



Engage 100 Mandatory Enrollment Pilot Three-Year Review & Undergraduate Policy Recommendation

Introduction

Florida State University is committed to supporting first-year students' academic and campus engagement and easing their transition to college. Engagement and connection during the first semester of college sets the tone for a student's experience at the institution. Research and evaluations of first-year learning community and seminar programs provide evidence they have the potential to enhance student engagement and retention, and they have been identified as a High-Impact Practice that supports the learning experience in college.¹ In addition to supporting the transition to college and enhancing student learning and development, engagement in a learning community may improve likelihood of retention to the second year. An analysis of the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE) found that first-year students who participated in a learning community had about a three percentage point higher retention rate than those who did not participate.² At FSU, [Engage 100](#) was designed to provide a small, course-based learning community for every first-year student to encourage students and help them persist.

Engage 100 is an umbrella term for a collection of learning community programs offered to first-year students. Engage 100 offers first-year students a structured learning community and peer mentorship during their transition to college. FSU's goal is for every first-year student to enroll in an Engage 100 community experience of their choice during their first Summer B or Fall semester.

The Engage 100 initiative was launched in 2017 to encourage students to intentionally approach their undergraduate experience. Engage 100 experiences are varied, but are all designed to help students:

- Navigate complex university systems successfully
- Overcome information overload during Orientation and the first weeks of the semester
- Build their FSU network and make friends
- Learn about and utilize campus resources
- Establish a plan for academic and co-curricular engagement
- Take ownership of their college experience

Engage 100 was inspired by models at other institutions and built on the foundation laid by long-time FSU programs such as the Honors Colloquium, Living Learning Communities and Freshman Interest Groups. The learning community and first-year seminar approach is harnessed at most of FSU's peer institutions, as noted in benchmarking data provided in Appendix A.

¹ Ribera, A.K., Miller, A.L., & Dumford, A.D. (2017). Sense of peer belonging and institutional acceptance in the first year: The role of High-Impact Practices. *Journal of College Student Development*, 58(4), 545-563. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/csd.2017.0042>

Keup JR, Young DG. Investigating the first-year seminar as a High-Impact Practice. In: Feldman RS, ed. *The First Year of College: Research, Theory, and Practice on Improving the Student Experience and Increasing Retention*. Cambridge University Press; 2017:93-125.

² Sarraf, S.A. (2012). NSSE predictive validity study. *Center for Postsecondary Research*. Retrieved from <https://nsse.indiana.edu/nsse/psychometric-portfolio/predictive.html>

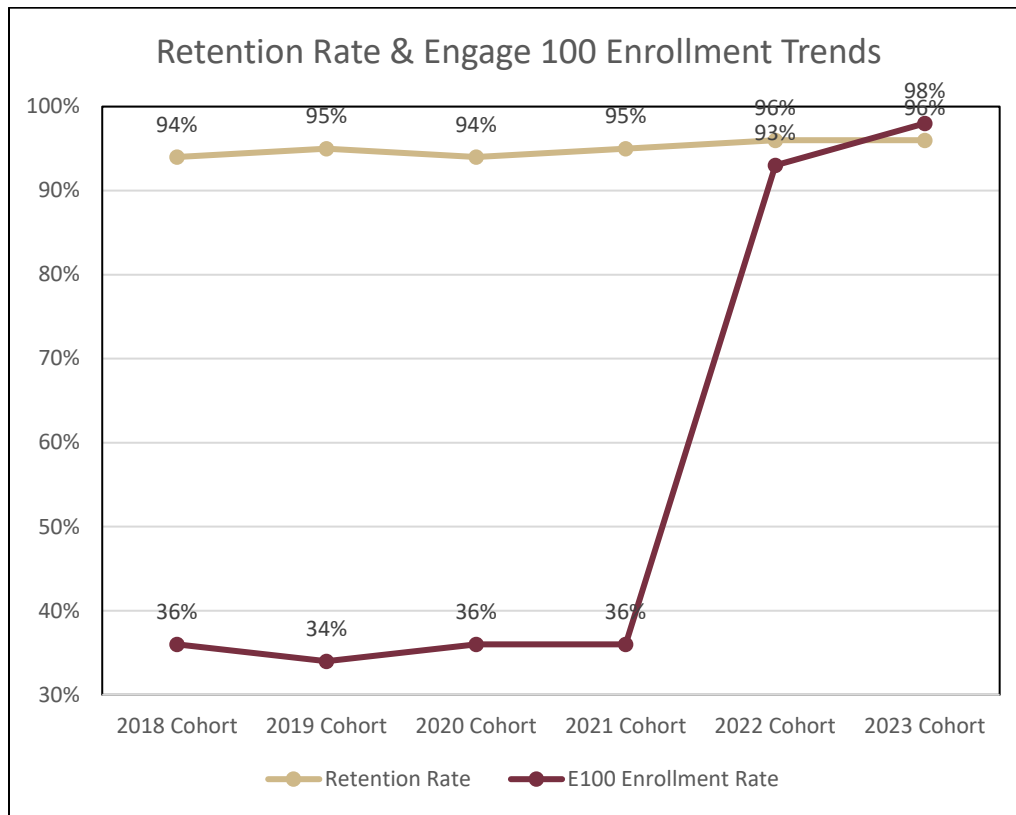
Engage 100 and Fall-to-Fall Retention

Engage 100 is the largest program focused on the college transition at FSU and is a central component of FSU’s student retention and student engagement strategy. The University has set the following retention goal for FTIC students and program goal for Engage 100:

- Maintain or exceed a 95% fall-to-fall FTIC retention rate annually, aiming for a 98% rate.
- 100% of FTIC admits will enroll in an Engage 100 experience during their first summer or fall term on the Tallahassee campus. Engage 100 enrollment is already at 100% at the Panama City, FL campus.

FTIC student retention is also a priority for the Board of Governors (BOG) of the State University System of Florida. The BOG has adopted performance metrics relating specifically to retention (Metric #5: 2nd Year Retention with a 2.0+ GPA), and the university’s retention rate is also a measure for the preeminent state research university designation (Metric C: Freshman Retention Rate). Fall-to-fall FTIC retention is also a critical measure for US News and Niche institutional rankings.

Figure 1. Full-time FTIC fall-to-fall retention rate and Engage 100 enrollment trends.



In Fall 2024, the full-time FTIC fall-to-fall retention goal was exceeded by reaching 96.1%, a new institutional record that keeps FSU’s retention rate in the Top 10 for public institutions. FSU is on track to exceed the target again, again achieving a 99% fall-to-spring retention rate in Spring 2025. Retention



levels this high are rare among large public institutions and are difficult to maintain over time. Doing so requires a high-touch approach. Each year there are first-year students who need leave the university or take a break from coursework for a variety of personal, health, and financial reasons. Others struggle to find their place at our institution. Engage 100 was designed to help students connect with resources when they experience a variety of setbacks in college.

FSU admits students from many backgrounds, locations, and pre-collegiate learning experiences. Students and families expect the university to provide excellent programs and services that enhance the educational experience. Every admitted student has the potential to succeed; retention is not the only goal. Engage 100 is a commitment to enhancing students' academic and social experiences, empowering help-seeking behaviors, encouraging academic and personal exploration while navigating student life, and providing them with tools for success in the college environment and beyond.

This report provides a three-year review of the Engage 100 mandatory enrollment pilot, and a recommended undergraduate policy to continue this initiative as a central part of FSU's robust retention and student engagement strategy. During the three-year pilot mandating FTIC enrollment in Engage 100 courses, FSU has experienced new record retention rates, and the percentage of students enrolled in Engage 100 has almost reached the 100% goal. Given FSU's ecosystem of student support programs focused on the first year, Engage 100 cannot be identified as the only reason retention has reached new levels during the pilot. However, evidence collected to date and summarized in this report suggests that Engage 100 has had a meaningful impact on students' first-term academic and personal experiences.

Engage 100 Structure, Learning Objectives, and Course Approval

As of Fall 2024, there were [33 different courses](#) offered under the Engage 100 umbrella. The programs feature a 0- or 1- credit hour course designed to connect, engage, and challenge students during their first semester at FSU through membership in a learning community. All Engage 100 courses capped at 19 students or less, and are supported by an upper-division, systematically trained peer mentor. Units across campus host Engage 100 courses for students during their first Summer B or first Fall term. A list of courses is included in Appendix B.

All Engage 100 courses are reviewed by a faculty committee prior to being approved as an Engage 100 course option.

Engage 100 courses must focus on at least three of the five Engage 100 student learning objectives. Course content, activities, and assessments must align with the selected objectives:

- Students will identify and intentionally select engagement that align with their interests.
- Students will join a formal learning community and form meaningful peer relationships.
- Students will explore new communities that support their personal development.
- Students will practice personal, social, and professional awareness.
- Students will assess how engagement activities align with their academic and personal goals.

Engage 100 courses ideally culminate with a student-developed engagement plan focused on future engagement and experiential learning opportunities aligned with their personal and professional goals.



Three-Year Review of the Engage 100 Pilot

Engage 100 Enrollment

A three-year pilot program mandating Engage 100 enrollment for all Undergraduate Studies FTIC students (excluding students in direct admission programs, student-athletes, and FSA/FYA) was approved by UPC and Faculty Senate and launched in Summer/Fall 2022. During the pilot, Engage 100 enrollment almost reached the 100% mark. **99.3% (n=5044) of students subject to the Engage 100 mandate enrolled in an Engage 100 course in Summer/Fall 2024.** 90.8% of all Tallahassee campus FTIC students (excluding FSA/FYA) enrolled in an Engage 100 course in Summer/Fall 2024. Furthermore, all FTIC cohort students enrolled at the Panama City, FL campus enrolled in an Engage 100 in Fall 2024.

Students choose and enroll in the Engage 100 course that aligns with their interests and goals at Orientation, except for a few application-based programs (e.g., UROP, Service Scholars) that administratively enroll students in an appropriate section. On average 12% of students enrolled in more than one Engage 100 course annually, which typically involves participation in at least one application-based program requires a specific seminar or colloquium course.

Table 1. FTIC cohort Engage 100 enrollment during pilot, Tallahassee campus.

	Students Mandated to Enroll	All FTIC cohort students
Summer/Fall 2022	93.0%	93.1%
Summer/Fall 2023	98.5%	97.7%
Summer/Fall 2024	99.3%	90.8%

Table 2. Engage 100 enrollment by year for mandated students, Tallahassee campus.

	Students Mandated to Enroll	Mandated, Not Enrolled	Not Mandated, Enrolled	Unique Student Enrollment	Dropped After Drop/Add	Total Seats Filled
Summer/Fall 2022	5370	380	241	6156	18	6572
Summer/Fall 2023	5188	80	213	6038	32	7027
Summer/Fall 2024	5081	37	418	6015	37	6756

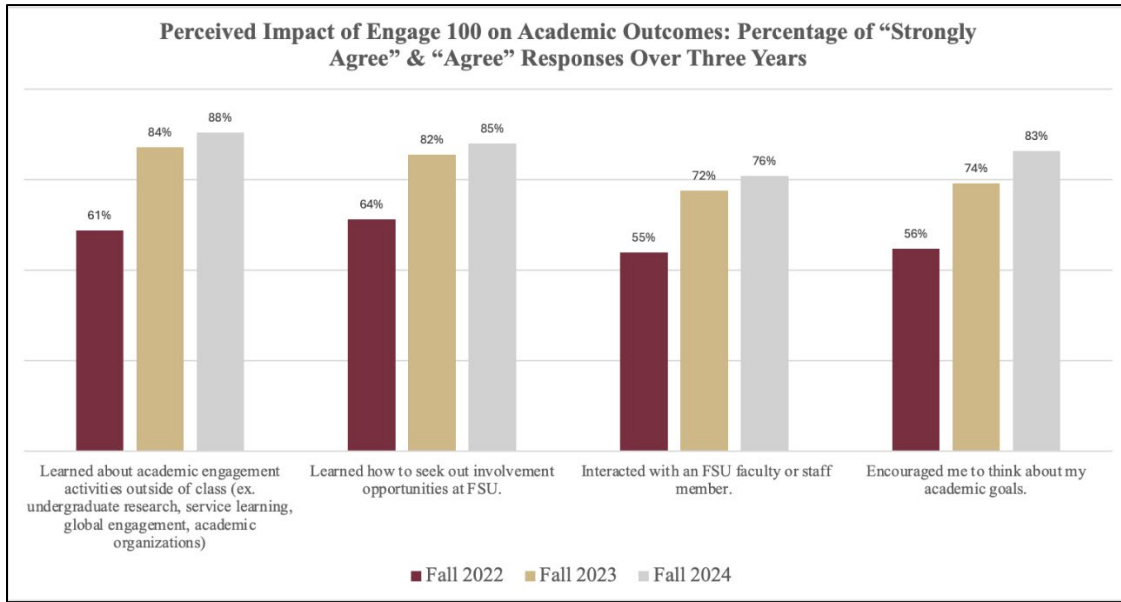
Note. Unique student enrollment represents the number of FTIC cohort students enrolled at the end of drop/add and de-duplicated. About 12% of students enroll in more than one Engage 100 each year.

Engage 100 Experience Survey Results

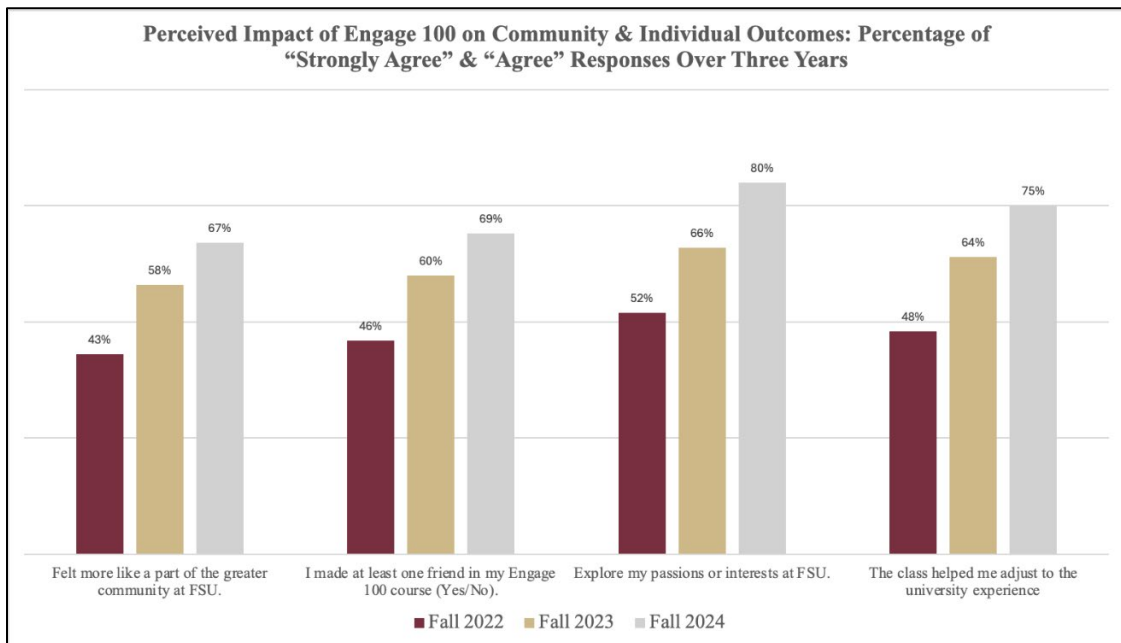
Engage 100 staff distributed a comprehensive experience survey and have notably seen progressively positive reflections on the course academic, social, and personal outcomes. The survey was distributed at the conclusion of the Fall term to a stratified random sample of Engage 100 participants. The Summer/Fall 2024 survey yielded 424 responses, and each question had an either “Agree” or “Strongly

Agree” response of over 50%. In addition, during the pilot, the course’s perceived academic and individual influence moved in a positive direction.

Figures 2-3. Annual Engage 100 Experience Survey results, Tallahassee campus.



Note. Responses collected varied by year, with response rates rising annually. Fall 2022 response rate 12% (n=350), Fall 2023 response rate 27% (n=641), and Fall 2024 response rate 21% (n=424).



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Over the three years, survey results have indicated that students progressively felt the academic impacts of their Engage 100 program. Importantly, analyses indicate that students felt more confident and knowledgeable about how to direct and empower their own learning after their Engage 100 program, either by interacting with professors, engaging with additional academic opportunities, and actively reflecting on their academic goals.

Similarly, students have expressed the positivity progressive personal benefits of the Engage 100 program as they begin their time at FSU. From feeling more connected to the community, to adjusting and preparing for their university experiences, students have communicated that Engage 100 supported their university transition experience.

Lastly, the majority of students did not feel that Engage 100 negatively impacted their other courses, caused them a financial burden, or would advise their classmates not to enroll in an Engage 100 class. This year, only 1.4% (n=6) of students agreed that this course negatively impacted their other courses and did not find positive academic benefits and less than 5% of students taking a one-credit Engage 100 program believed it caused a financial burden. Most students enroll in a 0-credit (free) class. In addition, only 4% of the respondents said “no” to the question, “Would you advise your classmate to take this Engage 100 program” (down from 11% in Fall 2022).

In our evaluation process, we offered respondents the opportunity to provide feedback via open response. Though we had very few responses to work with, we identified thematically students had positive feedback in the areas of community building, major and career pathfinding, and peer mentorship. One of the top themes in the responses showed that students felt participating in Engage 100 was a supportive introduction to their FSU experience. Some key quotes from this analysis are included below.

- *“[The peer leader] was a student which gave me and my peers a sense of familiarity and encouragement that we can also achieve great things here at the Florida State University.”*
- *“I felt like this class really prepared me for getting ready for nursing school applications, as well as sparking interest in different areas of nursing! I couldn't recommend this class enough!”*
- *“I love that the [peer instructors] are near our age. It builds a sense of comfortability in the classroom and community.”*
- *“The teacher helped with a lot of my questions whether it was how to access tutoring or how to overcome procrastination. This class provides students with the support they need as freshman, experiencing college and adulting for the first time.”*

Appendix C highlights conference presentations, current, and future research projects focused on Engage 100. Successes over the pilot period have increased interest in learning from FSU’s unique approach to first-year, course-based learning communities.

Appendix D covers a range of indirect benefits of the Engage 100 program related to peer mentor employment and development, proactive outreach to individual students based on Engage 100 attendance/participation, student involvement with departmental programs, and faculty/staff involvement.



Quality Assurance & Access Efforts

The Office of Retention has used the three-year pilot period to refine quality control and student course access strategies. Engage 100 courses vary by topic and focus on serving a variety of student sub-populations. Rather than taking the standard approach to the freshman seminar of a specific course required for all students, FSU chose to offer students a variety of courses to choose from to meet their needs and goals. The Engage 100 learning objectives and course design parameters are a common thread that weaves across the program.

Engage 100 Course Review

Engage 100 specialized faculty consult with faculty and staff in the early stages of Engage 100 course development so baseline expectations are clear. Engage 100 courses are reviewed by a faculty committee prior to being approved as an Engage 100 course option. The faculty members who have served on this review committee have experience with managing first-year learning communities and courses at FSU. The faculty members who comprise the review committee vary by home college and are a mix of Specialized, Teaching, and Tenure Track Faculty. The committee membership is evaluated and confirmed each year and averages six individuals reviewing program applications quarterly. The committee reviews each proposed course using a standard rubric, and the committee's feedback is shared with course coordinators to improve content and adherence to guidelines. The committee also provides recommendations on how to effectively involve peer mentors in classroom activities and through one-on-one interactions.

Resources for Engage 100 Program Coordinators

Following pilot year 1, it was clear the growing list of Engage 100 courses and faculty/staff coordinators required additional materials to support instructors. A manual for Engage 100 course coordinators was developed to outline steps for class building, peer mentor hiring and funding, and instructional requirements (e.g., first-day attendance, grade entry). Memos from the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement are also shared with all instructors.

Engage 100 program coordinators are invited to participate in meetings together each term, which has allowed them to ask questions, share ideas, and suggest new resources that would support their teaching and course management. A repository of example lesson plans on a variety of topics under development.

Applicable results from the Engage 100 Experience Survey are shared with course coordinators annually. Engage 100 administrative staff coordinate and facilitate meetings to discuss areas for improvement for courses with lower-than-average student satisfaction rates. Consulting on course design and active learning to improve courses is available for all Engage 100 courses.

Resources for Students & Course Access

To improve access to Engage 100 classes and to assist students in decision-making, Engage 100 course descriptions are readily available on the Engage 100 website. During active Orientation periods, a list of all sections with seat availability is updated daily so students and advisors can work together to select an appropriate course for each student. Engage 100 classes are offered at a variety of days and times



(following the standard meeting pattern), so finding an Engage 100 class that fits into a student's schedule is relatively easy. Classroom availability does somewhat limit class scheduling options.

An online version of IDS1000 First Year Connections and Success is under curriculum review at this time to ensure an Engage 100 option will be available to students who must study remotely during their first term due to medical or personal reasons. If approved, the online course could be offered in Fall 2025.

Undergraduate Policy Recommendation

Based on retention rate improvement, course enrollment trends, and results of data collection during the three-year pilot, the following policy recommendation is proposed:

Every incoming first-time-in-college (FTIC) student entering the Division of Undergraduate Studies must enroll in an Engage 100 course in their first fall term. FTIC students starting at FSU in the Summer B session may choose to take an available Engage 100 course that term instead. FTIC students who start at FSU in the spring semester will be required to take Engage 100 course that term.

Scope

For the purposes of this proposal, "FTIC students" are defined as those admitted as first-time-in-college, degree-seeking undergraduates in the Fall term, or Summer B continuing to Fall.

Engage 100 course enrollment will be mandatory in FTIC students' first Summer B or Fall term. Spring FTIC admits will be required to enroll in their first spring term.

Exemptions

Due to the special nature of their academic entry to the University, the following FTIC students are excluded: students admitted to direct-entry undergraduate programs (e.g., Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Fine Arts), students entering the upper-division major upon entry, and students admitted to First Semester Abroad or First Year Abroad programs.

Students may request in writing a waiver of mandatory enrollment through the Office of Retention and should provide documentation of extenuating circumstances or evidence enrollment would pose an undue hardship.

Appendix A: Benchmarking

Course-based first-year seminar and learning community programs are widely employed strategies that enhance student sense of connection with the university community and transition to the higher education learning environment.³ Institutions take different approaches to learning communities for first-year students, but many embed these educational experiences into the curriculum as required courses for core/elective credit or as experiences. Otherwise, students are “strongly encouraged” to enroll in during their first term.

Table C1: Benchmarking first-year learning communities & first-year seminar courses

Institution	Required	Faculty-led	Staff-led	Peer-led	In-person	Online	For credit
Florida State University	Pilot	X	X	X	X		X
Peer Institutions							
Georgia	X	X			X		X
Indiana - Bloomington	X	X	X		X		X
Iowa (seminars)		X			X		X
Iowa (post-Orientation)	X		X			X	X
Kansas	X	X	X		X		X
Maryland - College Park	X		X	X	X		X
Michigan State (seminars)		X			X		X
Michigan State (post-Orientation)	X		X			X	X
Ohio State (seminars)		X			X		X
Ohio State (survey course)	X		X		X		X
Other Institutions							
Florida			X	X	X		X
South Carolina	X	X	X		X		X
Texas - Austin (seminar)	X	X			X		X
Texas - Austin (survey course)	X		X	X	X		X
Washington				X	X		X

³ Priest, K. L., Saucier, D. A., & Eiselein, G. (2016). Exploring students' experiences in first-year learning communities from a situated learning perspective. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 28(3), 361-371.



**Appendix B:
Engage 100 Course List with Sponsoring Departments**

Engage 100 Title	Engage 100 Category	Course Code	Course Title	Term First Offered as an Engage 100	Department/Program
A Student's Guide to Sustainability: Changemaking & Mythbusting	Interest Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2020	Sustainability (Facilities)
CARE QUEST Scholars	Application Based	SLS1131	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2023	CARE
CARE Summer Bridge Program	Application Based	SLS1131	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2017	CARE
Chart Your Course	General	SLS2206	Chart Your Course	Fall 2018	New Student and Family Programs
Designing Your Life with Innovation	Interest Based	ENT1611	Designing your Life with Innovation	Fall 2020	Innovation Hub
Exploring Health Professions	Academic/Major Based	IHS1100	Exploring Health Professions	Fall 2020	Interdisciplinary Medical Sciences (IMS)
Exploring Service Leadership	Interest Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2021	The Center for Leadership and Service
Exploring the Past: Shaping the Future	Academic/Major Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2022	Department of History
First Year Connections & Success	General	IDS1000	First Year Connections & Success	Fall 2021	Retention (Undergraduate Studies)
Freshman Interest Groups	Academic/Major Based	HUM1920	Freshman Interest Groups (FIGs)	Fall 2017	Retention (Undergraduate Studies)
Freshman Music Seminar	Academic/Major Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Summer 2019	College of Music

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Engage 100 Title	Engage 100 Category	Course Code	Course Title	Term First Offered as an Engage 100	Department/Program
Freshman Seminar in Critical Thinking & Information Literacy	Academic/Major Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2024	University Libraries
Future Innovators	Interest Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2018	Innovation Hub
Get Into Nole Nursing	Academic/Major Based	NUR1010	The Florida State University Experience: Getting to Nole Nursing	Fall 2022	College of Nursing
Honors Colloquium	Application Based	HUM2944	The Honors Colloquium	Fall 2017	Honors Program
Housing: Community & College Life	Interest Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2020	University Housing
Inquiry Approaches to Teaching	Academic/Major Based	SMT1043	Inquiry Approaches to Teaching	Fall 2020	FSU-Teach
Into the Information Wormhole: Libraries, Scholarship and the Web	Academic/Major Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2023	University Libraries
Introduction to Academic Major Exploration	Academic/Major Based	SLS1203	Introduction to Academic Exploration	Fall 2018	Exploratory (Undergraduate Studies)
Introduction to Community Engagement	Application Based	SOW1054	Introduction to Community Engagement	Fall 2021	The Center for Leadership and Service
Introduction to Engage TLH	Interest Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2021	The Center for Leadership and Service
Introduction to Food & Nutrition Science	Academic/Major Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Spring 2025	College of Health & Human Sciences
Kickstart Your College Success	Academic/Major Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Summer 2023	Academic Center for Excellence (Undergraduate Studies)

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Engage 100 Title	Engage 100 Category	Course Code	Course Title	Term First Offered as an Engage 100	Department/Program
Library Introduction for Earth Science	Academic/Major Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2024	University Libraries
Living Learning Communities	Academic/Major Based	Various	Living Learning Communities	Fall 2017	University Housing/ Various Colleges
OAS Seminoles Excelling	Interest Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2019	Office of Accessibility Services
Setting a Path for Success in Business	Academic/Major Based	GEB1930	Setting a Path for Success in Business: The Florida State Experience	Fall 2023	College of Business
Student Development & Leadership Strategies	Application Based	SLS1261	Student Development & Leadership Strategies	Spring 2020	Student Athlete Academic Services (Undergraduate Studies/Athletics)
Succeeding as a STEM Major	Academic/Major Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2024	University Libraries
Table Top Role Playing Game Design: Crafting Worlds and Narratives	Interest Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2024	Advising First (Undergraduate Studies)
The High School AA Florida State Experience	Academic/Major Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2022	Graduation, Planning, and Strategies (Academic Affairs)
The Panama City Experience	General	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2018	FSU Panama City
Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program	Application Based	IDS2920	Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP)	Fall 2017	Center for Undergraduate Research and Academic Engagement (Undergraduate Studies)
Working with Others One-on One	Interest Based	IDS1107	The Florida State Experience	Fall 2024	Academic Center for Excellence (Undergraduate Studies)



**Appendix C:
Engage 100 as an FYE Model & Research Projects**

Since the mandatory enrollment pilot began in Summer/Fall 2022, FSU reached new milestones related to the first-year student experience, including the following:

- FSU was ranked number seven among public institutions for first-year experience; identified as an institution that offers a “stellar” first-year experience (FYE)⁴. This ranking is based on open-ended responses by college presidents, chief academic officers, deans of students and deans of admissions nationally. It places FSU among institutions with well-known FYE programs such as University of South Carolina, Georgia State University, and The Ohio State University.
- Engage 100 faculty and staff have consulted with the following institutions who are using our approach to first-year programs in benchmarking: University of Washington, University of Florida, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and Old Dominion University.

Table D1: Research projects & conference presentations

Dates & Research Partners	Project Focus
Summer 2021 & Summer 2023: Dr. Marty Swanbrow-Becker (EPLS) & Dr. John Reynolds (Sociology)	Quantitative studies and focus groups on social connection and mental health in which Engage 100 participants were surveyed and interviewed
Fall 2023 & Spring 2024: Dr. Allison B. Peters (UGS) & Danielle Porter (UGS)	Refereed presentations: <i>Priorities, Partnerships, Peers, & Perseverance: Scaling Up First-Year Courses</i> at NODA, Orientation, Transition, and Retention in Higher Education and NASPA, Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education
Spring 2025: Danielle Porter (UGS)	Refereed presentation: <i>Innovating First-Year Experience Courses Through Connection and Collaborative Partnerships</i> at The Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience
Fall 2024 & Spring 2025: Dr. Marty Swanbrow-Becker (EPLS) & Dr. John Reynolds (Sociology)	Classroom-based lessons and projects to enhance social connection in IDS1000 First-Year Connections and Success; pre- and post-survey of enrolled students and peer leaders in IDS1000 and SLS2206
Fall 2025, FSU’s Collaborative Lab for the Advancement of Student Success	Investigates the impact of Peer Mentor roles on student academic and career success
Fall 2026, University of South Carolina’s National Resource Center for First-Year Experience and Students in Transition “Paul F. Fidler Research Grant”	Planned submission in Fall 2025 for financial and research support on Engage 100’s programmatic, university-wide operational structure

⁴ U.S. News and World Report. (2025). First-year experiences. Retrieved from <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/first-year-experience-programs?sort=rank&sortDirection=asc>



Appendix D: Indirect Benefits of Engage 100

Peer Mentors

A pivotal piece of the success of Engage 100 has been the utilization of peer mentors in each program. In the 2022-2023 school year, at the start of the pilot, all but three programs were not using peer mentors in each class. That year, Engage 100 coordinators recruited, selected, and trained just under 350 peer leaders spanning all 17 academic colleges. In the 2024-2025 school year, the number of peer mentors more than doubled to over 650 students, including a large number of mentors returning for a second or third year of leadership. While individual Engage 100 programs utilize peer mentors differently, Office of Retention staff have worked to create structures that ensure all peer mentors receive a quality experience.

Peer mentor recruitment and selection processes vary by program. During the pilot period, Office of Retention staff worked towards a streamlined recruitment and application process to ensure increased access to peer mentorship roles. Most recently, we had six different Engage 100 programs collaborate on a single selection process from recruitment all the way to selection. Uniting under one process increased their applicant pool from an average sum of almost 300 to a total applicant pool of 495 students.

Peer mentors' responsibilities within the classroom vary by program, and the vast majority are compensated for their work. Those with the most responsibility and activity within class currently earn \$1350 per semester for supporting one Engage 100 class. In addition to earning wages, program coordinators offer professional development, networking, and on-going training opportunities. Students selected to support many of the largest Engage 100 programs (e.g., Freshman Interest Groups, Chart Your Course, the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program), students take the HUM4924 Engage 100 Peer Seminar course prior to serving in the role, through which they earn CoreFSU Oral Communication Competency credit. All peer mentors may also earn CoreFSU Formative Experience credit through partnership with the Career Center's Experience Recognition Program.

In end-of-semester reflections, peer leaders have shared that serving in their role within Engage 100 has helped them learn leadership skills, build a network of peers around campus, and develop success strategies that bridge their academics and skills required for their future careers.

Course Attendance Tracking & Proactive Retention Outreach

Office of Retention staff used the pilot period to test and implement new strategies to support retention. Most notably, Engage 100 instructors can report repeat absences or concerning behavior in their Engage 100 courses. This may be an early warning sign of academic dis-engagement. The Retention team reaches out students exhibiting these behaviors and subsequently connect students with appropriate campus resources. Not only has this tracking and outreach helped reduce the number of unsatisfactory grades, but it has also helped alert campus partners of students who need some additional support or resources.

Program and Student Engagement: Feedback from Engage 100 Partners

Several programs and offices across campus have shared that offering an Engage 100 course has allowed them to connect with first-year students in new ways. For example, the Center for Leadership and Service developed a set of courses that showcase opportunities to lead and serve beyond the semester-long course,



leading to increased engagement after the first term. For Graduation Planning and Strategies (GPS), Engage 100 has been an avenue for engaging with the increasing population of students who earned an AA degree in high school, many of whom subsequently join the Degree in Three or More in Four program. GPS plans to offer more sections in Fall 2025 to meet growing demand.

Faculty and Staff Involvement

One of the goals of the Engage 100 program has been to offer courses that appeal students with a variety of academic and co-curricular interests. Faculty and staff across campus have developed courses to meet this demand for individualize learning experiences, while simultaneously promoting departments' goals. Engage 100 is also an opportunity for faculty and staff to teach and work with first-year students to inspire their continued involvement with the department or major. Many Engage 100 classes invite faculty guest speakers and departmental representatives to contribute to student learning, which encourages students to connect early and often academic and personal support. Faculty members who may not be linked to a specific Engage 100 course are involved and interact with students through Engage 100.

Engage 100 Instructor and Program Coordinator Perspectives

“This program has positively impacted my ability to connect with freshmen where I have a full semester to discuss concepts of information literacy, such as AI in the classroom or what is fake news. In addition to teaching and providing opportunities for students to collaborate with others to form their own opinions on these topics, I am able to learn from their perspective and experience... Additionally, Kelly Grove and I have both learned from our experiences in ‘Succeeding as a STEM major’ over the years which has helped us in developing and informing our library programs and services in the STEM team.”

- Renaine Julian – Head, STEM Libraries & Engage 100 Instructor of Record

“The Peer Mentor program is the main way first-time in college engineering students connect to more advanced engineering undergrads. Peer mentors are usually very involved engineering students so they can link incoming students to student groups, academic support, and other engagement opportunities. They are also usually former Engineering Living-Learning Community which provides a strong connection across undergrads from the LLC and to the broader engineering student population. Because of these essential connections that peer mentors make, Engineering LLC students get integrated into engineering life on campus much earlier than they typically do without the connection. The engineering campus is not on the main FSU campus so when FTIC students go out to the College of Engineering they often go just for classes and don't know how to do more than that. Peer mentors keep our students connected to activities happening at the COE that they would not otherwise go to or know about.”

- Dr. Kassie Ernst – Teaching Faculty, FAMU-FSU College of Engineering & Engage 100 Program Coordinator



“Engage 100 has been a source of professional and personal growth for me, and my participation has resulted in lasting, meaningful relationships with students and staff. Having the unique experience of starting as a program participant and later serving as its coordinator, I can attest to the program’s profound personal and professional impact. My initial involvement with Engage 100 as a mentor allowed me to share with first-year students the experiences that made FSU such a special and formative place in my life. I believe deeply in the value of the FSU experience. With every lesson plan I created, my goal was to help students discover some pocket of FSU that could resonate with them. I encouraged curiosity—challenging students not to walk past closed doors but to open them and explore what lay inside. Every class, I reminded them that great things awaited them if they had the curiosity to explore the doors open to them. It was incredibly rewarding to see the students thrive with this encouragement. Many of my students found academic and employment opportunities. Many identified majors that aligned with their goals and made them excited about their education. Many took advantage of the experience-defining resources when they needed them – resources that they had learned about as part of their Engage 100 coursework. Through this work, I built enduring relationships with my students and fellow mentors. As a mentor, I greatly valued the collaborative nature of creating course materials with my peers.”

- Bobby Lolley – Instructional Technologist, College of Business & Engage 100
Instructor of Record

“Serving as an instructor for Engage 100 was a rewarding experience that allowed me to connect with first-year students on a personal level. It gave me the chance to not only share stories and insights from my own undergraduate journey but also address the gaps I wish I had filled back then. In this role, I became a mentor, of sorts, guiding students through a pivotal time in their lives when the dots don’t always seem to connect. From resume workshops to class excursions, and from financial planning sessions to guest speakers discussing career advancement, I could see the students absorbing, learning, and growing. Each moment reinforced my confidence in their preparation for success and reminded me how impactful these early academic experiences can be. These opportunities matter.”

- Jason Harle – Course Facilitator and Career Coach, College of Business & Engage 100