

THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY

SYMPOSIUM

April 13-14, 2023 | Charlotte, NC

Examining a Year-Long Program to Prepare First Year Undergraduate Students for Success

UNC System Learning and Technology Symposium

April 13, 2023

Charlotte, NC

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Purpose

Situating the Purpose:

Jean Donham and her colleagues (2010): “*Authentic inquiry is a constructivist endeavor where learning is repositioned so that it no longer functions as the mere transferal of information but as an active process by which individuals construct meaning*” (p. 9).

Purpose of Study

Describe and report on the Prospect for Success (PFS) program in the Cato College of Education at UNC Charlotte

Context for PFS



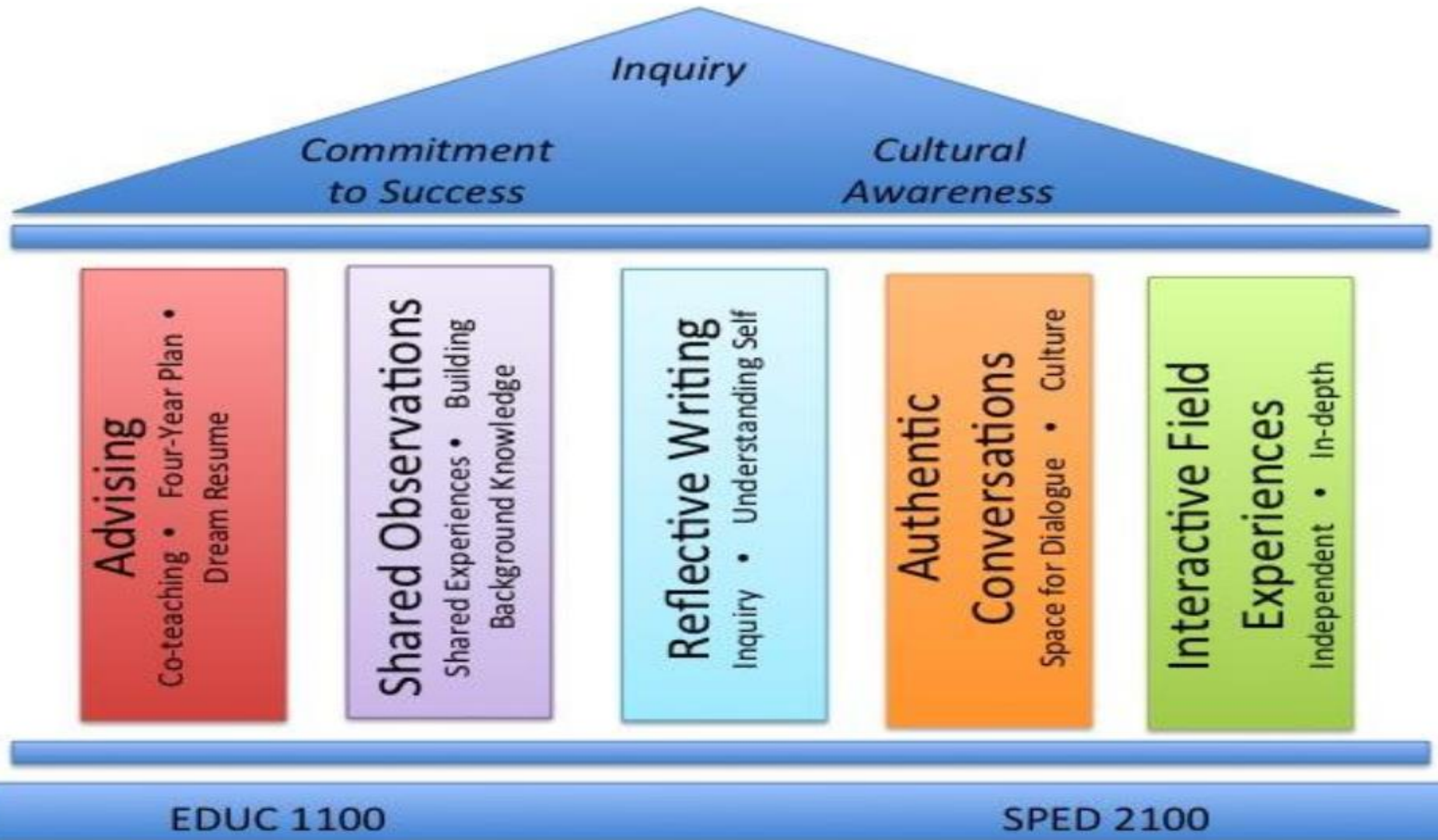
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- The Boyer Commission (1999) issued report featuring 10 recommendations
- First two recommendations deal explicitly with Constructivist practices to support student learning:
 - 1) make research-based learning the standard
 - 2) construct an inquiry-based freshman year
- Inquiry as a “shared adventure of discovery” (p. 16)

Prospect for Success Program

- The PFS program at UNC Charlotte is grounded in three central goals for first-year students:
 1. The first goal, *Intentionality*, helps students identify and create meaningful career goals.
 1. The second goal, *Curiosity*, is based on rationale that students who actively participate in their educational experience— by being curious—will be more invested in their education as they deepen their understanding of the inquiry process throughout their university experience.
 1. The third goal is *Awareness* and is focused on cultural diversity as well as the intersectionality of ability, gender, race, and socioeconomic class

Prospect for Success Program



PFS in the Cato COED

The PFS program in the Cato COED is a year-long program

Fall Semester

Semester

EDUC 1100

**Foundations of Education
& Diversity**



Spring

SPED 2100

**Intro to Students w/
Special Needs**

PFS in the Cato COED

- Across EDUC 1100 and SPED 2100
 - Field Experiences in Diverse School Settings
 - Focus on Diversity and Inclusion
 - A common assignment: The Inquiry Project
 - Project aligns with the PFS goal of inquiry
 - Includes: 1) a research proposal plan; 2) a written executive summary with annotated references; and 3) an infographic type presentation
 - Hone their questions and conclusions from Field Experiences in SPED 2100

PFS: SPED 2100

Dig Deeper:
Inquiry as
Pathway for
Cultural
Awareness



Reciprocal
Partners in
Learning
through
Community
Engagement



Focus on
Diversity &
Inclusion



Authentic
Engagement
with Learners &
Their Cultural
Assets

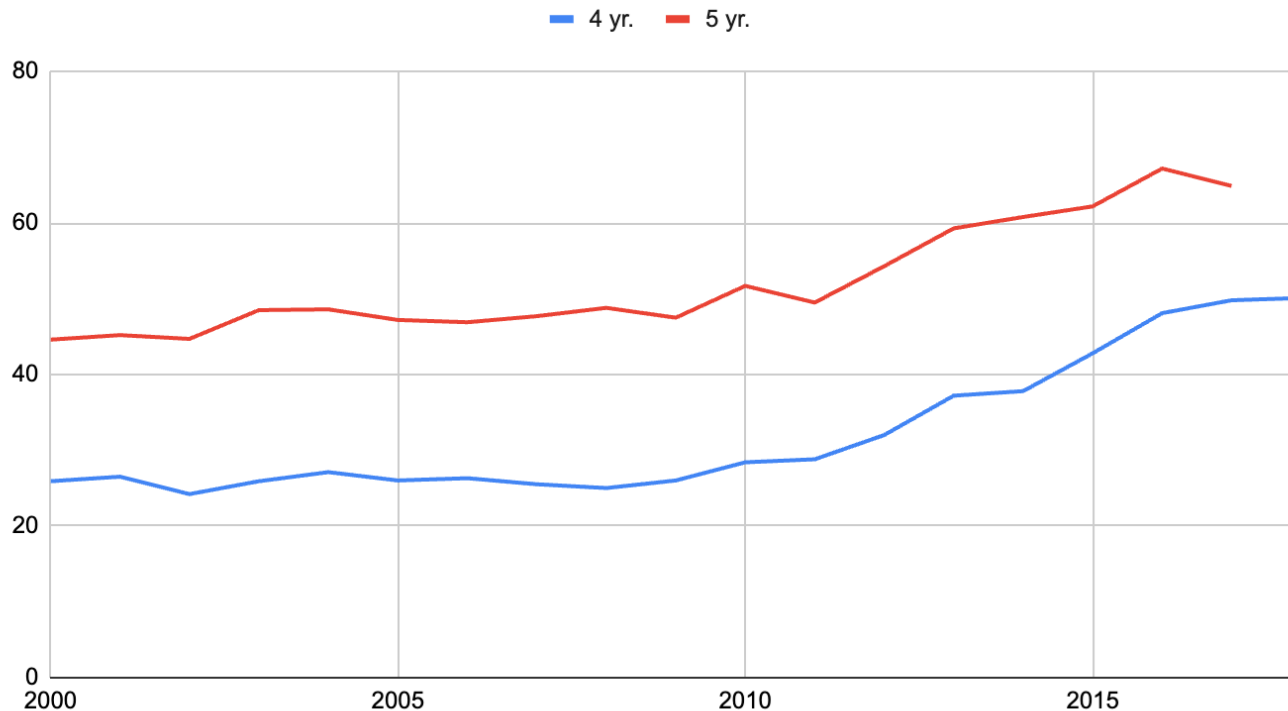
**SPED
2100**

Lessons Learned

- 1) Our experience and outcome data suggest that weaving non-academic learning outcomes with content is a balancing act but one that offers multiple benefits to first-year students.
- (2) The importance of on and off campus partnerships as invaluable for engaging and supporting first-year students.
- (3) The integration of active learning strategies are essential features of student success.
- 4) PFS supports UNC System performance measures including 4 year graduation rate and degree efficiency.

Campuswide Progress

4 year and 5 year Graduation Rates (Undergraduate)



Student success measures for Charlotte suggest that Prospect and other related programs have had an impact graduation rates (above) and retention rates.

Student Leadership and Growth

What is EDUC 1100 and what is the role of the preceptor in this course?

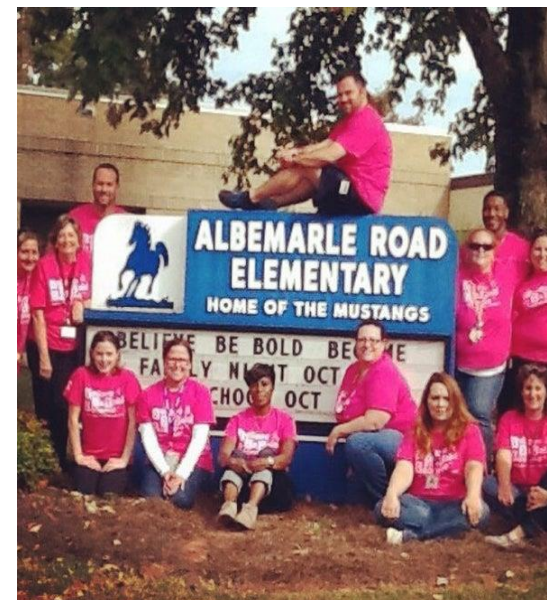
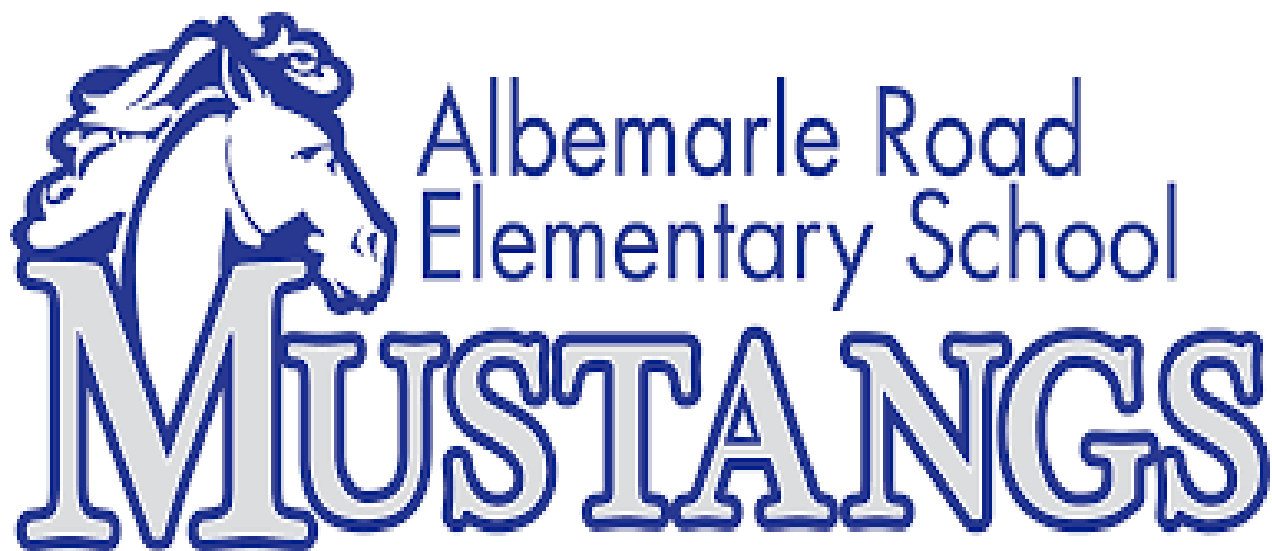
Student leadership and growth

Undergraduate Preceptors serve as peer mentors and, in many cases, co-teach:

1. In-class mentorship, sharing peer knowledge
2. Developing student mentors who have an impact in and out of the classroom
3. Leadership leads to greater academic engagement (undergraduate research, advanced degrees, etc.)

Campus Partnerships

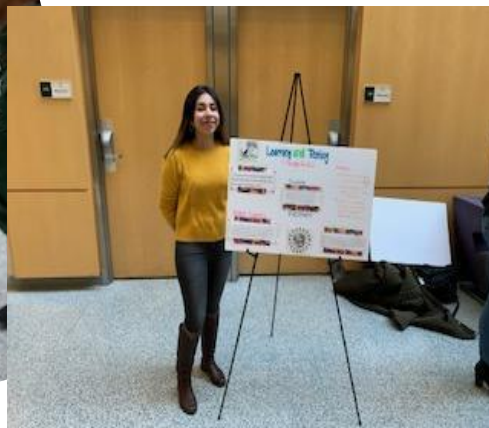
The importance of on and off campus partnerships as invaluable for engaging and supporting first-year students.



Active Learning = Student Success

(3) The integration of active learning strategies are essential features of student success.

Inquiry Assignment is an authentic research based experience that can be a springboard for acceptance to honors in education.



Challenges

- Adjustments related to community partnerships
 - Especially during COVID-19
- Limited resources
 - Continuing to justify why a clinical -field based PFS experience in the Cato COED
- Curriculum
 - What text is most responsive to first-year students and transfer students?
 - O'Brien et al. book
- Sustainability of PFS
 - Intensive collaboration as a team

Discussion Questions

- What are ways that you engage undergraduate students centered on preparing them for success in the University as well as introduce them to a possible future careers?
- How do you plan and implement student learning outcomes related to preparing students for success at the university
- How do such programs connect to improving the 4 year graduation rate in the UNC system?

Thank you!



We welcome your questions and comments . . .

Source:
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