

Sophomore Year Programs

Valdosta State University

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R.I.S.E. Website

www.valdosta.edu/studentaffairs/rise



About Valdosta State University VALDOS STA

- Public, 4 year institution
- Located in south Georgia serving a service region of 41 counties
- Fall 2008 enrollment of 11,490
 - 9,708 Undergraduate
 - 1,782 Graduate
 - 40%+ of new students are from metro Atlanta (and growing)
- Approved for \$80K of funding through a competitive on-campus special initiative funding process.







Overview of Presentation

- ▶ Part I: Why focus on Sophomores?
 - Results of our research
- ▶ Part II: How has your institution focused on Sophomores?
 - Discussion
- ▶ Part III: VSU's Sophomore Model R.I.S.E.
 - Presentation of current efforts
 - Reaction, discussion, feedback, questions





Part I: Focus on Sophomores Research Results



Research Agenda

- 1. Researched SYE Programs throughout the country
 - National Resource Center for First Year Programs and Students in Transition
 - Custom research report from Hanover (literature review)
- 2. Institutional Review & Data Analysis
 - Identified seven institutions for in-depth analysis
 - Developed interview guides
 - Conducted 1 hour+ phone interviews with seven institutions
 - Pulled IPEDS data for seven institutions
- 3. Researched Sophomores at VSU
 - Survey of students (Student Voice)
 - Focus Groups



Creation of SYP Advisory Board

- Vice President for Student Affairs
- Assistant to the President for Strategic Research and Analysis
- > Dean of Students
- Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Director of Advising
- Freshman Year Experience Coordinator

- Director of Career Services
- > VSU Counselor
- Residential SuccessInitiatives Coordinator
- Institutional Research Analyst
- Coordinator of Orientation& Leadership Programs
- > Student Success Center

Advisors



Sophomore Year Programs Background



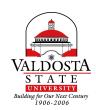
VSU hired the Hanover Research Council to analyze and discuss the existing literature surrounding Sophomore Year Experience (SYE) programs in the United States. The following is a summary of the completed literature review:

- Why implement a Sophomore Year Program?
 - To combat the nationally recognized "sophomore slump" that students encounter during their second year.
- What is the "Sophomore Slump"?





Sophomore Year Programs Background



- Common Features of SYE Programming
 - Academic Advising
 - Career Guidance
 - Residential Policies
 - Curricular Initiatives
 - Sophomore Orientations, Web Pages, Handbooks



- Suggested Strategies for Developing an SYE Program
 - Developing a "Sophomore Experience Working Group" to develop sophomore-specific programming.
 - Developing a "date-driven" SYE initiative to identify strengths and weaknesses of the university.
 - Conducting sophomore focus groups and a non-returners survey.



Source: Hanover: Sophomore Year Experience Programs in American Higher Education, July 2008.

Sophomore Year Programs Background



- Suggested Strategies for Developing an SYE Program (cont.)
 - Reshaping, repackaging, and redirecting resources that are already available.





Source: Hanover: Sophomore Year Experience Programs in American Higher Education, July 2008.



Institutional Review and Data Analysis

Institution	Goals	Academic Component	Programmatic Component
Emory University*	√	X	✓
Tulane University*	√	✓	✓
Rowan University	√	X	✓
Colgate University*	√	*	✓
University of South Carolina	√	*	*
Beloit University	√	✓	✓
Colorado College*	√	*	√

l*Private Universities





IPEDS Data

- A detailed data analysis using the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) demonstrating similarities and differences between VSU and the seven selected institutions. The measures for comparison included:
 - Locale.
 - Carnegie Classification (using 2000 and 2005 definitions).
 - Admissions Standards.
 - Enrollment.

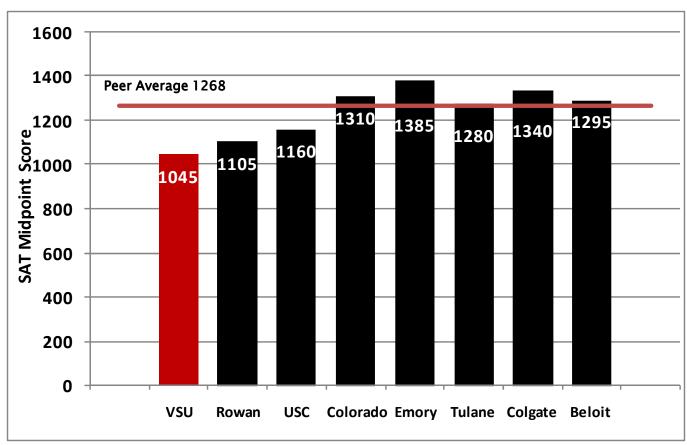
- Graduation and Transfer Rates.
- Operating Expenditures.
- Total Expenditures per Student Headcount.
- Student to Faculty Ratios.
- Headcount Enrollment.





Admission Standards

EXHIBIT 1: AVERAGE SAT SCORE BY SELECTED INSTITUTION ENTERING FRESHMEN, 2007



* Represents the midpoint between the sums of the 25th percentile math and verbal and 75th percentile math and verbal scores on the respective aptitude tests.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), 2007

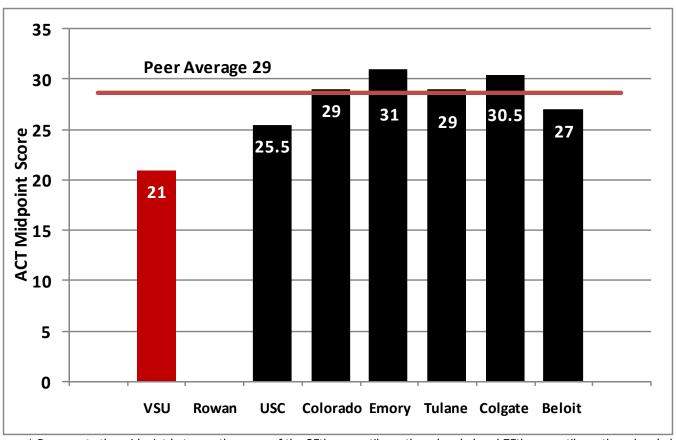
Institutional Characteristics data.





Admission Standards

EXHIBIT 2: AVERAGE ACT SCORE BY SELECTED INSTITUTION ENTERING FRESHMEN, 2007



* Represents the midpoint between the sums of the 25th percentile math and verbal and 75th percentile math and verbal scores on the respective aptitude tests.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), 2007

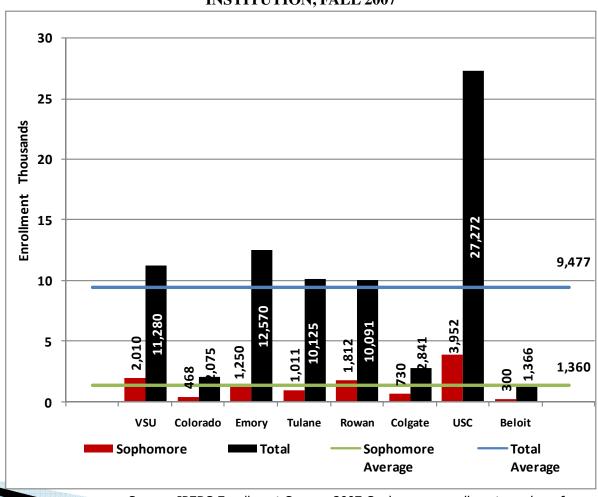
Institutional Characteristics data.





Selected Institutions - Enrollment

EXHIBIT 3: SOPHOMORE AND TOTAL ENROLLMENT BY SELECTED INSTITUTION, FALL 2007





Source: IPEDS Enrollment Survey, 2007 Sophomore enrollment numbers from school websites and phone interviews.



EXHIBIT 4: FALL SOPHOMORE STUDENT ENROLLMENT TREND, 2001 THROUGH 2007

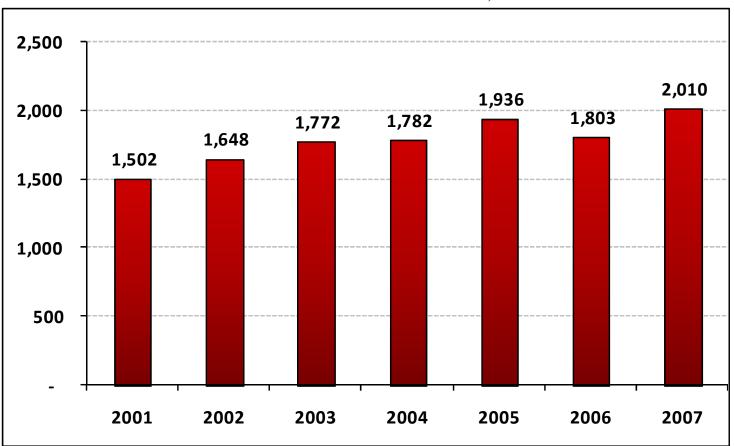






EXHIBIT 5:FALL SOPHOMORE ENROLLMENT TREND BY GENDER, 2001 THROUGH 2007

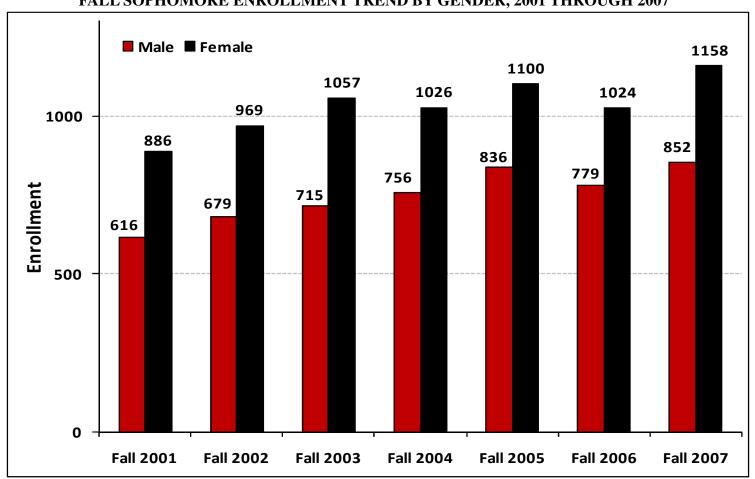






EXHIBIT 6: SOPHOMORE ENROLLMENT BY ETHNICITY, FALL 2007

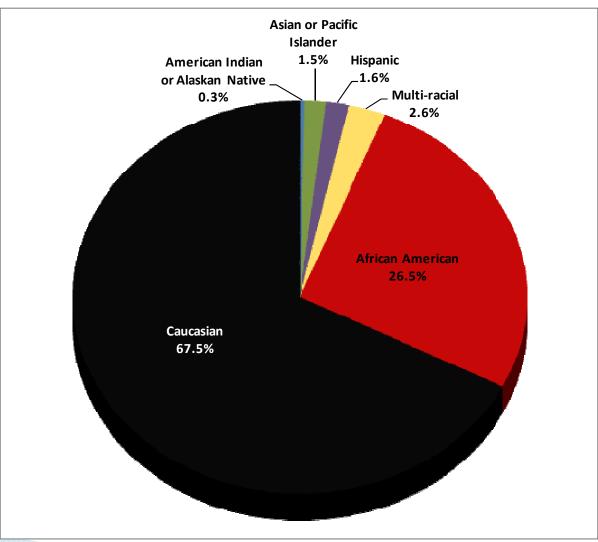
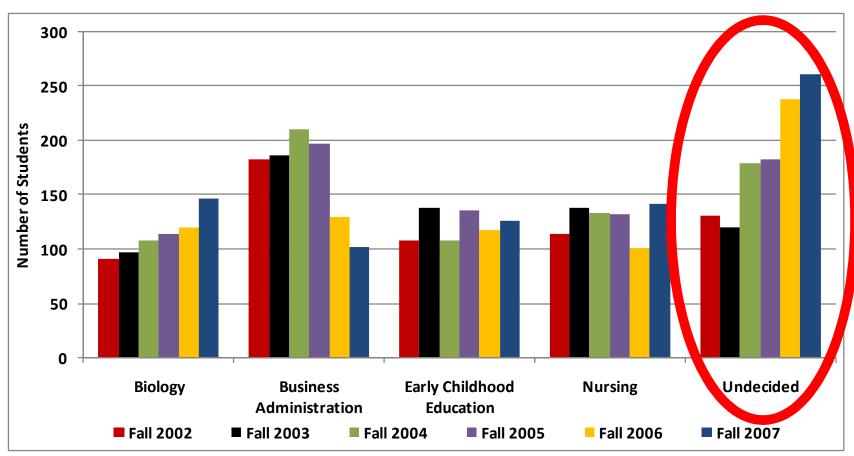






EXHIBIT 7: TOP FIVE MAJORS OF SOPHOMORE STUDENTS, FALL 2002 TO FALL 2007

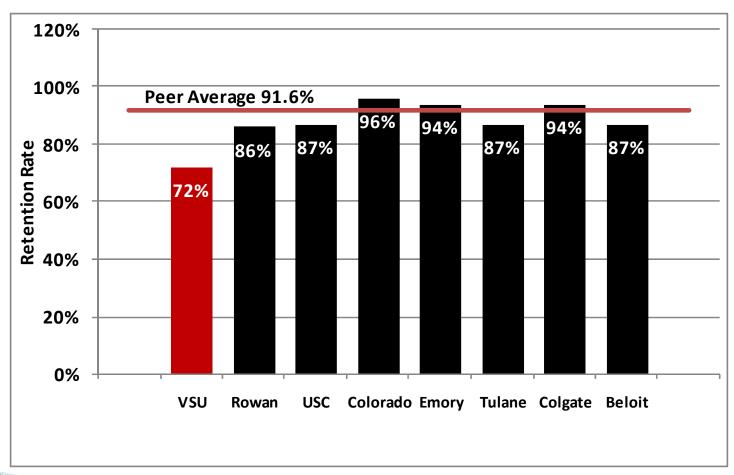






Selected Institutions - Retention

EXHIBIT 8: RETENTION RATES FIRST-TIME FULL-TIME FRESHMAN, 2006 ENTERING COHORT



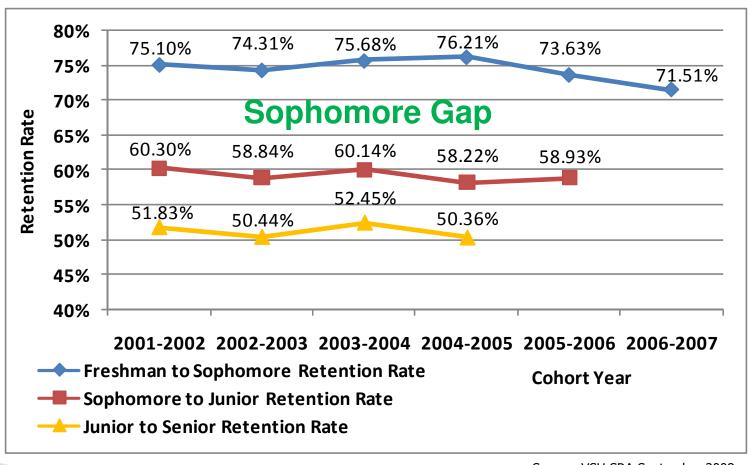
Source: IPEDS Enrollment Survey, 2007.





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EXHIBIT 9: RETENTION RATES FOR ENTERING COHORTS 2001-2006



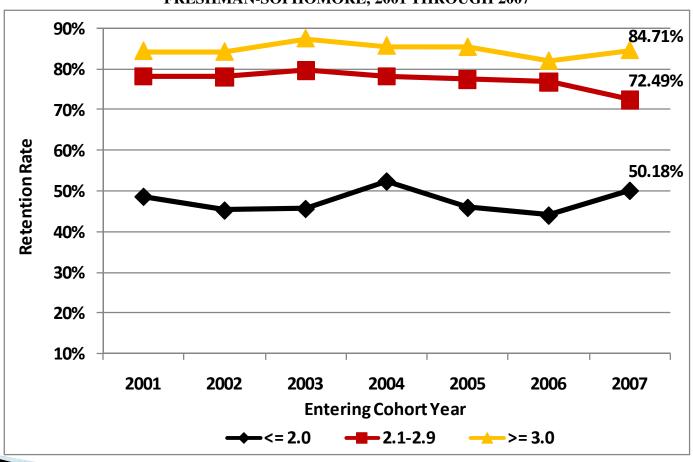
Source: VSU SRA September 2008.

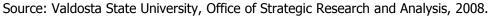




Retention Rates (cont.)

EXHIBIT 10: RETENTION RATES FOR ENTERING FRESHMAN COHORT BY FIRST-SEMESTER GPA FRESHMAN-SOPHOMORE, 2001 THROUGH 2007



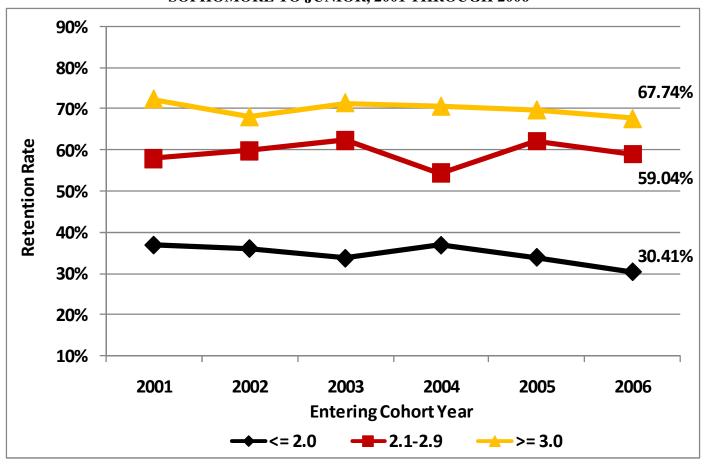






Retention Rates (cont.)

EXHIBIT 11: RETENTION RATES FOR ENTERING FRESHMAN COHORT BY FIRST SEMESTER GPA SOPHOMORE TO JUNIOR, 2001 THROUGH 2006





Researched Sophomores at VSU

VSU sophomores, juniors, and seniors to gain information on perceived needs of sophomore students and particularly challenging areas for sophomores that have been identified through research.

The following slides provide an overview of those results.





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Exhibit 12: Demographics of Survey Respondents, Fall 2008

Student Demographics	Number of Respondents	Percent
Academic Classification		
Sophomore	452	24.53%
Junior	611	33.15%
Senior	780	42.32%
Sex		
Male	577	31.05%
Female	1281	68.95%
Housing Status		
On Campus	188	10.20%
Off Campus	1655	89.80%
College		
College of Arts & Sciences	636	34.23%
College of Business Admin	256	13.78%
College of Education	573	30.84%
College of Nursing	115	6.19%
College of the Arts	278	14.96%







Exhibit 13: Sophomore Students' Interest in Sophomore-Specific Events/Programs, Fall 2008

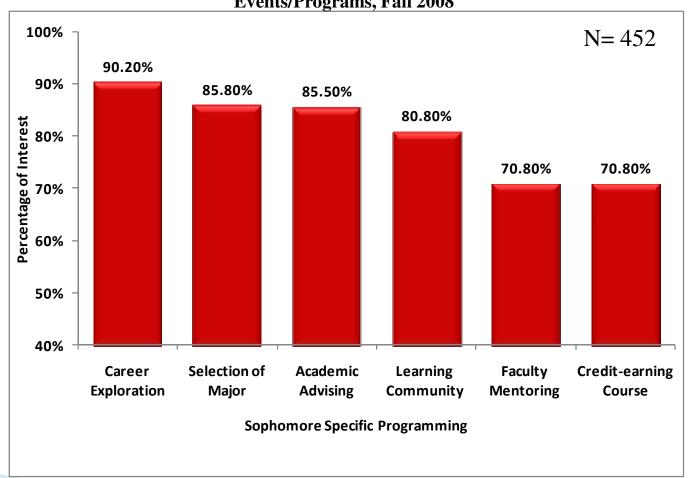




Exhibit 14: Students' Likelihood of Participating in Sophomore-Specific Events/Programs, Fall 2008

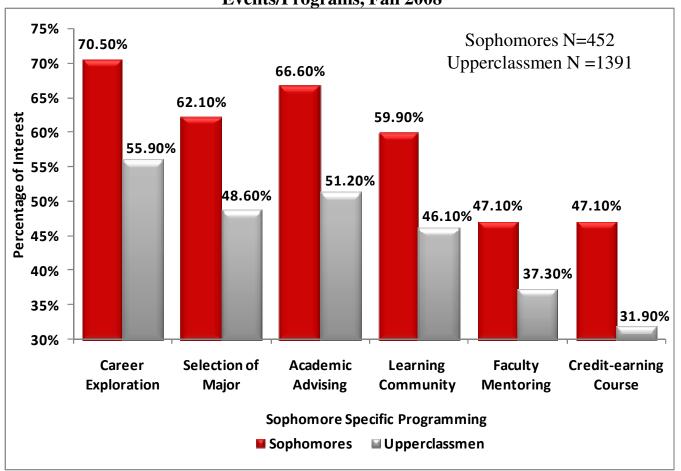
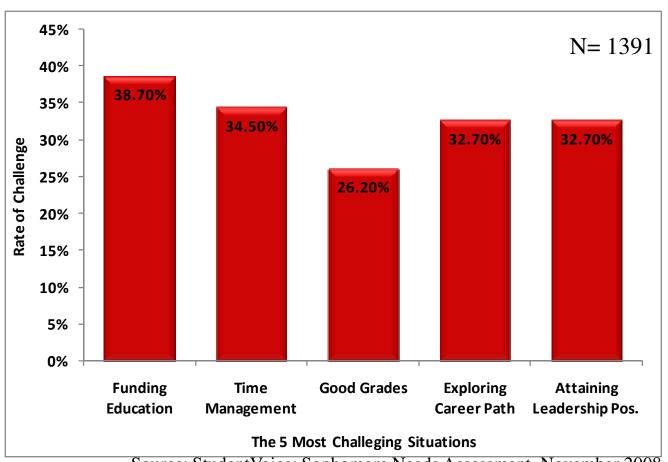








Exhibit 15: Upperclassmen Students' Perceptions of Most Challenging Situations, Fall 2008







Researched Sophomores at VSU

Exhibit 16: Sophomore Students' Perception of Advisor Effectiveness, Fall 2008

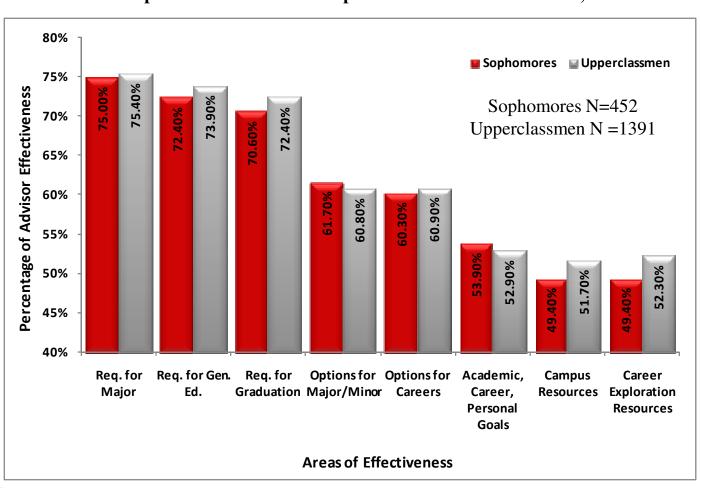
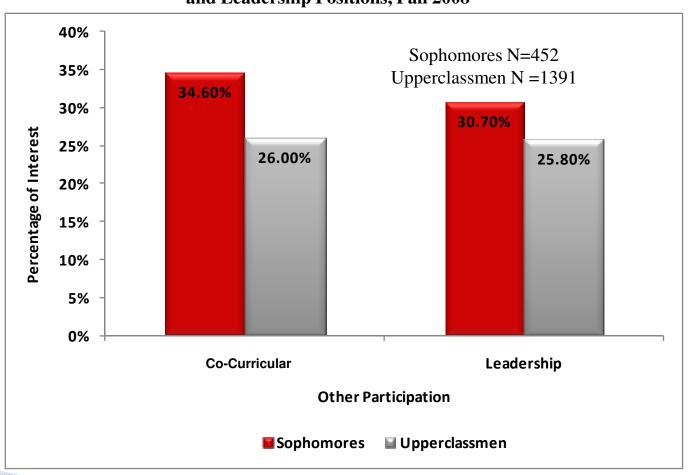






Exhibit 17: Sophomore Students' Overall Interest in Co-Curricular Groups and Leadership Positions, Fall 2008









➤ Sophomore-Specific Programming

 Sophomores and Upperclassmen identified the same 6 events/programs:

- Career Exploration
- Selection of Major
- Academic Advising
- Learning Community
- Faculty Mentoring Program
- Credit-Earning Course

> Advisor Effectiveness

 Overall, students indicated their advisor is effective at helping them in a variety of areas, therefore it would be beneficial to explore the strategies that advisors are using to gain insight into what makes them effective.





Leadership and Involvement

- Based on the survey results, a surprisingly high percentage of students are not particularly interested in extra-curricular activities, so it may be best to refrain from approaching any sophomore program as "extra-curricular."
- The most frequent obstacle students encounter is a lack of knowledge of where to find leadership opportunities.





- ➤ Major and Career Exploration
 - Students seem to be utilizing non-VSU resources, so by including the Career Services staff in the program students' awareness and use of the services offered may increase.
- Sense of Belonging and Institutional Support

 Nearly half of sophomores and a third of upperclassmen do not have someone to whom they can discuss their academic

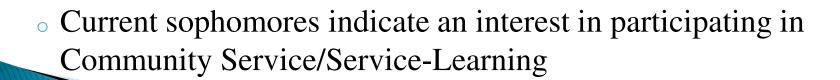






Other Useful Information

- 28.6% of upperclassmen indicated their needs changed as they transitioned from a first-year student to a sophomore in the following ways:
 - Choosing the right major
 - Time management skills
 - Becoming a better student
 - Adapting to a more difficult workload
 - Adapting to living off campus





Researched Sophomores at VSU Focus Groups

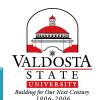
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 1906-2006
- A total of eight Focus Groups were conducted with current VSU students.
 - These eight groups were comprised of:
 - Three freshman groups
 - Three sophomore groups
 - Two upperclassmen groups



- Summary of Freshman group results:
 - Overall Experience: Students desire to gain more independence during their second year by moving off campus and getting a job.
 - <u>Programming</u>: Students are drawn to programs such as Freshman Year
 Experience (FYE), Greek Life, and Campus Activities Board (CAB).
 - <u>Academics</u>: Students are unsure of majors because they have yet to take any classes pertaining to their prospective or declared majors.







- Summary of Sophomore group results:
 - Overall Experience: Students feel slightly disconnected due to moving off campus, but desire to keep acquired independence.
 - <u>Programming</u>: Students living off campus feel less informed of programs occurring on campus.
 - <u>Academics</u>: Students are having more difficulty with timemanagement skills and staying on a budget. Students find it challenging to balance their academics, jobs, and social lives.









- Summary of Upperclassmen results:
 - Overall Experience: Students wish they had stayed on campus for their sophomore year due to the disconnect they felt after leaving.
 - <u>Programming</u>: Students would have been interested in participating in sophomore-specific programming. They feel it would have helped them adjust quicker to the differences between their first and second year.
 - <u>Academics</u>: Students would have benefited from exposure to their major before declaring. Students found it difficult to declare a major with their only course experience dealing with core classes.





Recommendations Overview

- Based on the information received from the phone interviews and data analysis, the recommendations are based on six main categories:
 - Background
 - Leadership
 - Eligibility
 - Measurement and Evaluation
 - Associated Costs
 - Proposed Additions







Recommendations

List of Categories and Recommendations:

- Background of the Program:
 - Recommendation #1: Spend at least 1 year developing program.
 - Recommendation #2: Brand program and market logo should be created throughout the campus before program's implementation.
- Leadership of the Program:
 - Recommendation #3: There should be one distinct coordinator for the program.
 - Recommendation #4: To allow for campus-wide support, get faculty and staff involved in the planning and development period from the beginning.





Recommendations

List of Categories and Recommendations:

- > Eligibility for the Program:
 - Recommendation #5: All sophomore students should be eligible for the program.
- Measurement and Evaluation of the Program:
 - Recommendation #6: Scheduled, yearly assessment should be done on the program by the coordinator.
 - Recommendation #7: The most largely unsuccessful components of the program has proven to be the academic component due to lack of faculty and staff involvement and lack of planning before implementation of the academic component.





Recommendations (cont.)

List of Categories and Recommendations:

- Associated Costs of the Program:
 - Recommendation #8: There should be a specific budget allocated for the program including an allocation for travel and programming expenses. Sponsorships help to alleviate programming costs.
- > Future Additions to the Program:
 - Recommendation #9: A majority of institutions are currently in the process of developing and implementing a new academic component due to lack of long-term success.
 - Recommendation #10: Establish short-term and long-term goals before implementation of the program.





Part II: Your Institutions' Focus on Sophomores



Discussion



Part III: VSU's Sophomore Model R.I.S.E.



R.I.S.E. - VSU's Model



Reveal Potential. Ignite Independence. Seek Possibilities. Explore Purpose.





Mission of R.I.S.E.

The mission of R.I.S.E. at Valdosta State University is to encourage **second-year students** to participate in programs and activities that promote **education** and the **development** of the individual. The students will be aided in developing their own **goals** and **purpose**, while working in partnership with involved faculty, staff, and departments for resources and guidance.

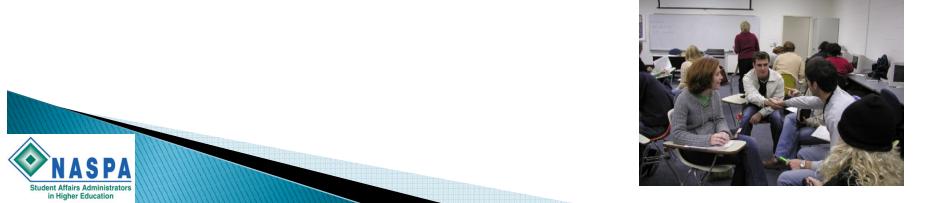
VSU recognized as "Titletown USA" in August of 2008





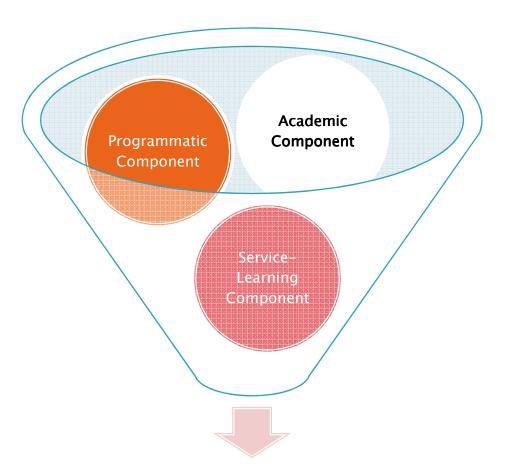
Goals of R.I.S.E.

- Increase graduation and retention rate of all secondyear students to their junior year by targeting those who are or may be potentially at-risk through programming that will aid in the following areas:
 - Identifying an academic direction and/or career path
 - Solidifying a bond with the university
 - Increasing engagement between faculty/staff and students









VSU's Sophomore Year Program





Fall 2009 Programming - R.I.S.E. 5 STA

- "We're Glad YOU'RE Here"
- "Bridging the G.A.P.P."
- 3. "R.I.S.E. Around the World"
- 4. "R.I.S.E. to the Occasion"
- 5. "R.I.S.E. Into Your Major"









"We're Glad YOU'RE Here"

Description:

Pack" and "We're glad you're here" events. It will consist of a R.I.S.E. Tailgate Tent at the first football game of the season.

Scheduling:

This event will be at Drexel Park before the first home football game.



"Bridging the G.A.P.P." (Graduate Assistant Peer Program)

Description:

• Graduate students will serve as mentors to willing sophomore students. This program will be in conjunction with the Higher Education Master's Program with an intern.

Scheduling:

This will be an ongoing program beginning in the Fall of 2009.





"R.I.S.E. Around the World"

Description:

R.I.S.E. will have a Study Abroad panel consisting of 3-4 students, who will host a question and answer session regarding their experiences as study abroad students.

Scheduling:

This panel will be ongoing occurring once in the Fall and in the Spring.





"R.I.S.E. to the Occasion"

Description:

On a monthly basis, selected faculty members from an academic college will attend a Sodexhosponsored on-campus lunch/dinner with 3-7 sophomore students.

Scheduling:

At the beginning of every month, an academic college will be featured and a predetermined faculty member will engage interested students in discussion over lunch/dinner.





"R.I.S.E. Into Your Major"

Description:

Students will be able to explore a variety of options and potential career opportunities within a chosen/prospective major with guidance from successful alumni from VSU. Alumni will host a Major/Career Fair specifically for sophomore students.

Scheduling: This event will occur once in the Fall and in the Spring.





Program Promotion

- Included on Calendar for Fall Explosion
- Door tags in Residence Halls
- ▶ T-shirt Giveaways
- Brochure and Letter from VP of Student Affairs sent to home of upcoming sophomore in summer
- R.I.S.E. Website
 www.valdosta.edu/studentaffairs/rise
- ▶ R.I.S.E. Campus Tour to freshman classes





Promotional Materials

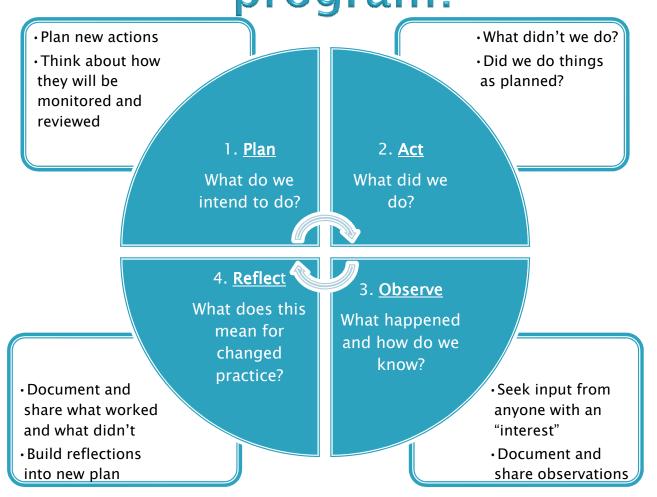
- ▶ T-shirts
- Sweat towels
- Chapstick
- Koozies
- Croakies
- ID Holder/Key Chain





How will VSU measure the program?





Source: Ferrance, E. (2000). Action research. The Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University. Retrieved September 24, 2008, from http://www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/themes_ed/act_research.pdf.

How will VSU measure the program?



- 1. Focus Groups
 - With students currently in program
 - With faculty and staff members (SYE Committee)

2. Surveys

- Short surveys after each program
- Surveys sent through email every 6 months and/or year
- 3. Data from Academic Component
 - Extent to which previously decided upon student learning outcomes are met
 - Grades from students



VSU General Education Outcomes

- Students will express themselves clearly, logically, and precisely in writing and in speaking, and they will demonstrate competence in reading and listening."
- Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze, to evaluate, and to make inferences from oral, written, and visual materials."
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of principles of ethics and their employment in the analysis and resolution of moral problems."

Source: Valdosta State University, 2008, Retrieved September 22, 2008, from http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/VSUGeneralEducationOutcomes.shtml





In Conclusion...

- "Nourishing Partnerships for Lifelong Learning"
 - Collaborating with offices
 - Strategic Research & Analysis assisted with obtaining funding, serves on the advisory board, directed research phase (IPEDS analysis, phone interviews, negotiated contracts/work with Hanover and Student Voice)
 - RISE Advisory Board representatives across campus that play a role in the success of RISE (Academic Affairs, multiple areas within Student Affairs, Strategic Research & Analysis)





Questions?













For more Information:



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