PROJECT: FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

Research and document required first year experience courses at four-year colleges and universities.

For questions or guidance, contact: Dr. Karen Becker at kabecker@ysu.edu

With first year experiences courses, it’s quite possible you’ll have to search a few different ways before you find. This is because first year experience courses vary widely from university to another

1. A single course that is required of all first year students and is the same for all students, regardless of the student’s major
2. A required course that allows students to select from among different topics.
3. A required course that is different depending upon the student’s major or college

Search Suggestions:

Select any state to start. Using Google search, enter "four year colleges and universities in xxxx). That will provide with a list of institutions that you can search.

Use Google search to enter the name of the university or college you would like to research.

Search the institution’s website using these phrases first year experience or first year seminar or UNIV 101. This will usually work for the first two types listed above.

For example:

1. A single course that is required of all first year students and is the same for all students

An example of this type comes from the University of Southern Indiana.

UNIV 101 - First Year Experience

Credits: 1

This course is an introduction to the University of Southern Indiana and the undergraduate experience with a specific focus on academic success, campus involvement and community engagement. Students will discuss issues of value and behavior in the college setting, discover what resources are available to them, and learn what it means to integrate themselves into the campus and surrounding communities.

2. A requirement that allows students to select from among different topics.

This example comes from the University of Richmond in Virginia

First-Year Seminars
First-Year Seminars (FYS) provide students with a hands-on introduction to academic inquiry. FYS offer the opportunity to explore varied interests in small class settings with close faculty contact. Each entering student takes a FYS in the fall and spring of the first year.

More than 40 seminar topics are offered each semester. Topics are drawn from every school of the University and cover a wide range of interests, from bioethics and math, to art history and English. Courses are developed by individual faculty members, giving them the chance to explore a subject that they are passionate about or have expertise in. All seminars provide opportunities for critical reading and thinking and establish a foundation for effective written and oral communications skills, information literacy, and library research skills.

Examples of topics offered include:

ANXIETY AND ETHICS
APOCALYPSE CULTURE
ATHLETES OF PIETY
BEYOND CIVILIZATION: HEART AND MIND

If you can't find either of the first two types, look for a required course that is different depending upon the student's major or college (YSU is an example of this type)

Search the degree requirements for a couple of majors to see if a first year seminar or first year experience course is included in the requirements for the major. There are a couple of ways to find the requirements for each major. The first way is to look for the intuitions’ undergraduate course catalog. Find a couple of majors and keep looking until you find the requirements. Then look for something that looks like first year Orientation course.

Below is an example taken from the Chemistry major at YSU.

STEM 1520: STEM First Year Orientation

You may be able to find the course description via a hyperlink. If not, you will have to look up the course in the undergraduate course catalog

The course description for STEM 1520: STEM First Year Orientation is below:

The course is designed to enhance the transition and adjustment of first-year students in the College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics by exploring key concepts and issues that support student motivation and academic persistence.

The second example, below, is also taken from YSU. This course appears on the Communication Studies “Curriculum Sheet.”

Communication First Year Experience Course (CCAC 1500)

To find the course description, it was necessary to look for the course in the YSU under graduate course catalog. The course description

CCAC 1500 College Success 3 s.h.
An overview of academic, personal, and life management tools to help prepare entering students for a successful university experience.

Some institutions don’t require a first year experience course. If after looking for the three types described above you can’t find anything, it’s quite possible one isn’t required.