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ABSTRACT

In an effort to determine whether OR 100, a college success orientation seminar offered at New Jersey's Cumberland County College (CCC), should be upgraded to a college-level course and whether OR 101, a one-unit orientation course, should be required of all students, CCC surveyed 288 two- and four-year institutions in New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania regarding courses accepted as transfer credits and current offerings. Completed questionnaires were received from 86 institutions, 21 of which were two-year colleges and 56 of which were private institutions. Study results included the following: (1) 60% of the responding institutions indicated that they would not accept OR 100 in transfer, compared to 33% that would; (2) CCC orientation courses were considered transferable at approximately the same rate by two- and four-year colleges; (3) 37% of the institutions indicated that a freshman seminar or equivalent orientation was a requirement; and (4) similar to CCC practice, this course was offered by the student services department at 26% of the reporting institutions, while 76% of the time the course was offered for credit. (KP)

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## Cumberland County College Orientation Course Survey

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CUMBERLAND COUNTY COLLEGE  
Orientation Course Survey  
Office of Advisement  
November, 1994.

Introduction

In the Spring 1994, the Curriculum Committee recommended that certain information be gathered concerning our orientation course offerings. For a number of years, issues surrounding campus orientation courses have been a growing concern among the faculty and administration. Three of the most discussed questions circulating are:

- 1) Should OR 100 (3:3:0) College Success Seminar be changed to OR 110 and upgraded to a college level course?
- 2) Should OR 101 (1:1:0) College 101 or another orientation course be made an institutional requirement for all or part of the entering freshman class?
- 3) Should the institution institute a required exit course for all or part of the student body?

Purpose of this Survey

This survey was conducted to provide information requested specifically by the Curriculum Committee concerning the transferability of our various orientation courses. This inquiry resulted from a proposal to upgrade OR 100 to a college level course. The college offers four courses in this area generally taught by the student services staff.

OR 100 College Success Seminar (3 credits) - Offered initially by the EOF Department as a program requirement, this is the most popular and most frequently offered of all the OR courses. Eight to ten sections carry each academic year and many are over enrolled. It is open to all students but tends to be dominated by first semester EOF, Student

Support Services, or other basic or developmental level students.

OR 101 College 101 (1 credit) - Viewed as the course that would be the institutional orientation requirement should this action be brought about. Although two to three sections are on the schedule each semester, few ever carry due to insufficient enrollments.

OR 102 Career Development (3 credits) - This course is taken by students in developmental studies who need to attend full-time, and is also recommended to those who have yet to designate a major.

OR 103 Learning Strategies (3 Credits) - Although this course has yet to be included in the college catalog, it is the designated orientation course for students within Project Assist, and enrollment is limited to that (learning disabled) student population. The course has carried each semester for a number of years.

#### Sampling and Data Gathering Procedures

The Higher Education Directory (1990) was used to identify all colleges and universities, both two- and four-year in New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania. Two hundred and eighty-eight (288) institutions were mailed the survey form with a cover letter explaining its purpose. The surveys were mailed in July 1994, and those that were returned were received by mid October. There was no follow-up done. Of the 288 mailed surveys, nine were returned by colleges that had either closed or moved. Eighty-six completed surveys were returned for a response rate of 30 percent.

The returned surveys contained many omissions. In the tables that were constructed to display the results, omissions were overlooked and percentages were calculated based on the number of responses to each individual item. Of the 86 returned surveys, 21 were from two-year

colleges and 65 represented four-year institutions. Thirty public and 56 private institutions responded (see Table 2).

The survey instrument was developed by the student services administrative members and was expanded to incorporate information beyond the transfer issues requested by the Curriculum Committee (see Appendix I). It was felt that additional information would be useful for future planning and decision making regarding these four courses.

#### Summary of Responses

OR 100 is the only "pre college" of the four orientation courses (designated by its 100 course number), but it transfers at greater proportions than its three counterparts. Table I contains the information requested by the Curriculum Committee. At the time, OR 100 was the topic of discussion concerning whether the course number should be upgraded. It appears that 60 percent of all responding institutions will not accept OR 100 in transfer, however, 33 percent do award transfer credit for the course. If you compare Tables 3 and 4 with Table 1, you will see that the transfer ratios of these orientation courses with two- and four-year colleges is about the same. Generally, OR 100 will transfer as a free elective about one third of the time.

About 37 percent of the institutions contained herein have a Freshman Seminar or equivalent orientation course required of incoming freshman students (see Table 2). Seventy-six percent of the time this requirement is offered for credit. Although colleges vary in the amount of credit they award for orientation courses, 43 percent of the time it is a one-credit course. Just 20 percent of the time is this course offered for three credits.

The course is taught by just about everyone; faculty, counselors and administrators all appear to have a hand in the delivery of

orientation courses, but it is most frequently taught by the instructional faculty. These courses are most often scheduled within a normal semester. Only 21 percent of the time are the courses condensed into the first part of a semester.

The intent of this survey was to provide information, not to make recommendations. The information provided here should add considerable light onto questions 1 and 2 posed in the introduction.

Table 1

Responses from 2-year and 4-year Colleges Combined on  
Transferability of Orientation Courses

This course would most likely:	OR 100		OR 101		OR 102		OR 103	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Be accepted for transfer credit as a free elective toward the Bachelors.	27	33	23	28	24	30	18	23
Be accepted, but not applied toward graduation requirements.	5	6	6	7	5	6	4	5
Be accepted only if the student transferred with an Associates Degree.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Not applied for transfer credit.	50	60	53	64	51	63	57	71
Total responses/percent	83	100	83	100	81	100	80	100

Table 2

## Cumulative Responses to Various Questions on Survey

1. Is Freshman Seminar, or equivalent orientation course, a requirement at your institution?				
	yes - 31 (37%)		no - 53 (63%)	
2. What department does the course fall under at your college?				
	Student Services	18	(26%)	
	Social/Behavioral Science	4	(6%)	
	decentralized	10	(15%)	
	not applicable	15	(22%)	
	other	21	(39%)	
3. Who teaches Freshman Seminar/Orientation courses at your college?				
	psychology faculty	1	(1%)	
	all faculty	26	(36%)	
	counselors	15	(21%)	
	administrators	15	(21%)	
	all of the above	15	(21%)	
4. Is your Freshman Seminar/Orientation offered as a (check all that apply):				
	one-credit course	26	(43%)	
	two-credit course	6	(10%)	
	three-credit course	12	(20%)	
	non-credit course	15	(24%)	
	(four-credit course)	2	(3%)	
5. Is the course offering a semester-long course or is it condensed into the beginning of the semester?				
	normal course offering	42	(79%)	
	condensed offering	11	(21%)	
6. Is your institution a public or private, two-year or four-year college?				
	two-year	four-year		totals
public	13	17		30
private	8	48		56
totals	21	65		86



Table 3

Responses from 4-year Colleges on  
Transferability of Orientation Courses

This course would most likely:	OR 100		OR 101		OR 102		OR 103	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Be accepted for transfer credit as a free elective toward the Bachelors.	21	33	17	27	16	27	12	20
Be accepted, but not applied toward graduation requirements.	3	5	3	5	3	5	2	3
Be accepted only if the student transferred with an Associates Degree.	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Not applied for transfer credit.	38	60	41	66	40	66	44	75
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4

Responses from 2-year Colleges on  
Transferability of Orientation Courses

This course would most likely:	OR 100		OR 101		OR 102		OR 103	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Be accepted for transfer credit as a free elective toward the Bachelors.	6	30	6	30	8	38	6	29
Be accepted, but not applied toward graduation requirements.	2	10	3	10	2	10	2	10
Be accepted only if the student transferred with an Associates Degree.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not applied for transfer credit.	12	60	12	60	11	52	13	62
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5

## Colleges and Universities that Participated in the Survey

## Two-Year Colleges:

Delaware Technical & Community College  
 Keystone Junior College  
 Assumption College for Sisters  
 Ocean County College  
 Clarion University  
 Berkeley College  
 Mercer County College  
 Sussex County Community College  
 Thaddeus Stevens State School of Technology  
 Penn College  
 Johnson Technical Institute  
 Welder Training & Testing Institute  
 Pierce College  
 Delaware County Community College  
 Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science  
 Bergen Community College  
 Harrisburg Area Community College  
 Northampton Community College  
 Camden County College  
 Lackawanna Junior College  
 Manor Junior College

## Four-Year Colleges &amp; Universities:

University of Pennsylvania  
 Lehigh University  
 Robert Morris College  
 Seton Hill College  
 University College - Rutgers New Brunswick  
 Delaware Valley College  
 Lafayette College  
 Temple University  
 Seton Hall University  
 Ramapo College of New Jersey  
 Saint Peter's College  
 East Stroudsburg University  
 Millersville University  
 College Saint Elizabeth  
 Alvernia College  
 Beaver College  
 Penn State Schuylkill Campus  
 Rutgers University - Camden  
 University of Pittsburgh/Bradford  
 Wilmington College  
 University of Delaware  
 Marywood College  
 St. Vincent College  
 University of Pittsburgh/Greensburg Campus  
 Allentown College of St. Francis de Salis  
 Philadelphia College of Textiles & Science  
 Lancaster Bible College  
 Holy Family College  
 Moore College of Art & Design  
 Chestnut Hill College

Penn State  
Richard Stockton College of New Jersey  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Carlow College  
Widener University  
LaRoche College  
University of Pittsburgh  
Thomas Jefferson University  
Gwynedd-Mercy College  
Gratz College  
Geneva College  
Wilkes University  
Fairleigh Dickinson University  
Susquehanna University  
Messiah College  
Rutgers College of Pharmacy  
Allegheny College  
Philadelphia College of Bible  
Ursinus College  
Bucknell University  
Mercyhurst College  
Goldey-Beacom College  
Moravian College  
LaSalle University  
Albright College  
Juniata College  
Rutgers University  
Point Park College  
Georgian Court College  
Rowan College of New Jersey  
Rider University  
King's College  
Lycoming College

Note: These institutions are listed in no particular order.  
Not all colleges that participated are listed since it was  
optional to identify themselves.

APPENDIX I

CUMBERLAND COUNTY COLLEGE

Orientation Course Survey

This course would most likely:	OR 100 College Success Seminar 3 Credits	OR 101 College 101 1 Credit	OR 102 Career Development 3 Credits	OR 103 Learning Strategies 3 Credits
1. Be accepted for transfer credit as a free elective toward the bachelors.				
2. Be accepted, but not applied toward graduation requirements.				
3. Be accepted only if the student had transferred with an associate degree.				
4. Not be accepted for transfer credit.				

(Check one box in each column)

5. Is Freshman Seminar, or equivalent orientation course, a requirement at your institution? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

6. What department does the course fall under at your college?  
 Student Services \_\_\_\_\_  
 Social/Behavioral Sciences \_\_\_\_\_  
 Decentralized within various departments \_\_\_\_\_  
 Not Applicable \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Who teaches Freshman Seminar/Orientation courses at your college?  
 Psychology Faculty \_\_\_\_\_  
 All Faculty \_\_\_\_\_  
 Counselors \_\_\_\_\_  
 Administrators \_\_\_\_\_  
 All of the above \_\_\_\_\_

8. Is your Freshman Seminar/Orientation course offered as a (check all that apply):  
 One-credit Course \_\_\_\_\_  
 Two-credit Course \_\_\_\_\_  
 Three-credit Course \_\_\_\_\_  
 Non-credit Course \_\_\_\_\_

(CVER)

9. Is the course offering a semester-long course or is it condensed into the beginning of the semester?  
Normal Course Offering \_\_\_\_\_  
Condensed Offering \_\_\_\_\_

10. Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Name of College: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Is your institution a two-year \_\_\_\_\_ or four-year \_\_\_\_\_ college? (Check one.)

13. Is your institution public \_\_\_\_\_ or private \_\_\_\_\_? (Check one.)

14. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey sent to you when they are compiled? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If "Yes," please provide your name and mailing address here:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you have conducted any institutional reports on the effects of your orientation course offerings on students' success, a copy would be appreciated.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance. Please return this form in the self-addressed, postage-paid return envelope.

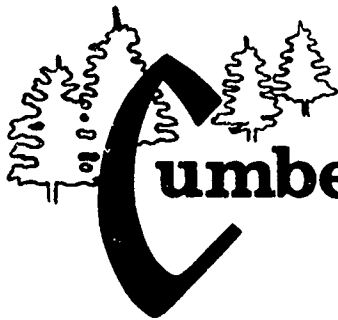
## Cumberland County College - Orientation Courses

OR 100 (3 credits) College Success Seminar prepares students to utilize academic survival skills, to practice goal setting, and to develop achievement thinking and behavior which increase their chances of being successful in college. Upon successful completion of this course the student should be able to: understand and explain the many concepts and issues that contribute to greater self-awareness; understand and utilize effective listening and communication skills; identify his/her own self-motivations, attitudes, feelings, and belief; understand the decision making process and how to use cognitive processing; and establish short and long range career and personal goals.

OR 101 (1 credit) College 101 provides incoming students the opportunity to acquire academic survival skills and to develop critical thinking skills for success in college. Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to: adopt active learning strategies enhancing student's ability to organize, clarify, and be successful in meeting academic and personal demands; understand and utilize catalog information about college policies, academic information, student services, and programs of study; develop skills to utilize the library effectively; understand the importance of relationships in having a satisfying college experience; and recognize the importance of physical and mental health including nutrition, exercise, relaxation and stress management toward personal well-being.

OR 102 (3 credits) Career Development is designed to provide students with an awareness of career issues, personal values, objectives and an informative realistic approach to obtaining work. Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to: investigate salary, educational requirements and outlook for jobs and careers in the American labor market; approach businesses for positions with the State and Federal employment; apply for positions with the State and Federal Government Civil Service Administrations; construct chronological and functional resumes and cover letters; conduct mature and successful employment interviews; more fully clarify their personal career goals; employ positive work attitudes and job keeping skills.

OR 103 (3 credits) Learning Strategies is designed to provide students with the skills needed to increase their chances of having a successful college experience. Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to: identify his/her own strengths and limitations in terms of abilities, learning style, personality, and specific learning disabilities; consider these factors in planning an academic program and selecting a realistic career; and demonstrate knowledge of appropriate academic adjustments and how to access them. The learning strategies, study skills and techniques of compensation presented are adapted to the specific need of students who have learning disabilities.



# Cumberland county college

P.O. BOX 517, VINELAND, NEW JERSEY 08360-0517 • C09/691-8600

August 1, 1994

ATTENTION: TRANSFER/ADMISSIONS OFFICE

Dear Colleague:

Our institution is currently examining its orientation course offerings. One of the issues we are investigating is the transferability of these college courses to other two- and four-year institutions.

Would you please examine these courses identified on the back of this page and, to the best of your ability, answer the questions on the enclosed survey form. Simply place a check in one box for each column under the four courses identified and answer the questions posed. Return the completed form by as soon as possible in the enclosed, self-addressed, postage-paid envelope. If you are not the most appropriate individual to complete this form, please forward it to that person whom you think could answer the questions more accurately.

If you would like to receive a copy of this completed survey, check the appropriate line and provide your institutional address on item 14 of the last page.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Steven M. Stolar, Ed.D.  
Director of Advisement

SMS:pjs  
Enclosure