first-term grades

February

- Mid-term anxiety
- Symptoms from Seasonal Affective Disorder at peak
- Valentine's Day exacerbates concerns about relationship status

March

- Pregnancies from winter break become apparent; choices must be made
- Finals anxiety
- Spring break may lead to unhealthy use of drugs/alcohol; impact sexual behavior

April

- Financial concerns from Spring Break expenses
- STDs contracted during Spring Break become evident

May

- Pressure to find a summer job
- Pressures regarding major and career choice
- Midterms

June

- Finals
- Decisions about fall course choices
- Depression over leaving friends and facing conflicts at home with parents
- Planning for having children home for summer/finding full-time child care

## **Conclusion**

The three models presented above represent only a fraction of the models which have been developed to explain college student development. In particular, these models address only psycho-social issues: the “what” of students’ thinking. Much research has also been conducted on how students’ forms of reasoning changes: the “how” of students’ thinking. Further resources on both psycho-social and epistemological development of college students are listed below, as well as some other, more general, references on students’ experiences in college.

## **Selected Bibliography**

- Baxter Magolda, M. (1992). *Knowing and Reasoning in College: Gender-related patterns in students’ intellectual development*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Belenky, M.F., Clinchy, B.M., Goldberger, N.R., and Tarule, J.M.(1996). *Women’s Ways of Knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind*. New York: Basic Books.
- Cheatham, H. E., & Associates. (1991). *Cultural Pluralism on Campus*. Alexandria, VA: American College Personnel Association.
- Chickering, A.W. and Reisser, L. (1993). *Education and Identity*. (2nd ed.) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cross, W. E., Jr. (1991). *Shades of Black: Diversity in African-American Identity*. Philadelphia: Temple.
- Evans, N. J., & Wall, V. A. (Eds.). (1991). *Beyond Tolerance : Gays, Lesbians, and Bisexuals on Campus*. Alexandria, VA : American College Personnel Association.
- King, P.M. and Kitchener, K.S. (1993). *Developing Reflective Judgment: Understanding and promoting intellectual growth and critical thinking in adolescents and adults*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Knefelkamp, L., Widick, C., & Parker, C. A. (Eds.,). (1978). *Applying New Developmental Findings. New Directions for Student Services*, no. 4. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Levine, A & Cureton, J. S. (1998). *When Hope and Fear Collide: A portrait of today’s college student*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Perry, W.G., Jr. (1968). *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years: A scheme*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Upcraft, M.L., Gardner, J.N. and Associates (1989). *The Freshman Year Experience*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

## Assessment Purposes and Protocols

Preamble: The UNST assessment program is a means to improving student learning and enhancing faculty reflective practice. It seeks to encourage faculty to take productive and creative risks in the classroom to maximize the learning potential of the class. Our goals include:

- 1) Understanding our students' unique background and learning needs to inform our teaching practices;
- 2) Support faculty and mentors to develop and improve their teaching;
- 3) Empower students to become self-directed learners;
- 4) Give the program feedback on how courses are meeting the goals of the program.

Feedback mechanisms for improving student learning and enhancing faculty reflective practice:

- Assessment instruments
- From mentor
- From students
- From team members

Assessment Sources:

Formative Early Term

Because freshman inquiry is a difficult course to teach, the program acknowledges that faculty require more support during their early experience in teaching frinq. Thus, the protocol for entering faculty in frinq is slightly different for those who are more experienced in teaching frinq. The early assessment is used with new faculty in frinq. Other faculty have the option to participate. The purpose of the early term is to get a quick and early sense of how students perceive the course and what if any teaching changes need to occur. It provides a teaching moment for faculty to share the rationale for the teaching strategies being used. Our data suggests that if faculty listen and respond to early term feedback, students report greater satisfaction and learning in the course at the end of the year assessment.

Viewed by:

- Individual faculty
- Frinq faculty coordinator

Processing data:

- Will be done week 3 or 4
- Faculty receive data in a timely manner
- Process and “share” data with mentors
- Faculty should consider discussing data with students
- Faculty are encouraged to identify issues and share insights from the data with

their team.

If there are areas of concern:

- 1) Faculty will take responsibility to address issues.
- 2) Faculty will identify issues and share insights from the data with their team.

Formative Early Year:

All students in Frinq complete this survey. The purpose of the early year assessment is to understand:

- 1) Students' experience in the course
- 2) Students' response to pedagogy and curriculum
- 3) Students' evaluation of their progress towards the University studies goals.

Faculty can use this feedback to make timely adjustments to the course. It also provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their own role in learning.

Viewed by:

- All sections of the survey reviewed by individual faculty
- Mentor section and student learning section reviewed by mentors
- Faculty encouraged to share complete survey with mentors
- All sections reviewed by Curriculum development and Assessment Associate and Frinq faculty coordinator
- Mentor section reviewed by Director of Mentor Programs.

Processing data: timely process for improvement

- 1) Process and discuss data with mentors
- 2) Faculty should consider discussing data with students
- 3) Frinq faculty coordinator reviews all data, Director of Mentor Programs reviews mentor data.

If areas of concern:

- 1) Faculty can approach team members or Frinq faculty coordinator to seek assistance.
- 2) Frinq faculty coordinator can approach faculty to discuss issues.
- 3) If meeting held, strategic plan to address issues.

Mid Year

All students in Frinq complete this survey. The purpose of the mid-year assessment is to have students identify their role in learning as it connects to theme specific concepts and University Studies goals. It also provides feedback to that faculty can make timely adjustments to the course.

Viewed by:

- All sections of the survey reviewed by individual facultyMentor section and student learning section reviewed by mentors
- Faculty encouraged to share complete survey with mentors
- All sections reviewed by Curriculum development and Assessment Associate and Frinq faculty coordinator
- Mentor section reviewed by Director of Mentor Programs.

If areas of concern:

- 1) Faculty can approach team members or Frinq faculty coordinator to seek assistance.
- 2) Frinq faculty coordinator can approach faculty to discuss issues.
- 3) If meeting held, strategic plan to address issues.

End of Year

The end of year provides students' perception of the overall success of the course. It also provides feedback for faculty to continue to develop innovative pedagogy. It is used in both summative and formative ways.

- Summative: Members of the administration will review data from this assessment. Data from this assessment may be used as a part of the yearly review of faculty performance. For further details on the yearly review process, check governance guidelines for University Studies (to be determined).
- Formative: If the course is continuing, the feedback can be used to make adjustments in curriculum and pedagogy.

Review Process:

- All sections of the survey reviewed by individual faculty
- Mentor section and student learning section reviewed by mentors
- Faculty encouraged to share complete survey with mentors
- All sections reviewed by Curriculum development and Assessment Associate and Frinq faculty coordinator
- Mentor section reviewed by Director of Mentor Programs.
- Faculty are encouraged to reflect on the end of year assessment with their team in their yearly portfolio.
- All data is reviewed by Program Director, the Assessment Associate and the Frinq faculty coordinator.

If areas of concern:

- 1) Faculty can approach team members or the Frinq faculty coordinator to seek assistance.
- 2) faculty coordinator can approach faculty to discuss issues.
- 3) If meeting held, strategic plan to address issues.

Concerns from Mentors:

- 1) Mentors are responsible for talking to their faculty about any course concern or their relationship.
- 2) If a mentor approaches the Director of Mentor Programs before talking with the faculty partner, the mentor will receive coaching on approaching their faculty partner.
- 3) If a mentor feels that their concerns have not been addressed and approaches another administrator about the course, they will be referred back to the Director of Mentor Programs.
- 4) The Director of Mentor Programs will develop a plan for the mentor for how to approach the faculty again about the concerns. If the issue is not resolved by another discussion between mentor and faculty, the Director of Mentor Programs will develop a plan of the mentor for how to approach the faculty again about the concerns.
- 5) If the issue is not resolved by another discussion between the mentor and faculty, the Director of Mentor Programs will seek to resolve the issue by talking with the individual faculty members. Depending on the severity and type of the issues, the Frinq faculty coordinator and/or Curriculum Development and Assessment Associate and/or team members will be consulted.
- 6) If the issue is still not resolved the Director of Mentor Programs will request a meeting between the faculty, mentor Frinq faculty coordinator and/or Assessment associate.
- 7) If no resolution is found, the Director of University Studies will consult with the Frinq faculty coordinator and Director of mentor programs about appropriate actions.

### Frinq Assessment Schedule 2007/2008

Terms	Assessment type	Type/Purpose
<b>Fall</b>		
Week 1	Prior Learning	<i>Student Learning</i>
Week 3-4	Early Term (optional except for new faculty where an in-class peer feedback session will be provided)	<i>Anonymous data Formative, (provide assistance if needed)</i>
Week 8-10	Early Year	<i>Formative, (provide assistance if needed)</i>
<b>Winter</b>		
Week 3-4	Early Term (optional)	
Week 8-10	Mid Year Progress	<i>Formative, (provide assistance if needed)</i>
<b>Spring</b>		
Week 6-8	Teacher facilitated discussion, re: content, theme, process, ideas for next year	<i>Formative, (provide assistance if needed)</i>
Week 8-10	End of the Year	<i>Non-anonymous Formative &amp; Summative: Part of Faculty Review Process</i>
Spring Retreat	Team Analysis of End-of-Year Data	
<b>Summer</b>		
	Portfolio Review	Formative
<b>Fall</b>		
	Portfolio/End-of-Year Data Review	Formative

### **Freshman Inquiry Yearlong/Third Term Portfolio Assignment**

**Purpose:** Your third term portfolio is designed for you to showcase your best work from the entire year. Your selection should include the work which you feel best represents your progress towards the four goals of University Studies Freshman Inquiry. These portfolios have two functions:

- The first is the opportunity for each student to reflect upon their learning and achievements within the Freshman Inquiry program and will form part of the course grade as assigned by the instructor.
- The second is the focus upon the portfolio for assessment of the curriculum and how the teaching and assignments given by instructors may best serve the program goals. This review has no impact on individual grades. In carrying out this review, a small number of portfolios will be randomly selected from consenting students in every section of Freshman Inquiry.

**Structure:** Your third term portfolio may be either electronic or hard copy. This will depend upon the individual instructor and class. The instructor may request additional information or presentation but every portfolio should contain the following:

- **A title or home page** giving the course title and your name. Be clear to indicate that this is the *Third Term Portfolio*. If other end-of-term portfolios are included on your disk, CD-Rom, or Website, it is all the more important that you identify which is your Third Term Portfolio.
- **A Table of Contents or List of Links** indicating A Reflective Essay and each of the four University Studies Goals (see below).
- **The Reflective Essay** should be linked to the list on the title page. This essay should be approximately 750-1000 words reflecting your learning in Freshman Inquiry and your perceived strengths and weaknesses as a self-directed learner. What has been your experience with the Freshman Inquiry curriculum and pedagogy? Give constructive feedback on this year's experience and consider what you plan to focus on next in your student development.
- **The Four University Studies Freshman Inquiry Goals.** Each of these will be linked to the title page. Include a description of each goal (see <http://www.unst.pdx.edu/mission/fourgoal.html>)
  1. Critical Thinking
  2. Appreciation of the Diversity of Human Experience
  3. Ethics and Social Responsibility
  4. Communication (including Writing, Quantitative Literacy)

For each goal state, in one or two well-developed paragraphs, whether you feel you have progressed towards that goal over the past year and explain your reasons for the selection of work. Why did you choose the examples you did to best represent your learning in each of the above areas.

- **Examples of your Work.** These should be linked to the Freshman Inquiry Goal that it represents. You should select at least two examples for each goal (at least two for each form of the Communication Goal: Writing and Quantitative Literacy). *You must include your research paper in your work selection.* It may be for any one of these Goals. Often one piece of work may represent more than one

- Goal and you may use the same example of work for more than one Goal.  
However, you still must have at least two different work samples for each Goal.
- Last, include any additional material that your instructor may have requested.

**Suggestions:** When constructing your portfolio, remember this is a showcase of your best work. Be consistent in your high standards of presentation. Be both professional and creative and make sure that the portfolio contents are easily accessible.

## Contact Lists

### University Student Services

Center for Student Health and Counseling\_(SHAC).....5-2800  
Counseling, psychological evaluation and intervention,  
testing services, and all health-related concerns (www.shac.pdx.edu)

Educational Opportunity Program (EOP).....5-3815  
First generation college, lower-income, and disabilities

Undergraduate Advising Support Center (UASC).....5-4005  
Action central for academic advising

Kim Glanville, UASC, Athletic Academic Advisor.....5-2387  
Advising and academic support for student athletes

Student Development ..... 5-4452  
For information on student groups on campus

Student Legal and Mediation Services.....5-4556  
Services available to all currently enrolled students

Women’s Union Resource Center.....5-5672  
Information on classes and scholarships

Writing Center .....5-3570  
One-on-one help with writing, on a drop-in or appointment basis

### University Studies Administration and Staff

Cramer 117 – Fax (503) 725-5977

Sukhwant Jhaj, Interim Director .....5-8996  
jhaj@pdx.edu

Rowanna Carpenter, Assessment Associate.....5-3445  
carpenterr@pdx.edu

Ann M. Fallon, FRINQ faculty Coordinator.....5-9423  
amfallon@pdx.edu

Seanna Kerrigan, Capstone Coordinator.....5-8392  
kerrigans@pdx.edu

Candyce Reynolds, Director of Mentor Programs.....5-4657  
reynoldsc@pdx.edu

Katherine Barich, Scheduler.....5-5895  
barichk@pdx.edu

Denise Schmidt, Executive Assistant.....5-5818  
schmidtd@pdx.edu

Clare Quinn, Front-Desk Assistant.....5-5890  
quinnc@pdx.edu

Thuy Vu, accountant.....5-5843  
thuyv@pdx.edu

### FRESHMAN INQUIRY FACULTY

Bagley, Kenny	5378	NH 23A	kbagley@pdx.edu
Batchelder, Leslie	8158	CH 117 D	lwbatch@pdx.edu
Bettridge, Joel	9553	CH 117 V	jmbett@pdx.edu
Boesch, Becky	5975	CH 117 L	boeschb@pdx.edu
Bulman, Teresa	3167	CH 424 G	bulmant@pdx.edu
Carey, Chris	9402	CH 117 C	ccarey@pdx.edu
Cohen, Alicia	9404	CH 163 B	cohen@pdx.edu
Davidova, Evguenia	8992	CH 117 Z	evguenia@pdx.edu
Dillon, Grace	8144	CH 117 Q	dillong@pdx.edu
Dillon, Tracy	3579	NH M412	dillont@pdx.edu
Estes, J.R.	8995	CH 117 U	estesjr@pdx.edu
Everett, Margaret	3319	CH 141Q	everettm@pdx.edu
Fallon, Ann Marie	9423	CH 117 F	amfallon@pdx.edu
Fisher, Tom	8994	CH 117 T	tfisher@pdx.edu
Flower, Michael	5362	UHP 105	flowerm@pdx.edu
Gerwing, Jeff	4482	CH 117 B	jgerwing@pdx.edu
Kaehler, Laura	3547	CH 163	kaehler@pdx.edu
Latiolais, Paul	3632	NH M321	latiolaisp@pdx.edu
Long, Chip	3451	CH 117 N	jlong@pdx.edu
MacCormack, Alan	8430	CH 117 E	alanm@pdx.edu
Natter, Betsy	9042	20-11 FAB	natterb@pdx.edu
Parker, Scott	4601	LH 334	parkers@pdx.edu
Perkins, Ben	3387	CH 17Z	rperkins@pdx.edu
Pohl, Victoria	8157	CH 117S	parkerv@pdx.edu
Rhee, Ma-ji	5282	NH 451A	rheem@pdx.edu
Ross, Jamie	8370	CH 117 M	rossj@pdx.edu

Schuler, Friedrich	3988	CH 441 N	schulerf@pdx.edu
Sheard, Tim	2410	FAB 120-04	sheard@pdx.edu
Smith, Julie	4252	378 SB2	smithjj@pdx.edu
Straton, Jack	5844	CH 117 P	straton@pdx.edu
Tauber, Daveena	8983	CH 163 B	dmt@pdx.edu
Taylor, Teresa	9401	CH 165	taylor@pdx.edu
Trimble, Anmarie	9403	CH 117 G	atrimble@pdx.edu
White, Chuck	5891	CH 137	whitech@pdx.edu
**Bergland, Daneen Writing Center Liason	503-516- 9960	378 NH	daneen@pdx.edu