

Does an Honors First Year Seminar Lead to More Involved Student Leaders?

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The University of Tampa introduced its First Year Experience (FYE) seminar, Gateways, in 1998 and has grown from thirty sections to nearly 80 with the goal of connecting students to the campus community and providing them with tools for success. The ultimate goal of any FYE program is to increase retention. At The University of Tampa, the course is offered as a mandatory two semester, 1 credit pass/fail course. However, in recent years, the program has expanded to include sections for honors (Pathways), transfer, and veteran students. The honors section, which is the focus of this paper, uses the same format as traditional Gateways but is only open to students admitted to the honors program and is graded using a letter scale. The purpose of providing honors sections is to allow the students to go a bit deeper in the material and prepare them for active leadership roles on campus. By looking at the list of campus student leaders in large, active organizations and those that took Pathways, we are hoping to ascertain if honors students are more likely to get involved and take on leadership roles early in their college career. Additionally, we plan to review the University's CIRP data to understand how first year students feel about leadership and if it should be addressed more specifically in the FYE course.