Survey Assessment, Summary Report **(2007)**
Submitted by Anne Zanzucchi
Interviews: Groups of three, Interview 1: 7 / 9 and Interview 2: 8 / 9 of total students group

Surveys: Faculty, Tutor and Mentor

Time Management
The first interview question focuses on the transition Summer Bridge (SB) students are making from high school to college, whether it be their perceptions of the differences or their hopes and fears about the fall semester. The most common concern regarding their academic success and transition to college included managing workload. In several cases, workload was identified as "time management" (86%). Others were either curious or concerned about how WRI 1 would apply to future courses (50%). Some expressed concerns about balancing responsibilities, particularly commutes, family, employment, and academics (25%). Time management was cited as a notable concern in faculty surveys as well.

Reading skills
The next question focuses on SB students' perceived gains in terms of academic skills and / or learning strategies, with particular focus on how these skills might apply to future courses or their intended discipline. The most common response, in both interviews, focused on reading strategies (interview 1: 86%; interview 2: 75%). Descriptions of this skill varied, including "reading like a writer, writing like a reader" to comprehend textbooks more deeply [IS], "serves as a reference when writing an essay, also useful for memory" [JS], "easy to see how annotating readings will help in other courses, e.g. Introduction to Biology and WRI 10" [IR], and "read everything, if you don't read you cannot build an essay" [JS].
It is interesting that students identified reading skills as a significant gain in light of tutor, mentor and faculty surveys. Smith, WP faculty, notes "comprehension problems with academic texts (inability to find thesis and rephrase it); problems finding support for thesis." She also sees an "inability to summarize and paraphrase (simply extracting author's words and couching it in their own)." In response to these reading comprehension issues, Smith employed "reading response journals in various formats (double-, triple-entry journals); posting questions about the reading on the Discussion thread and having students respond to each one before discussing as a group." Van Bebber, WP faculty, also notes "comprehension of reading material is a significant issue. Frequent miscomprehension leads to inaccuracies in the writing" to which she included "giving time to students to process questions, either through conversation or through writing down response before joining the broader discussion." She notes this helped with skills as well as confidence levels.
These discrepancies between perceived gains and outcomes are significant. The positive interpretation is that both cohorts view reading comprehension as an essential skill, a building block to writing and learning.

Other academic skills and learning strategies

Other skills that were noted include analyzing teacher expectations as well as lectures, writing skills, understanding alternative viewpoints, developing an academic style / voice, building an academic vocabulary, and working collaboratively.
Faculty noted specific teaching methods that lead to desired outcomes. Smith mentioned focusing students on responding to questions, "the first step was to assure they understood it – clarifying questions, asking students to restate directions." Writing to learn and collaboration were also critical skills, as Smith notes it helped to "allow students to write down their responses [to assigned reading]. After they wrote, asking to share with peer and then peer group sharing response. By the end of 8 weeks, less timed was need with the first two steps of this procedure." Both instructors employed teaching strategies that addressed prevalent issues and themes found in all surveys and interviews, namely reading comprehension, developing drafts, adjusting to academic culture, and managing time.

Tutor and Faculty Feedback
SB students were also asked to reflect on when they feel comfortable sharing their writing for faculty feedback and tutor support. Nearly all of the students emphasized the importance of having a full draft (88%), with many reporting needing a second complete draft to feel comfortable asking for help (25%). This process was described as "must be a full draft, otherwise uncomfortable sharing ideas" [ME], "want it to be polished before feedback" [AS], and it is important to have "enough developed to discuss ideas and have questions, so feedback helps" [AM]. Only one student reported feeling comfortable with seeking help from an instructor or tutor on interpreting an assignment to begin an essay. These results are consistent with faculty observations and tutoring experiences. Smith notes an on-going challenge for students will be "communicating with instructors." All tutors reported that they focused on a full-draft of an essay with students.
One notable issue was mentioned by a tutor, Jack McCrone, about when tutoring can make the greatest impact: "I think the beginning of an assignment, or the first draft is when I have the most impact as a tutor. This is when the student generally is not very sure of what direction he / she is moving in – I help them take what ideas they have on the assignment, and form it into a clear thesis." It is interesting that the beginning of the assignment is viewed as critical to this tutor, especially because at this point students will not seek assistance. Also notable is the discrepancy between the students' sense of completion with the full draft and the tutor's perspective that this is a beginning point.

Academic resources
The next focus point was on academic resources, and which ones responded best to student needs. In the first interview, perhaps because of schedules, students frequently mentioned working with librarians and databases (43%). Due to employment schedule conflicts, two students had yet to meet with tutors or librarians (29%). Tutors were also mentioned frequently as a useful resource (43%) with comments like tutors "help with visualizing what needs fixing" [AM] and "offer much encouragement and explain how papers work" [JT]. The answers in the second interview were more diverse, suggesting that students had worked with a wider range of resources. Useful resources identified included academic advising, databases, mentoring, Student First Center, and computer support.

When asked what additional resources would be useful to their academic career, students offered several suggestions. About one-third of the students had difficulty gaining internet or computer access at home, which was a complicating factor in their studies. A computer loan service, for home use, was suggested by 43% of the students – the most common recommendation. They are also interested in learning more about research skills, Career Services, student employment on campus, and study groups.

Faculty surveys echoed some of the students' suggestions. Smith recommended more practice with research skills and library searching skills. Other suggestions for how to improve services include: (1.) mentoring beginning earlier during the summer, (2.) on-campus and off-campus activities, (3.) extended library hours, especially if mobile technology is not available, (4.) more interaction with other professors (students could interview faculty to assess expectations, etc.), and (5.) work with rubrics from other disciplines. Van Bebber recommended making efforts to continue learning community models throughout the year.