# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First- and Second-Year Experience Highlights</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Activity &amp; Acknowledgements</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Year Philosophy Statement</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIV 101/201 Instructors</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIV 101/201 Peer Instructors</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIV 101/201 Graduate Student Leaders</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIV 101/201 Facts &amp; Figures</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Faculty Links</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer2Transfer</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huskies Get Connected</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REACH Program</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First- and Second-Year Success Series</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Reading Experience</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-Year Experience Highlights</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Prepared By:

**Denise L. Rode**  
Director  
First- and Second-Year Experience  

**Kelly Smith**  
Assistant Director  
First- and Second-Year Experience  

## With Contributions From:

**Kelsey Ward**  
Graduate Assistant  
First- and Second-Year Experience  

**Ashley Heins**  
Student Graphic Designer  
First- and Second-Year Experience  

**Dylan Heinrich**  
Student Graphic Designer  
First- and Second-Year Experience  

A Fall 2014 UNIV student takes a “selfie” with Eboo Patel during his visit to NIU on October 27, 2014.
The First- and Second-Year Experience (FSYE) at Northern Illinois University is the combination of services, programs, and curricular and co-curricular activities that provide the path between student entry to the University and their successful transition to the junior year/upper division. First- and Second-Year Experience offers a foundation for major selection, career exploration, campus involvement and leadership development, residential learning, and engagement in campus and community service. NIU’s First-Year Experience (FYE) programs are designed to help first-year students make a successful transition to college life. The Second-Year Experience assists students in exploring the unique, critical issues and tasks of the second year of college.

The components of First-Year Experience include UNIV 101/201, Student-Faculty Links (SFL), Transfer2Transfer (T2T), Retention Efforts for All inComing Huskies (REACH), Huskies Get Connected (HGC), the First- and Second-Year Success Series (FSYSS), and the Common Reading Experience (CRE).

The Second-Year Experience is a partnership between several NIU departments, including Housing & Dining, Student Involvement & Leadership Development, Career Services, and various community collaborators. Components include a Y2@NIU Welcome Back event, Sophomore Days of Service, and “Half-Way There” recognition for rising juniors.

This annual report details the FSYE activity for 2014, noting advancements that have occurred over the past year.

For additional information on FSYE, call First- and Second-Year Experience at (815) 753-0028, e-mail fsye@niu.edu, or visit the website at http://www.niu.edu/fsye.

An NIU student colors with a young resident at Hope Haven Homeless Shelter during Sophomore Days of Service.
Presentations and Professional Development

Denise Rode served as co-chair of educational sessions for the March 2014 National Orientation Directors Association regional conference in Urbana, Illinois. Rode and Bobbie Cole, Associate Director of Residential Education for Housing & Dining, presented a session on the Second-Year Experience.

- In 2014, eleven students served as members of the FSYE Student Success Team:
  
  Mathew Brown, junior Computer Science major
  Danielle Dyra, sophomore History Education major
  Kiran Gill, junior Political Science major
  Amy Henkel, senior Art and Design Education major
  Taras Lesyk, junior Marketing major
  Corey Meredith, sophomore Accountancy major
  Bridgett Phelan, senior Communicative Disorders, Speech-Language Pathology major
  Nicolette Riscossa, junior Accountancy major
  Jency Thomas, senior Nutrition and Dietetics major
  Ericka Wilson, senior Journalism major
  Annie Ziga, senior Psychology major

- 89 sections of UNIV 101/201 were offered in fall 2014, with 79 sections serving first-year students and 10 sections serving transfer students.
- 1,692 students were enrolled in UNIV, with the average class size being 19.
- 45 Peer Instructors volunteered in 42 sections, and 6 Graduate Student Leaders engaged in the UNIV teaching team experience.
- New UNIV sections were added in 2014 as part of Themed Learning Communities, including Health Statistics, Academic Opportunities, and Developing Champions.
- Four pilot UNIV 101 sections were offer taught by Presidential Teaching Professors E. Taylor Atkins (History), Dan Gebo (Anthropology), Michael Kolb (Anthropology), and Kristen Myers (Women’s Studies/Sociology). These sections featured content from the faculty’s area of specialization and involvement by NIU alumnus William Marutzky, licensed attorney and CPA.
- First- and Second-Year Experience sponsored the Fall 2014 REACH program, resulting in contact with 817 first-year students who were not otherwise connected with “high impact practices” or who had known risk factors upon entering NIU.
- The First- and Second-Year Success Series offered 38 programs to help first-year students transition to college life. The series included information such as leadership, student employment, how find and apply for scholarships, healthy eating, self-defense, time-management, and exploring research opportunities.
- A seventh year of the Common Reading Experience took place, and the CRE selection became a requirement for all sections of the UNIV 101/201 course. Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation (2007), by Eboo Patel, was utilized as the text.
- A BetterTogether@NIU student interfaith organization was formed in Fall 2014 by President Eleanor (Ellie) Evins and Vice President Afreen Warsi. Jennifer Groce and Andrew Pemberton serve as advisors to this new Student Association-recognized group. Ellie Evins also was hired as the Student Coordinator for Interfaith Initiatives for the 2014-2015 academic year.
• Common Reading events in fall 2014 were highlighted by Eboo Patel’s visit to campus on October 27, during which he spoke to approximately 1,100 NIU students, faculty, staff, as well as campus and local clergy and community leaders.

• Several new programs were developed and piloted by FSYE in the Fall 2014 semester, including the Huskies Get Connected involvement consultation program and Transfer2Transfer peer mentoring program.

Denise Rode is serving a three-year term (2013-2016) on the Advisory Board of the National Resource Center on the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.

NIU senior Psychology major Annie Ziga was selected as one of five undergraduate fellows by the National Resource Center on the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition for the 2015 Annual Conference.

Six NIU graduate students were selected as Graduate Student Leaders in UNIV 101 and 201 sections in Fall 2014. All six enrolled for independent research, CAHA 597, through the Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education. Graduate Leaders attended bi-monthly seminars on the topics of The First-Year Experience Movement, Teaching the First-Year Seminar, Essential Components of the First Year/Connecting the First-Year to the Campus Mission, Student Engagement in the First-Year, First-Year Student Success and Theory, First-Year Experience Programming, and Assessing the First College Year. Denise Rode and Kelly Smith facilitated the sessions.

NIU extended its Resource Sharing Agreement with the National Resource Center on the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition in 2014. This agreement supports the Midwest First-Year Conference, which was held at Waubonsee Community College on September 19, 2014. Nearly 200 participants attended from seven states; Illinois, Indiana, Texas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Several NIU staff served on the conference committee, including Kelly Smith (awards) and Denise Rode (major speakers). The keynote speaker for the event was Dr. Joe Cuseo, Professor emeritus of Psychology at Marymount College in California.

NIU’s chapter of the Lambda Sigma Sophomore Honor Society, which is advised by staff of First- and Second-Year Experience, was designated as one of two Most Outstanding Chapters by the National Board for the 2013-2014 academic year (the University of Pittsburgh chapter was also honored). Franz Varga served as chapter president of this award-winning chapter. At the Annual Presidents’ Conference held at Auburn University in September, Denise Rode was installed as president of the National Society. Shawna Johnson, a junior advisor to the NIU chapter, received one of five scholarships awarded by the national organization for 2014-2015.

The May 2014 Instructor Conference was an all-day event for new UNIV instructors. The day was dedicated to informing new instructors of the importance of UNIV 101/201 at NIU, providing an overview of the resources that FSYE provides for instructors, as well as a training session on MAP-Works presented by Randi Napientek, Assistant Director of the Office of Student Academic Success. In August, staff of the Interfaith Youth Core based in Chicago assisted in training UNIV instructors to teach Acts of Faith in the classroom.
Several NIU staff members presented sessions at the 2014 Midwest First-Year Conference. These included:

- “Peer Mentoring: In the Process,” presented by Mary Tosch, Student Life Manager, Waubonsee Community College; Ulysses Diaz, Bilingual Counselor, Waubonsee Community College; Brandy Skierkiewicz, Director of Student Engagement, Aurora University; Stella Okeke, Coordinator of Multicultural Student Affairs, Moraine Valley Community College; and Don Bramlett, Graduation Specialist for the Center for Black Studies.
- “A First-Generation Student’s First Year: A Campus Partner Impact,” presented by Kathryn Olson, VISTA/AmeriCorps, Office of Student Engagement & Experiential Learning; Lucero Martinez, Graduate Assistant, OSEEL; and Michaela Holtz, Assistant Director, OSEEL.
- “The Positive Impact of Peer Mentors on First-Year Students Participating in Co-Curricular Programs,” presented by Michelle Pickett, Director of the Academic Advising Center, and Susana DasNeves, Academic Advisor/Counselor.
- “Beyond Requirements: Reminding Students that College is for Learning,” presented by Amanda Durik, Associate Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Psychology.
- “CHOICES Matter!” presented by Monique Bernoudy, Associate Athletics Director.
- “Impact of Peer Mentoring in First-Year Composition,” presented by Christopher Parker, Associate Vice Provost of Academic Outcomes Assessment, Office of Assessment Services; Michael Day, First-Year Composition Program, Department of English; Tawanda Gipson, Research Associate, Office of Assessment Services; Eric Hoffman, Coordinator, Networked Writing and Research; Ellen Franklin, Assistant to the Director of First-Year Composition; and Meghan Huntoon, doctoral student.
- “Student Success for the Exploring Student: The Academic Advising Role,” presented by Michelle Pickett, Director of the Academic Advising Center; and Susana DasNeves, Academic Advisor/Counselor.
- “Sophomores and Service,” presented by Denise Rode, Director of First- and Second-Year Experience; and Amy Henkel, Student Success Team Member, FSYE.
- “Need a little TLC?” Incorporating First-Year Seminars in Themed Learning Communities,” presented by Kelly Smith, Assistant Director of First- and Second-Year Experience; and Stephanie Zobac, Associate Director of the Office of Student Engagement & Experiential Learning.
- “Shaping Campus Culture Through a Common Reading Experience,” presented by Denise Rode, Director of First- and Second-Year Experience; and Kelly Smith, Assistant Director, FSYE.
- “Academic Success for First-Year Students at Northern Illinois University: The Role of Faculty-Mentored Undergraduate Research through the Research Rookies Program,” presented by Lauren Boddy, Program Assistant, Office of Student Engagement & Experiential Learning; Marilyn Lorch, Program Coordinator, OSEEL; and Katie Grosshart, Graduate Assistant, OSEEL.

“I really enjoyed the class and will recommend it to any new student I meet!”
- Former UNIV 101/201 student.
Denise Rode presented two sessions at the 2014 National Orientation Directors Association conference in Orlando, entitled “Sophomores and Service: One Pillar of a Comprehensive Second-Year Experience Initiative,” and “Lessons Learned about Orientation, Transition, and Retention from the Pillars of the Profession.”

Denise Rode participated in the 20th National Conference on Students in Transition in Denver, and presented a session on NIU’s Sophomore Days of Service initiative.

Kelly Smith participated in the Institute on Peer Educators, sponsored by the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition on November 6-9, 2014 held at the University of South Carolina in Columbia.


NIU was represented at the September 2014 Vanguard Conference of the Interfaith Youth Core at Georgetown University in Washington, DC by President Doug Baker, Vice Provost Anne Birberick, Director of the Center for Non-Governmental Organization and Leadership Nancy Castle, and FSYE Director Denise Rode.

Denise Rode, with Richard Mullendore of the University of Georgia, conducted a program review/consultation for the University of Missouri – Columbia’s New Student Programs Office.

Fall 2014 first-year honors students display the 2013-2015 Common Reading.
Northern Illinois University recognizes the first year of college is central to setting the foundation for a successful higher education experience and for developing informed and engaged citizens. As such, we seek to:

- help students transition into, and succeed in, the NIU college experience;
- stimulate intellectual curiosity, creativity, and exploration of information and ideas as well as mastery of content;
- encourage students to connect with faculty staff, advisors, and upper level students as mentors;
- provide students with opportunities for exposure to, and appreciation for and interaction with individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds and belief systems;
- cultivate a supportive environment through mutual respect, shared responsibility, and a campus ethic of care;
- foster moral and ethical development that encourages self-reflection and individual responsibility; and
- guide and assess student engagement and recognize faculty, staff, advisors, and students as collaborative partners in the first-year experience.

We strive to engage first-year students in varied in-class and out-of-class opportunities that encourage them to connect with and become contributing members of the Huskie Community.

Developed by the Foundations of Excellence™ in the First College Year Steering Committee.
Approved by the Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Experience, February 2013.
# UNIV 101/201 Instructors

## UNIV 101: The University Experience

### UNIV 201: The Transfer Experience

### UNIV 101-201 Instructors

*Indicates an Instructor for a pilot section of UNIV 101 taught by a Presidential Teaching Professor, and incorporating academic content from his/her area of specialization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role/Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jason Akst</td>
<td>Instructor, Department of Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esenam Ameztochi</td>
<td>Counselor, CHANCE Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Andersen</td>
<td>Office Manager, Financial &amp; Institutional Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy Ash</td>
<td>Associate Director, CHANCE Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Taylor Atkins*</td>
<td>Professor, Department of History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Baker</td>
<td>Assistant Director, Undergraduate Studies, College of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Blair</td>
<td>Special Assistant to Vice President, University Advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Bough</td>
<td>Associate Professor, School of Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerome Bowers</td>
<td>Associate Vice Provost and Associate Professor, University Honors Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelli Bradley</td>
<td>Assistant Director for Leadership and Student Organizational Services,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Involvement &amp; Leadership Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angela Bross</td>
<td>Assistant Director, Testing Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea Buford</td>
<td>Senior Research Development Specialist, Office of Sponsored Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ted Campbell</td>
<td>Senior Assistant Director, Undergraduate Admissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikkita Carrington</td>
<td>Trainer, Center for Affirmative Action &amp; Diversity Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christie Chappell</td>
<td>Women's Soccer Assistant Coach, Intercollegiate Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jes Cisneros</td>
<td>Assistant Director, University Honors Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regina Curry</td>
<td>S-Plan Coordinator, Center for Black Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susana Das Neves</td>
<td>Academic Advisor/Counselor, Academic Advising Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie DeCicco</td>
<td>Assistant Dean, College of Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Doederlein</td>
<td>Coordinator of Internships for the Humanities, College of Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenna Dooley</td>
<td>Radio TV Announcer Producer I, Northern Broadcast Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krystle Dorsey</td>
<td>Counselor, CHANCE Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolinda Douglass</td>
<td>Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Development, Division of Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheronda Everett</td>
<td>Instructor, Center for Non-Governmental Organization Leadership and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angie Flannery</td>
<td>Academic Advisor, College of Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana Gautcher</td>
<td>Director, Office of Student Academic Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Gebo*</td>
<td>Presidential Teaching Professor &amp; Illinois Professor of the Year, Department of Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debbie Gettemey</td>
<td>Associate Director of Residential Communities, Housing &amp; Dining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missy Gillis</td>
<td>Director of External Programming and National Safety Education Center, College of Engineering and Engineering Technology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tawanda Gipson  
Research Associate for Special Projects  
Assessment Services

Brian Glick  
Assistant Director  
Office of Community Standards & Student Conduct

Jason Goode  
Assistant to the Associate Vice Provost  
University Honors Program

Dain Gotto  
Senior Associate Director  
Student Involvement & Leadership Development

Merlynette Griffin  
Health Promotion Specialist  
Health Enhancement

Abhijit Gupta  
Professor  
Department of Mechanical Engineering

Katie Haft  
Instructor  
School of Family, Consumer & Nutrition Sciences

Michele Hill  
Associate Director  
Undergraduate Admissions

Michaela Holtz  
Assistant Director  
Office of Student Engagement & Experiential Learning

Angela Johansson  
Director  
Office of Alumni Relations

Lisa King  
Associate Director  
CHANCE Program

Mary Kocsis  
Instructor  
Allied Health and Communication Disorders

Michael Kolb*  
Associate Vice Provost and Presidential Teaching Professor  
Department of Anthropology

Christine Lagattolla  
Assistant Director for Outdoor Adventures  
Campus Recreation

Brian Lance  
Director  
Planning & Assessment  
Student Affairs & Enrollment Management

Brittney Lovett  
Program Advisor  
Student-Athlete Academic Support Services

Missy Lugo  
Student Success Specialist  
Office of Student Academic Success

Colette Maher  
Academic Advisor/Counselor  
Academic Advising Center

Beverly McCall  
Academic Advisor/Counselor  
Academic Advising Center

Jeanne Meyer  
Director  
Office of Community Standards & Students Conduct

Debra Miller  
Student Success Specialist  
Office of Student Academic Success

Chris Mitchell  
Counselor  
CHANCE Program

Lauren Mock  
Associate Director for Enrollment and Outreach  
Study Abroad

Ted Moen  
External Programs Coordinator  
College of Education Office of External and Global Programs

Kristen Myers*  
Director  
Women’s Studies Program  
Presidential Teaching Professor, Sociology

Randi Napientek  
Assistant Director  
Office of Student Academic Success

Kalin Noel  
Hall Director  
Housing & Dining

CJ Oates  
Academic Coordinator  
Student-Athlete Academic Support Services

Kate Paton  
Teaching Assistant  
Department of Political Science

Anne Petty Johnson  
Director  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences External Programming

Joseph Przybyla  
Police Sergeant  
Public Safety

Deyci Ramirez  
Counselor  
CHANCE Program

Erin Reid  
Academic Advisor  
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Denise Rode  
Director  
First- and Second-Year Experience

David Seymour  
Counselor  
CHANCE Program

Nicholas Slicer  
Counselor  
CHANCE Program
Instructor Training

Instructor requirements include completion of a master’s degree, prior teaching experience, and participation in the instructor conference, workshops and meetings. Instructor training included a series of workshops and meetings in May (for new instructors) and August (for all instructors) that provided information and techniques on teaching, working with first-year students, using the Common Reading Experience selection *Acts of Faith*, and ongoing student development information provided through the weekly Instructor Newsletter. Through instructor training, the following learning objectives were reached:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
<th>Evaluation Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The instructor will identify ways to connect with first-year students based on their needs.</td>
<td>33 percent of survey participants (n=5) agreed and 67 percent (n=10) strongly agreed that they could identify ways to connect with first-year students based on their needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor will identify different techniques that can be used to teach topic or chapter content.</td>
<td>44 percent of survey participants (n=7) agreed and 56 percent (n=9) strongly agreed that they could recognize pedagogical styles and techniques relevant to first-year students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor will identify at least 3 required course components.</td>
<td>13 percent of survey participants (n=2) agreed and 88 percent (n=14) strongly agreed that they could identify at least 3 required course components.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructor Observations

In an effort to continually enhance the quality of instruction and the student experience in Northern’s UNIV 101 and 201 courses, a rotation for in-class observations by experienced instructors has been established. Instructors are observed during their first semester of teaching, and every five years, as needed, or at their request. The observations are intended to supplement the quantitative and qualitative data that is collected at the end of the UNIV cycle directly from UNIV students. Observations also allow instructors to discuss the teaching process with an experienced colleague—what’s working well, what ideas could make the classroom experience more effective, and how to manage the classroom for maximum engagement. After the completion of this process, feedback was collected from the instructors who had their classrooms observed in fall 2014. A representative sample of comments follows:

- “It was great! I was nervous but [the observer] provided direct and on-the-spot feedback.”
- “I enjoyed my observation. I was provided with great feedback and suggestions.”
- “[The] observer was very interested in the class, [and] observed in an unobtrusive manner. Feedback was very positive.”
- “I thought my observer was helpful overall. [The observer] went over strategies for me to use and how I can better my class experience as a whole.”

Instructors indicated ways they would use the feedback:

- “We have already incorporated some of [the observer’s] feedback by finding more opportunities for small group discussion.”
- “I put the students in circles to engage learning and make the classroom feel smaller. I am becoming less afraid to let there be silence after I ask a question, and [I] wait for people to participate instead of answering my own questions.”
- “We will work on an even more student-focused atmosphere.”

Student Success Team members and professional staff gather used clothing items as part of the NIU Neighborhood Block Party in September, 2014.
* Indicates a returning Peer Instructor

Kati Bloyd
Senior
Biological Sciences

Rickeshia Cox
Junior
Textiles, Apparel and Merchandising

Leah Culbertson
Senior
Elementary Education

Nicole Dispensa
Sophomore
Medical Laboratory Sciences

Eleanor Evins
Sophomore
Nursing

Megan Fish
Sophomore
Pre-Nursing

Janeen George
Sophomore
Communicative Disorders, Speech-Language Pathology

Sumer Gill*
Senior
Medical Laboratory Sciences

Kiran Gill
Junior
Political Science

Margarita Gonzalez
Senior
Journalism and Spanish

Megan Haduch
Sophomore
Communicative Disorders

Courtney Harrell
Sophomore
Marketing

Marvin Harris
Senior
Rehabilitation Services - Occupational Therapy

Nomzamo Jamal
Senior
Operations and Information Management

Alexis King*
Senior
Family Social Services

Emily Knetsch
Sophomore
Communicative Disorders, Speech-Language Pathology

Terry Lesyk*
Junior
Marketing

Katlyn Luebke
Junior
Nursing

Eveliz Maldonado
Sophomore
Community Leadership & Civic Engagement

Adam McNeil*
Senior
Communication and Psychology

Corey Meredith
Sophomore
Accountancy

Jasmine Mikell*
Senior
Kinesiology

Kerrian Miller
Sophomore
Marketing

Jordon Mitzelfelt*
Senior
Biological Sciences

Richard Moore*
Junior
Business Management and Political Science

Andrea Nale
Junior
Nursing

Philip Nanni*
Senior
Marketing

Heather Niziolek
Senior
Rehabilitation Services - Occupational Therapy

Bridgett Phelan*
Senior
Communicative Disorders, Speech-Language Pathology

Jake Porento
Sophomore
Math Education

Fran Carlo Resto
Sophomore
Sociology

Jerrell Ross
Junior
Nursing and Public Health

Amanda Santucci
Sophomore
Communicative Disorders

Grace Schnell
Sophomore
Undecided

Raja Shah
Junior
Early Childhood Studies

Bobby Truong
Junior
Music Education

Sarah Trygstad*
Senior
Community Leadership & Civic Engagement

Moriah Tyler
Sophomore
Political Science

Ericka Wilson*
Senior
Journalism

Michael Wohlner
Senior
Media Communications

Ella Wybourn
Senior
Nursing

Annie Ziga
Senior
Psychology
Peer Instructor (PI) Training

Peer Instructor (PI) requirements include a minimum grade point average of 2.5 and participation in PI training sessions. PIs receive ongoing training through weekly electronic newsletters and primary training during mandatory workshops in April and August. Peer instructors are also invited to meet with the program coordinator at mid-semester to reflect on their experiences. Through Peer Instructor training, the following learning objectives were reached:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Objective</th>
<th>Evaluation Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The PI will establish a connection with one to three other PIs as a network for support and resource sharing.</td>
<td>14 percent of survey participants (n=2) agreed and 71 percent (n=10) strongly agreed that they were able to meet and talk with other PIs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The PI will become familiar with campus resources that are important to the success of first-year students.</td>
<td>40 percent of survey participants (n=8) agreed and 45 percent (n=9) strongly agreed that the training helped familiarize them with the resources important to the success of first-year students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The PI will understand the importance of the UNIV 101/201 course as well as the role of the PI.</td>
<td>45 percent of survey participants (n=9) agreed and 55 percent strongly agreed (n=11) that they understood the importance of UNIV 101/201 and their roles as PIs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A UNIV 101 class explores the NIU campus on an early fall scavenger hunt.
Graduate Student Leaders (GSL) Training

Graduate Student Leader (GSL) requirements are completion of at least one semester of undergraduate or graduate course work at NIU, a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher, and an interest in effectively communicating and working with first-year students. GSL training included learning the history of UNIV and the First-Year Experience movement, applying theory to practice, and learning expectations and tips for managing in the classroom. In the fall 2014 semester, one GSL was paired with a UNIV 201 instructor and five were placed with UNIV 101 instructors. Of the five GSLs placed with UNIV 101 instructors, two were placed in UNIV Themed Learning Communities (Explorations of Perception and Academic Opportunities), and one was placed in an Honors section. The following learning objectives were evaluated by UNIV instructors paired with GSLs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
<th>Evaluation Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of first-year student needs</td>
<td>100 percent of survey participants (n=4) were found to demonstrate awareness of first-year student needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Interpretation: Demonstrated an understanding of University structure and functions</td>
<td>75 percent of survey participants (n=3) were found to demonstrate an understanding of University structure and functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization Culture: Demonstrated understanding of First-Year Connections and campus culture of NIU first-year students</td>
<td>100 percent of survey participants (n=4) were found to demonstrate an understanding of First-Year Connections and campus culture of NIU first-year students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying Theory to Practice: Successfully integrated student development theory into interactions with the first-year students</td>
<td>100 percent of survey participants (n=4) were found to demonstrate competency integrating student development theory to practice with first-year students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching/Presenting Preparation and Organization Teaching/Collaboration Time Management/Prioritization Mentoring Students Technology Skills Organization Individual Growth and Awareness Promotion and Development of Awareness in Others Inclusive of all appreciative of unique factors and intersections of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability, and non-traditional status, including veterans Interpersonal Skills</td>
<td>100 percent of survey participants (n=4) were found to demonstrate competencies in these areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNIV 101/201 Facts &amp; Figures - Fall 2014</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Enrollment</strong></td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,692 first-year students enrolled in a UNIV course (1,484 UNIV 101, 208 UNIV 201)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sections</strong></td>
<td>89 Total Sections (79 UNIV 101, 10 UNIV 201)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructors</strong></td>
<td>83 Instructors (including 31 new)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peer Instructors</strong></td>
<td>45 Peer Instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate Student Leaders</strong></td>
<td>6 Graduate Student Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average class size</strong></td>
<td>19 Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range of class sizes</strong></td>
<td>8-25 Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent of freshman class enrolled in UNIV 101</strong></td>
<td>58.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course effectiveness average</strong></td>
<td>3.99/5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructor effectiveness average</strong></td>
<td>4.54/5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specialized sections</strong></td>
<td>CHANCE (24), Pilot (4), Intercollegiate Athletes (2), Business Interest (1), Heath &amp; Human Sciences (1), Honors Program (2), African American Females (1), African American Mentorship (1), Political Science (1), and ten Themed Learning Community sections including Major Exploration, Technology and Social Networking (CHANCE), Exploring Health Majors, Health Statistics, Pre-Law, Developing Champions (Athletes), Academic Opportunities, Technology and Social Networking (Engineering), Growing a Mindset of Success, and Explorations of Perception.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Student-Faculty Links program pairs participating first-year students with NIU faculty or staff members. The goal of the mentoring relationship is to offer students one-on-one interaction with a member of the NIU community who can provide advice and support. Students and their respective mentors were paired based on identified majors, interests, and characteristics. Seventy-seven first-year students and sixty-two faculty and staff members participated in the program. Mentor pairs were invited to an orientation event where they met each other and received a useful information packet with guidelines and activities meant to foster a successful relationship.

NIU has established several student learning outcomes that apply to students participating in the Student-Faculty Links program:

- Communicating clearly and effectively;
- Collaborating with others to achieve specific goals;
- Exhibiting intercultural competencies with people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives; and
- Synthesizing knowledge and skills relevant to one’s own major or particular field of study, and applying them creatively to develop innovative outcomes.

The faculty and student mentoring experience emphasizes communication between both parties to ensure various avenues for discussion. Every mentoring relationship is unique, and encompasses at least one or more of the student learning outcomes above. Collaborating with others to achieve specific goals is a common outcome achieved through every mentoring relationship. Pairing student protégés with a faculty mentor enables protégés to synthesize knowledge and skills relevant to their own major and field of study. The faculty mentor guides their student in applying their skills in a creative way to develop innovative outcomes.

The SFL program partnered with Student Involvement and leadership development to host a leadership event for mentors and protégés. The event assisted in recognizing various leadership styles with the incorporation of activities exploring the logistics of each individual’s personal leadership characteristics.

Evaluations were received from 13 protégés involved in the program. The evaluations indicated that by participating in the program, 69% (n=9) of the protégés agreed that they felt more comfortable talking to faculty and staff on campus. Additionally, 62% (n=8) agreed that their mentor helped them achieve academic success, and 62% (n=8) agreed that they gained a career-centered approach through the relationship with their respective mentors.

“I’m glad that I was able to meet new people. I saw different viewpoints and reactions that I normally wouldn’t see in any other class.” - Former UNIV 101/201 student.
Student-Faculty Links Mentors:

**Sarah Adamski**
Assistant Director of Investigations
Human Resource Services

**Katharina Barbe**
Chair
Foreign Language & Literature

**Sheila Barrett**
Assistant Professor
Family, Consumer & Nutrition Sciences

**Sanjib Basu**
Professor
Statistics

**Joseph Baumgart**
Physician
Health Services

**Sinclair Bell**
Assistant Professor
School of Art and Design

**Angela Branson**
Associate Director for Professional Development & Operations
Student Affairs & Enrollment Management

**Patricia Braun**
Instructor
Nursing & Health Studies

**Kara Britzman**
Psychotherapist
Counseling & Student Development

**Victoria Brooks**
Instructor
Kinesiology & Physical Education

**Amy Buhrow**
Outreach Specialist
College of Business

**Ted Campbell**
Assistant Director, Campus Tours & Events
Admissions

**Jeff Chan**
Technology Support
Special and Early Education

**Cristine Clemente dos Santos**
Associate Professor
Allied Health & Communicative Disorders

**Bobbie Denise Cole**
Associate Director for Residential Education
Housing & Dining

**Purushothaman Damodaran**
Associate Professor & Chair
Industrial & Systems Engineering

**Maylan Dunn-Kenney**
Associate Professor
Special and Early Education

**Phyllis Dupré**
Event & Marketing Coordinator
Housing & Dining

**Laurie Elish-Piper**
Professor
Literacy and Elementary Education

**Sherine Elsawa**
Assistant Professor
Biological Sciences

**Steve Estes**
Academic Advisor
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

**Richard Fritz**
Residential Dining Director
Housing & Dining

**Dain Gotto**
Assistant Director
Student Involvement & Leadership Development

**Laura Heideman**
Assistant Professor
Sociology

**Theodore J. Hogan**
Assistant Professor
Engineering Technology

**Sheryl Honig**
Assistant Professor
Literacy and Elementary Education

**Gail Jacky**
Director, Writing Center
University Writing Center

**Ryan James**
Assistant Professor
Geography

**Timothy Johnson**
Assistant Professor
Electrical Engineering

**Mike Konen**
Associate Professor
Geography
Brian Lance  
Director  
Planning & Assessment

Amy Levin  
Chair  
English

Karen Lichtman  
Assistant Professor  
Foreign Language & Literature

Jennifer Likeum  
Instructor  
Communication

Brian Mackie  
Assistant Professor  
Operations Management & Information Systems

Jennifer Manning  
Associate Director, Residential Facilities  
Housing & Dining

Sarah Marsh  
Chair  
Management

Mark S. Matuszewski  
Clinical Psychologist  
Counseling & Student Development

Samantha McCarron  
Assistant Director, Student Services  
Student Financial Aid

Amanda McCarthy  
Assistant Professor  
Allied Health & Communicative Disorders

William C. McCoy  
Director, BELIEF Initiative  
College of Business

R. Meganathan  
Professor  
Biological Sciences

Keith Millis  
Professor  
Psychology

Michelle Pickett  
Director  
Academic Advising Center

Thomas Pingel  
Assistant Professor  
Geography

Erin Reid  
Academic Advisor  
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Dawn Rogodzinski-Lisa  
Instructor  
Foreign Language & Literature

Mark Rosenbaum  
Assistant Professor  
Marketing

Linda Saborio  
Assistant Professor  
Foreign Language & Literature

Judy Santacaterina  
Director, Bachelor of General Studies  
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Gail Schumacher  
Academic Advisor  
Literacy and Elementary Education

Mike Stang  
Executive Director  
Housing & Dining

Connie Storey  
Complex Coordinator  
Housing & Dining

Ursula Y. Sullivan  
Assistant Professor  
Marketing

Meryl Sussman  
Assistant Vice President  
Outreach Adult and Non-Credit Programming

Aaron Hill  
Complex Coordinator  
Housing & Dining

Tina Wade  
Physician  
Health Services

Carol Wahlstrom  
Instructor  
Nursing & Health Studies

Michelle Xia  
Assistant Professor  
Statistics

Zhili Xiao  
Interim Associate Dean for Research and  
Graduate Affairs  
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Bridget Yochem  
Academic Advisor  
College of Health & Human Sciences

Jill Zambito  
Director  
Student Involvement & Leadership Development
The Transfer2Transfer peer mentorship program pairs new transfer students with other students who have successfully transferred to Northern within the past year. The goal of the peer mentoring relationships is to offer students one-on-one interaction with a student who has previously been in their position. Pairings are based on identified majors, interests, and characteristics. Twelve formerly transfer students served as mentors and thirteen new transfer students participated as mentees in the program. Mentor pairs were invited to an orientation event where they met each other and received a useful information packet with guidelines and activities meant to foster a successful relationship.

Evaluations were received from three of the mentees involved in the program. The evaluations indicated by participating in the program, 100% (n=3) of the mentees agreed that their mentor helped them to get connected to resources on campus. 100% (n=3) also agreed that their mentor helped them get involved with organizations on campus, and all agreed to feeling academically supported for their first semester at NIU.

Transfer2Transfer Peer Mentors:

Jennifer Ballard  
Rehabilitation Services

Kaitlyn Barten  
Communications/History

Nomzamo Laura Jamela  
Operations Management & Information Systems

Katherine Kendall  
Athletic Training

Rio Long  
Art/Anthropology

Veronica Mascote  
Communicative Disorders-Speech Pathology

Grace Molina  
Operations Management & Information Systems

Karissa Pach  
Elementary Education

Richard Keith Pyle  
Special Education

Anthony Roberts  
Biomedical Engineering

Roberta Schwarz  
Community Leadership and Civic Engagement

Camille Stowe  
Nursing

NIU students pose for picture before a Huskie football game.
Huskies Get Connected

Huskies Get Connected (HGC) is implemented through First- and Second-Year Experience. HGC aims to provide first-year students with information and advice during the transitional period. Through HGC, Student Success Team members meet in a one-on-one consultation with students interested in becoming more involved at NIU’s campus to learn about opportunities that may fit their interests, such as student organizations and clubs, campus employment, campus events, mentorship programs, and research opportunities.

The Northern Illinois Huskies Get Connected program began as a branch off of the University of Missouri’s Involvement Ambassadors. During weekly FSYE staff meetings, different offices from around campus are brought in to help SST members learn how to effectively assist first year students by utilizing their services. Among the offices brought in to assist the SST members in fall 2014 were Career Services, the Academic Advising Center, the Counseling and Student Development Center, and the Office of Student Academic Success. Huskies Get Connected was a pilot program in Fall 2014, and has great potential for Spring 2015. Future objectives for this program include reaching more students, increasing marketing, and incorporating a chat box feature on the website for students in need of immediate assistance.

Student Concerns:
- Involvement on Campus: 100% of participants (n=5)
- Time Management: 60% of participants (n=3)
- What organization to join: 100% of participants (n=5)

Appointments:
- Total interested in HGC = 10
  - Majors included:
    - Accounting, Media Studies, Pre-Nursing, Computer Science, Communication, Communicative Disorders, Chemistry (Pre-Pharmacy)
- Appointments Scheduled = 7
- Total number of students who attended appointments = 5

“I feel inspired to be accepting of others not only with religious differences but also with other beliefs, including beliefs on sexuality or politics. You don’t have to agree with them, but you have to be accepting and understanding of their beliefs just like your own.” - Feedback from a student who attended Eboo Patel’s presentation on October 27, 2014.
The REACH program is implemented by First- and Second-Year Experience with financial support from the Office of Student Academic Success. REACH aims to provide resources, information, and advice to aid in first-year students’ transition to the campus. Through the REACH program, trained upper-division students call new NIU students identified as at risk of leaving the university before the second year. Students called are selected because they are not formally involved with another significant support strategy such as UNIV 101/201 courses, Student Faculty Links, the University Honors Program, ROTC, Intercollegiate Athletes, or CHANCE. Some students called have lower placement test scores, putting them at risk academically. REACH callers provide information, referral, and support. In spring 2014, REACH callers contacted 323 first-year students. In fall 2014, REACH callers contacted 817 first-year students.

Fall 2014 REACH Callers:

**Nicolette Riscossa** (Coordinator)  
Junior  
Accountancy

**Mathew Brown**  
Junior  
Computer Science

**Danielle Dyra**  
Sophomore  
History Education

**Kiran Gill**  
Junior  
Political Science

**Taras Lesyk**  
Junior  
Marketing

**Corey Meredith**  
Sophomore  
Accountancy

**Bridgett Phelan**  
Senior  
Communicative Disorders, Speech-Language Pathology

**Jency Thomas**  
Senior  
Nutrition & Dietetics

**Ericka Wilson**  
Senior  
Journalism

**Annie Ziga**  
Senior  
Psychology
Student Concerns

Academic Concerns Included:
• Academic advising and course registration
• Academic courses
• Concerns regarding major/minor
• MyNIU and Blackboard
• Tutoring

Social Concerns Included:
• Getting involved on campus
• Meeting people/making friends
• Connection to campus
• Social concerns for commuter students

Environmental Concerns Included:
• Residence halls (dining halls, roommates)
• Commuting
• Campus Services and Parking
• Apartment issues

Personal Concerns Included:
• Time management
• Employment and internships
• Frequent homesickness
• Scholarships and finances

Other Concerns Included:
• NIU One-Card
• Huskies Buses
• Study Abroad
• Student e-mail

Students show off their temporary hand-tattoos at the Neighborhood Block Party in September, 2014.
In the 2014 spring semester, REACH callers contacted both new incoming students from the spring of 2014 as well as students who were not successfully contacted in the fall of 2013. The following are key statistical findings from the 2014 spring semester REACH program:

In Spring 2014, the REACH Program contacted 323 (51%) new Spring 2014 students of a list of 626 who met REACH criteria.
- Of the 323 students contacted, 39 (12%) concerns were brought up to callers about academics.
- Of the 323 students contacted, 107 (33%) concerns were brought up to callers about social life.
- Of the 323 students contacted, 26 (8%) concerns were brought up to callers about NIU’s environment.

In addition, during the spring of 2014 REACH callers contacted 327 (22%) of 1,470 first-year students from the fall semester who were not successfully contacted in the fall.
- Of the 327 students contacted, 66 (20%) concerns were brought up to callers about academics.
- Of the 327 students contacted, 92 (28%) concerns were brought up to callers about social life.
- Of the 327 students contacted, 27 (8%) concerns were brought up to callers about NIU’s environment.

In Fall 2014, the REACH Program contacted 817 students (34.5%) of a total of 2,369 students who were listed as meeting REACH criteria. REACH contacted 3.5% more students in Fall 2014 than Fall 2013.
- Of the 817 students contacted, 227 (44%) concerns were brought up to callers about academics.
- Of the 817 students contacted, 127 (25%) concerns were brought up to callers about social life.
- Of the 817 students contacted, 77 (15%) concerns were brought up to callers about personal issues.
The First- and Second-Year Success Series (FSYSS) offered events to first- and second-year students during the fall 2014 semester which provided information on skills, involvement, and resources that could benefit students during their college career at NIU. These events also served to connect students to others with common interests, as well as faculty and staff. The series included 38 programs, 6 of which partially fulfilled requirements for Student Involvement & Leadership Development’s (SILD) NIU Leadership Academy. Program sponsors are listed in italics beneath their respective events. Programs and sponsors are listed below:

**Bystander Intervention Education**  
Monday, September 8, 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.  
Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management

**Exploring Majors Fair**  
Tuesday, September 23, 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
Academic Advising Center

**Edible Education: It’s About Time (Management)!**  
Tuesday, September 9, 12:30 p.m.  
Office of Student Academic Success

**Edible Education: Public Speaking 101**  
Tuesday, September 23, 12:30 p.m.  
Office of Student Academic Success

**Leadership Academy: Creating a Shared Vision**  
Tuesday, September 9, 3:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.  
Student Involvement & Leadership Development

**Leadership Academy: Public Speaking 101**  
Wednesday, September 24, 3:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.  
Student Involvement & Leadership Development

**Outdoor Adventure Opportunities**  
Tuesday, September 9, 4:30 p.m.  
Campus Recreation Outdoor Adventures

**Finding a Job on Campus**  
Wednesday, September 24, 7:00 p.m.  
Student Employment Office

**Utilizing your Community Advisor**  
Wednesday, September 10, 7:00 p.m.  
Housing & Dining

**Stay Safe: Women’s Self Defense**  
Wednesday, September 24, 6:00 p.m.  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

**How to Use MyNIU**  
Thursday, September 11, 5:00 p.m.  
First- and Second-Year Experience

**22nd Annual Study Abroad Fair**  
Thursday, September 25, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
Study Abroad Office

**NIU Resource Crash Course**  
Monday, September 15, 5:00 p.m.  
First- and Second-Year Experience

**Edible Education: Test Prep**  
Monday, September 29, 12:00 p.m.  
Office of Student Academic Success

**Mid-Semester Check**  
Tuesday, September 30, 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.  
Office of Student Academic Success

**Diversity Jeopardy**  
Tuesday, September 16, 5:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m.  
Diversity & Equity

**Mid-Semester Check**  
Tuesday, September 30, 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.  
Office of Student Academic Success

**Orientation and Goal Setting for Strength and Conditioning**  
Wednesday, September 17, 6:00 p.m.  
Campus Recreation

**How to Get Involved in Your Residence Hall**  
Thursday, October 2, 7:00 p.m.  
Housing & Dining

**Edible Education: Exploring Research Opportunities**  
Monday, October 6, 12:00 p.m.  
Office of Student Academic Success

**Developing Healthy Eating Habits**  
Tuesday, October 7, 6:00 p.m.  
Campus Recreation
Bystander Intervention Education  
Tuesday, October 7, 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.  
Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management

Study Skills 101  
Wednesday, October 8, 5:00 p.m.  
First- and Second-Year Experience

Leadership Academy: Dress for Success  
Thursday, October 16, 3:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.  
Student Involvement & Leadership Development

Writing Well  
Thursday, October 16, 6:00 p.m.  
University Writing Center

Social Media: Outlook for the College Student  
Monday, October 20, 5:00 p.m.  
First- and Second-Year Experience

How to Find and Apply for Scholarships  
Wednesday, October 22, 3:00 p.m.  
Scholarship Office

Conflict Management and Roommate Mediation  
Tuesday, October 28, 7:00 p.m.  
Housing & Dining

Stay Safe: Women’s Self Defense  
Monday, November 3, 6:00 p.m.  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Finding a Job on Campus  
Monday, November 3, 7:00 p.m.  
Student Employment Office

Leadership Academy: What Leaders Do & Constituents Expect  
Tuesday, November 4, 3:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.  
Student Involvement & Leadership Development

Learning How to Navigate a Diverse Environment  
Tuesday, November 11, 5:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m.  
Diversity & Equity

Leadership Academy: Leading With & Without Authority  
Wednesday, November 19, 3:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.  
Student Involvement & Leadership Development

Leadership Academy: End-of-the-Semester Celebration  
Thursday, December 4, 5:30 p.m.  
Student Involvement & Leadership Development

Members of Lambda Sigma Sophomore Honor Society participate in a “Feed My Starving Children” mobile food pack at the Suter Company in Sycamore in November, 2014.
These events connected students to campus resources as well as connect them with people of common interests as well as faculty and staff.

At these 38 events, 356 evaluations were received from student participants. The evaluations indicated that 44% (n=158) of students were freshmen and 21% (n=74) of students at the events were transfers. The other 35% (n=125) of respondents either did not indicate their year in school or were listed as “other,” which was defined as a junior, senior, or graduate student at NIU. Evaluations indicated that 60% (n=216) of students that attended indicated that the program they attended was helpful. Additionally, 29% (n=102) of students indicated that the program they attended was somewhat helpful (designating a rating of 4/5 on a five-point scale).

NIU has established eight student learning outcomes that the First- and Second-Year Success Series has adopted.

These learning outcomes include:
• Communicating clearly and effectively;
• Demonstrating critical, creative, and independent thought;
• Using and combining appropriate quantitative and qualitative reasoning skills to address questions and solve problems;
• Collaborating with others to achieve specific goals;
• Integrating knowledge of global interconnections and interdependencies;
• Exhibiting intercultural competencies with people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives;
• Analyzing issues that interconnect human life and the natural world; and
• Synthesizing knowledge and skills relevant to one’s own major or particular field of study, and applying them creatively to develop innovative outcomes.

Two of the FSYSS programs reflect developing intercultural competencies with people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Five of the programs reflect communicating clearly and effectively. Nearly all of the programs reflect collaborating with others to achieve specific goals as well as demonstrating critical, creative, and interdependent thought. All 38 of the FSYSS programs fit into at least one of the eight established student learning outcomes.

A Student Success Team member attended each FSYSS event to oversee and help where needed for the event. The feedback from student staff overall was very positive, with only a couple negative remarks about some specific events.

“I learned about the importance of getting involved and having to rely on myself to get things done.” - Former UNIV 101/201 student.
A Common Reading Experience (CRE) program was piloted on NIU’s campus in the fall of 2008 in 10 sections of UNIV 101/201. The program continued in 2009 and 2010 with the selection of *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch and Jeffery Zaslow, and in 2011 and 2012 with the book *This I Believe II*, edited by Dan Gediman and Jay Allison. The book *Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation* by Eboo Patel was selected for the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 CRE, with all 89 UNIV 101/201 sections, as well as 28 instructors from the Department of English, participating in the 2014-2015 academic year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you heard of the Common Reading Experience (CRE)?</td>
<td>81 percent of on-campus UNIV students who completed the MAP-Works® Fall Transition Survey (n=1,214 out of 1,502 respondents) answered ‘yes.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With regard to the First Year CRE, have you or do you plan to attend an event?</td>
<td>36 percent of on-campus UNIV students who completed the MAP-Works® Fall Transition Survey (n=541 out of 1,502 respondents) answered ‘yes.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An NIU student shares a book with a young DeKalb resident at “Read to a Huskie,” a Common Reading Experience event at the DeKalb Public Library in September, 2014.
Campus events in conjunction with Eboo Patel’s Visit to NIU:

On Monday, October 27, NIU hosted Dr. Eboo Patel, author of this year’s Common Reading, Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, The Struggle for a Soul of a Generation and the Founder and President of the Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC). Three additional IFYC staff participated in events with NIU students, faculty, and staff as well. The presentation was entitled Many Beliefs, One Community.

Dialogue with Students
October 27, 12:00 p.m., Altgeld Hall, Room 315

Eboo Patel Luncheon
October 27, 1:00 p.m., Holmes Student Center, University Suite

Attendees included:
- **Eboo Patel**, Founder and Executive Director, Interfaith Youth Core
- **Anne Kaplan**, Vice President for Outreach, Engagement, and Information Technologies;
- **Sean Frazier**, Vice President for Athletics;
- **Anne Birberick**, Vice Provost;
- **Andrea Drott**, Chair of the Presidential Commission on the Status of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity;
- **William McCoy**, Director of the BELIEF Initiative;
- **Catherine Doederlein**, Chair of the Presidential Commission on the Status of Disabilities;
- **Felicia Bohanon**, Chair of the Presidential Commission on the Status of Minorities;
- **Jennifer Groce**, Director for Community Affairs for Outreach, Engagement, and Information Technologies;
- **Katrina Caldwell**, Assistant Vice President for Diversity & Equity;
- **LaVerne Gyant**, Director of the Center for Black Studies;
- **Nancy Castle**, Director of the Center for Non-Governmental Organization Leadership and Development;
- **Rebecca Hannagan**, Chair of the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women;
- **Denise Rode**, Director of First- and Second-Year Experience;
- **Kelly Smith**, Assistant Director of First- and Second-Year Experience;
- **Ellie Evins**, BetterTogether@NIU President and Student Coordinator for Interfaith Initiatives;
- **Afreen Warsi**, BetterTogether@NIU Vice President; and
- **Randa Kuziez, Kristi Del Vecchio, and April Mendez**, Interfaith Youth Core Staff Members.

BetterTogether@NIU Meeting
October 27, 2:00 p.m., Altgeld Hall, Room 100

Meeting with UNIV 101/201 Instructors
October 27, 2:30 p.m., Altgeld Hall, Room 125

Meeting with Campus and Community Faith Leaders
October 27, 4:00 p.m., Newman Catholic Student Center

Public Presentation by Eboo Patel
October 27, 6:30 p.m., Holmes Student Center, Carl Sandburg Auditorium

Book Signing and Mini Volunteer Fair
October 27, 7:30 p.m., Holmes Student Center, Gallery Lounge

Civic Reflection Discussion
October 27, 7:30 p.m., Holmes Student Center, Hunt Room
Author Visit Assessment

Eboo Patel gave two presentations during his visit: an afternoon dialogue which was attended by approximately 130 NIU students and faculty, and an evening public presentation which was attended by approximately 1,000 students, faculty, staff, and community members.

Learning objectives for the public presentations included:
• Participants will discover the value of exhibiting intercultural competencies with people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives;
• Participants will be inspired to make a commitment to service and community involvement;
• Participants will be inspired to think about how their beliefs contribute to their actions;
• Participants will learn how acts of service can bring people together from diverse backgrounds; and
• Participants will be inspired to collaborate productively with diverse individuals towards achieving specific common goals.

These CRE Learning Objectives align directly with the University’s Student Learning Objectives. At the completion of the presentations, feedback was collected from attendees regarding their views on community involvement, collaboration, beliefs, social justice, and service. A sample of participant comments follows:

• “I feel inspired to take full advantage of my time here at NIU. Although four years may seem like a long time now, it’s actually really short when you think of your life. College is a unique chance to focus on yourself and developing who you want to become years down the road and what legacy you want to leave.”
• “I want to know what people can do within the community or university to engage in diverse situations with people of different backgrounds.”
• “I feel inspired to teach tolerance and show that everyone has a right to their opinion and way of believing.”
• “I recognize that being aware of working together with others from different backgrounds helps me fully understand the basis of other people’s beliefs, using this knowledge to supplement and strength my own faith as well as my understanding of religious plurality.”
• “I feel inspired to explore different religious beliefs and culture, to educate myself in order to reduce stigma and misunderstanding.”

“\[I learned that religion plays an important role in not only our daily lives, but also in the workplace and society. It is good to have an understanding of different religions in order to be an educated American.\]”
- Feedback from a student who attended Eboo Patel’s presentation on October 27, 2014.
An analysis of attendees’ comments revealed the following themes:

### Resulting Themes

- Encouraged to be more open-minded
- Motivated to develop relationships with others
- Inspired to learn about other cultures and beliefs
- Inspired to be a leader
- Motivated to explore self-identity
- General positive feedback
- Inspired to take action
- Random comments

Following the evening public presentation by Eboo Patel, several students expressed interest in further engaging in interfaith work and service opportunities with the NIU campus and community:

- Twenty-nine students expressed interest and provided contact information for the BetterTogether@NIU organization;
- Seventeen students expressed interest and provided contact information for the Spring Interfaith Dialogue series;
- Six students expressed interest and provided contact information for involvement in future service projects; and
- Twenty students signed up to volunteer or receive information from multiple organizations at the Mini-Volunteer Fair.

A group of second-year NIU volunteers at the DeKalb Public Library poses with youth from the DeKalb community.
Committee Members

Bobbie Cole
Associate Director for Residential Education
Housing & Dining

Steve Leon Estes
Director of Academic Advising
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Ellen Franklin
Assistant Director
First-Year Composition, English

Jason Goode
Assistant to Associate Vice Provost for University Honors
University Honors Program

Aaron Hill
Complex Coordinator (Gilbert Complex)
Housing & Dining

Teresa Iversen
Reference Department Manager
DeKalb Public Library

Dino Martinez
Associate Director of Student Recruitment & Assessment
Housing & Dining

Tim Pierce
COMS 101 Instructor Coordinator
Communication

Chris Porterfield
Professional Services
First- and Second-Year Experience

Denise Rode
Director
First- and Second-Year Experience

Alicia Schatteman
Assistant Professor
Political Science

Kelly Smith
Assistant Director
First- and Second-Year Experience

Steve Torres-Roman
Librarian
DeKalb Public Library

Sheela Vemu
Professional Services
Literacy & Elementary Education

Common Reading Experience Event Series

In addition to Eboo Patel’s visit to campus, First- and Second-Year Experience sponsored six service events as part of the Common Reading Experience event series in fall 2014.

Read to a Huskie
Saturday, September 27, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
DeKalb Public Library

Twenty-two volunteers joined Victor E. Huskie on Saturday, September 27, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the DeKalb Public Library to help children learn by reading with a child from the DeKalb and Sycamore communities.

Volunteers reported the following comments:

- After working with others from different backgrounds and beliefs than my own, “I learned that if we set aside our differences we can be a more cohesive unit and work more efficiently.”
- As a result of this service participation, “I was able to see how active this community is with NIU and [I appreciate] the value of education from a young age.”
Common Reading Experience Events

Feed ‘Em Soup
Sunday, October 19, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday, October 21, 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Fourteen students volunteered their time to help wash dishes, prepare food, and clean the restaurant. The work that was done supported Feed ‘Em Soup, a buffet-style restaurant in DeKalb for individuals facing food insecurity, in serving meals to members of the community free of charge.

Volunteers reported the following comments:
• After this volunteer experience, “I feel that it was an honor to be able to work with other people from different backgrounds, and it has changed my view of my peers.”
• After this volunteer experience, “I feel like NIU students greatly contribute to DeKalb’s community through service.”

Feed My Starving Children Food Pack
Friday, November 14, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 15, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Suter Company, Sycamore

4,713 volunteers (36 registered through FSYE) helped pack meals at the Feed My Starving Children Food Pack event at the Suter Company in Sycamore. This year, $232,278 was raised and 1,055,808 meals were packed over four days.

Volunteers reported the following comments:
• After volunteering at Feed My Starving Children, “I now feel that I have a means to do my part to help end world hunger. It is awesome that there are organizations that dedicate themselves to ending such a prevalent issue in our world.”
• “As a result of this service participation, I have a deeper understanding of the connection between the NIU, DeKalb, and Sycamore communities. Seeing people of all ages and backgrounds come together for a great cause was an experience I will never forget.”

Fast-a-Thon during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week
Thursday, November 20
All-day event

BetterTogether@NIU

As part of the 2014 Common Reading Experience initiatives, a new campus student organization – BetterTogether@NIU – was formed. According to BetterTogether@NIU President and FSYE Student Coordinator for Interfaith Initiatives, Ellie Evins, “With the creation of a student-run interfaith organization on campus (BetterTogether@NIU), NIU is moving closer to a campus that practices interfaith cooperation and understanding between people of different religious and belief practices. By engaging the students and putting them at the forefront of this movement, we are furthering the progress of The Interfaith Youth Core on campus and within the DeKalb community.”
Common Reading Experience Acknowledgements

NIU Interfaith Committee

Ana Blechschmidt
Circle Sanctuary Campus Ministries

Paulette Bowman
Outreach & Engagement Assistant
Center for P-20 Engagement

Angela Branson
Associate Director for Professional Development
Office of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

Paul Crawford
Director of Community College Relations
PASCAL Initiatives
Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development

Sherine Elsawa
Assistant Professor
Biological Sciences
Advisor, Muslim Students Association

Eleanor Evins
Student Coordinator for Interfaith Initiatives
First- and Second-Year Experience
President, BetterTogether@NIU

Jennifer Groce
Director for Community Affairs
Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development

Mini Volunteer Fair Participants

Alpha Phi Omega
BetterTogether@NIU
DeKalb Area Women’s Center
Heartland Blood Center
Kishwaukee United Way
Muslim Student Association
Voluntary Action Center
NGOLD Office
NIU CAUSE
Thrive Market and Neighborhood Garden
Goodwill DeKalb Community Resource Room
Huskies Student Food Pantry

Lucero Martinez
Graduate Assistant
Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning

Bill McCoy
Director
BELIEF Initiative
College of Business

Destiny McDonald
Assistant Director for Community Service
Student Involvement & Leadership Development

Kathryn Olson
Americorps Vista
Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning

Andrew Pemberton
Outreach and Engagement Associate
Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development

Denise Rode
Director
First- and Second-Year Experience

Kelly Smith
Assistant Director
First- and Second-Year Experience

Afreen Warsi
Vice President, BetterTogether@NIU

Eboo Public Presentation Sponsors/Supporters

First- and Second-Year Experience
Division of Academic Affairs
Division of Outreach, Engagement, & Regional Development
Center for P-20 Engagement
Office of the President
Office of the Provost
Association of Campus Religious Organizations
Common Reading Experience Acknowledgements

Instructors Incorporating the Common Reading Experience:

All UNIV 101/201 instructors

Maria Alderson
Instructor
English

Katie Andraski
Instructor
English

Andre Berchiolly
Graduate Assistant
English

John Bradley
Instructor
English

Suzanne Coffield
Instructor
English

Jesse Conrad
Graduate Assistant
English

Lindsey Crane
Graduate Assistant
English

Doug DePalma
Graduate Assistant
English

Adam Dietz
Graduate Assistant
English

Susan Dorbeck
Instructor
English

David Durian
Graduate Assistant
English

Erica Durian
Graduate Assistant
English

Carie Gauthier
Graduate Assistant
English

Aaron Geiger
Graduate Assistant
English

Hanna Glaser
Graduate Assistant
English

Jeanne Jakubowski
Instructor
English

Lori Lawson
Instructor
English

Dan Libman
Instructor
English

Bryan Mead
Graduate Assistant
English

Tiffany Messick
Graduate Assistant
English

Agustin Morado
Graduate Assistant
English

Joseph Mysliwiec
Instructor
English

Ben Parker
Graduate Assistant
English

John Price
Graduate Assistant
English

Charles Stapleton
Graduate Assistant
English

Crystal Sturgeon
Graduate Assistant
English

Liz Swisher
Instructor
English

Lauren Tabakhi
Graduate Assistant
English

SECOND-YEAR EXPERIENCE

Mission Statement

The Second-Year Experience at Northern Illinois University assists students in exploring the unique critical issues and tasks of the second year of college. In partnership with the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, the Second-Year Experience intentionally provides support for students by:
• Connecting them to peers, faculty, staff, and campus resources in meaningful ways;
• Building class community in and out of the classroom;
• Defining academic and co-curricular goals for the NIU experience;
• Educating faculty, staff, and families about the challenges and opportunities in the second year; and
• Examining institutional policies and practices from a second-year perspective.

Sophomore Days of Service
February 2014

NIU’s Sophomore Days of Service (SDoS) give second-year students an opportunity to make an impact on campus and in the DeKalb community in a brief (one-to three-hour), one-time volunteer experience. Students often are looking to find a sense of purpose in their second year through their course work, their relationships, and out-of-class activities. One way in which students discover purpose is by helping others who can benefit from what they can offer. In the process, second-year students learn more about themselves and the communities around them. Each Day of Service begins with a quick orientation to the agency or group served, and ends with a brief reflection about the experience.

Approximately 100 students participated in the 2014 Sophomore Days of Service events, more than doubling the pilot year in 2013. Events also grew in number from four to eight, with potential for added sites in the future. Second-year students volunteered at the following locations:

Feed ‘em Soup
February 9, 2014
10 a.m. to 3 p.m., 122 South First Street, DeKalb
Kitchen preparation and clean-up

Senior Center Valentine’s Day Activities
February 13, 2014
8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., St. Mary Parish Hall, 244 Waterman Street, Sycamore
Served meals and beverages to couples who were married for at least 50 years

Hope Haven Homeless Shelter
February 15, 2014
10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., 1145 Rushmoore Drive, DeKalb
Interactive activities with children including reading, coloring, games, and karaoke

Feed ‘em Soup
February 16, 2014
10 a.m. to 3 p.m., 122 South First Street, DeKalb
Kitchen preparation and clean-up

NIU Campus Child Care
February 19, 2014
3 p.m. to 5 p.m., east side of Annie Glidden Road, DeKalb
Read and interacted with toddlers, pre-school, and early elementary children

DeKalb Public Library
February 22, 2014
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., 309 Oak Street, DeKalb
Created a mural with children

DeKalb County Rehabilitation & Nursing Center
February 25, 2014
3 p.m. to 5 p.m., 2600 North Annie Glidden Road, DeKalb
Visited with and read to senior citizens

Barb Food Mart
February 27, 2014
3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Huntley Middle School, 1515 South Fourth Street, DeKalb
Stocked and distributed food items to low-income families
Sophomore Days of Service Assessment

A two-page evaluation/reflection was completed by nearly all participants at the end of the events. All nine events were seen as valuable for both the volunteers and for those they were serving. Participants reported the following comments:

- “There are benefits for both the volunteers and also for those being helped. Volunteering teaches the importance of helping, and also makes those served feel cared about.”
- “Because of this event I am now more aware of the needs of the community.”
- “NIU plays such a huge role in helping out the community and I hope to be part of it more often.”
- “I think it’s great to be able to engage in service, because it makes you appreciate the things you take for granted.”
- “There are a lot of ways to give back to the DeKalb community, and this has made me more aware of [them].”

Emergent themes included:

- Some students confirmed a major choice; others decided to switch majors;
- Students became a part of and engaged in the larger NIU and DeKalb communities;
- Students expressed pride in their university;
- Students got to know each other better;
- Students became more aware of social justice issues;
- Students expressed that they wanted to continue serving (short-term and long-term); and
- Students gained valuable leadership skills and self-confidence.

Student volunteers recommended that Sophomore Days of Service be an ongoing annual event, and that all service sites be continued for the future. Some students also were hired as student employees to work at service sites.

Members of Lambda Sigma Sophomore Honor Society distribute groceries at the Barb Food Mart.
Second-Year Experience Events

Additional Y2@NIU Initiatives in 2014

Financial Aid, Scholarship, and Student Employment Resources for Second-Year Students
Wednesday, February 26, 7:00 p.m.
First- and Second-Year Experience, Housing & Dining, Financial Aid, Student Employment, Scholarship Office

Y2@NIU Newsletters
February and March/April 2014
First- and Second-Year Experience

Half-Way There Event
Tuesday, April 22, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Housing & Dining and First- and Second-Year Experience

Sophomore Etiquette Dinner
Tuesday, April 22, 5:00 p.m.
Housing & Dining and First- and Second-Year Experience

Sophomore Year Experience Brochure (Mailed to rising second-year students over the summer.)
July, 2014
First- and Second-Year Experience

Y2@NIU Kick-Off: Sophomore Welcome & Resource Fair
Monday, August 25, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
First- and Second-Year Experience and Housing & Dining

Second-Year Research and Artistry Opportunities and Ollie’s Frozen Custard
Thursday, September 4, 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
First- and Second-Year Experience and Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning

Internship Success Program Series
Five rotations of six sessions each, offered between September 8 and November 20
Career Services

Exploring Majors Fair
Tuesday, September 23, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Academic Advising Center

Study Abroad Fair
Thursday, September 25, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Study Abroad

Cupcakes and Conversation
Thursday, October 9, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
First- and Second-Year Experience

Internship Fair
Tuesday, October 21, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Career Services

Full-time Job Fair
Wednesday, October 22, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Career Services

Common Reading Experience Author Presentation
Monday, October 27, 6:30 p.m.
First- and Second-Year Experience

Second-Year Leadership Retreat
Saturday, November 1, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Housing & Dining and First- and Second-Year Experience

Feed My Starving Children
Friday, November 14, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Saturday, November 15, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Suter Company, Sycamore
First- and Second-Year Experience

Future objectives for Second-Year Experience initiatives include a SYE Alternative Spring Break, a Y2@NIU Living-Learning Community floor in the residence halls, Y2@NIU civic reflections, additional education for students regarding what service learning is and how it benefits students who engage in it, and generating more participation among second-year students.

“UNIV will help new students feel comfortable coming to a large campus like Northern’s.”
- Former UNIV 101/201 student.
Become Involved

Interested in helping first-year students with their transition to NIU? Willing to help a second-year student find purpose and develop leadership skills? Becoming involved with First- and Second-Year Experience is a great way to reach out. Opportunities are available for faculty and staff members to get involved with the Common Reading Experience, UNIV 101/201 as instructors, or Student Faculty Links as mentors. Please contact this office if you are interested in any of these opportunities.

First- and Second-Year Experience
Altgeld Hall, Room 100
(815) 753-0028
fsye@niu.edu
http://www.niu.edu/fsye/

First-year students show their NIU spirit as part of the UNIV “Huskie Pride Contest” (Fall 2014)