

60-Second SoTL

Episode 51 – Defining Success in a First-Year Seminar

(Piano Music)

0:03

Jessie L. Moore:

Welcome to 60-Second SoTL! This week's episode is part of a short series by students in Elon University's Masters of Higher Education program. The students are exploring first-year experiences as meaningful or high-impact learning experiences. Listen for the other podcast episodes in their series wherever you subscribe to 60-Second SoTL.

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(Piano Music)

0:27

Logan Morral:

Does participating in a first-year seminar lead to a higher rate of success in college? That's the focus of this week's 60-second SoTL from Elon University's Center for Engaged Learning. I'm Logan Morral.

In "Investigation of the Effect of First-Year Seminars on Student Success," SoTL scholars Qingmin Shi, John R. Crooker, Christina R. Drum, and Brent M. Drake attempt to address gaps in current literature about the effectiveness of first-year seminars in promoting success. Previous studies have found conflicting results, with some finding they lead to success and others finding no correlation.

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Data was collected from a minority-serving R1 university, and participants of the study were first-time full-time degree seeking students. The study utilized a probit econometric model and a general linear model to predict future outcomes. Data was collected before and after the implementation of the first-year seminar course at the university. Previous scholars had defined success in a first-year seminar as retention between the first and second year. The researchers of this study extended their definition of success to also include first-Fall GPA, first-year seminar grade, and a 6-year graduation.

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The results of the study affirmed that FYS programs led to student success and aided with their transition from high school to higher education. Additionally, it was concluded that enrollment in a first-year seminar was predictive of retention, increased graduation rate, and higher GPAs. While the data from this study was limited to one large research university, it is recommended that other institution types use a similar research design to evaluate their own first-year seminars. To learn more, check the notes for our full citation.

2:12

(piano music)

2:15

Jessie L. Moore:

Join us next week for another snapshot of recent scholarship of teaching and learning on **60-second SoTL from Elon University's Center for Engaged Learning**. Learn more about the Center at www.CenterForEngagedLearning.org.

2:28

(Piano Music)