

In-Class Compared to Hybrid (Online) U110 First-Year Seminar Courses

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to understand student perceptions of U110 First-Year Seminar (FYS) courses offered at IUPUI. Specific focus was given to differences between the in-class and hybrid (online) format. University College FYS courses are designed to help students acclimate to the college environment by providing personal development assignments, instructional support, and critical information about thriving in a new academic and social environment. National research has shown that programs such as first-year seminars provide essential assistance to students during the stressful time of transitioning to college and can also affect actual persistence rates and students' intentions to persist (Schnell & Doetkott, 2003; Porter & Swing, 2006). The UC courses were designed to provide positive experiences that can instill confidence in new students and help them successfully transition to IUPUI.

After finishing their FYS U110 course, students in both the in-class and online hybrid formats voluntarily completed a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to gather information on student learning and development. Individual questions were grouped together based on previous research and theory and formed into seven (7) reliable constructs (Table 2, pg., 2). The constructs are: *use of technology*, *time management/study skills*, *critical thinking*, *transitional assistance*, *goal commitment*, *diversity*, and *peer interactions*.

Summary of Findings

After comparing the hybrid and in-class groups using independent samples t-tests, four significant differences were found between the 7 constructs. These differences suggested that students in the in-class format rated their experiences higher in *peer interactions* $t(161)=3.49$, $p=.001$, *critical thinking* $t(154)=2.97$, $p<.05$, *goal commitment* $t(142)=1.99$, $p<.05$, and *time management and study skills* $t(161)=2.00$, $p<.05$. Table 1 shows the mean differences and significance levels of the differences in the constructs. Table 2 breaks down each construct into its individual items.

Additionally Table 2 shows students in the in-class format rated ten individual items significantly higher. These items included *establish an effective study schedule* $t(157)=2.16$, $p<.05$, *prepare for tests and exams* $t(160)=3.27$, $p<.05$, *actively participate in class discussions* $t(144)=3.54$, $p=.001$, *succeed academically* $t(161)=2.2$, $p<.05$, *adjust to college life* $t(153)=2.24$, $p<.05$, *find my way around campus* $t(149)=4.14$, $p<.001$, *locate campus resources* $t(151)=2.72$, $p<.05$, *decide on a major or future career* $t(149)=2.3$, $p<.05$, *established close friendships* $t(148)=5.14$, $p<.001$, *met new people* $t(194)=2.18$, $p<.05$.

Figure 1 Mean Differences in FYS In-class v. Hybrid (online) Formats

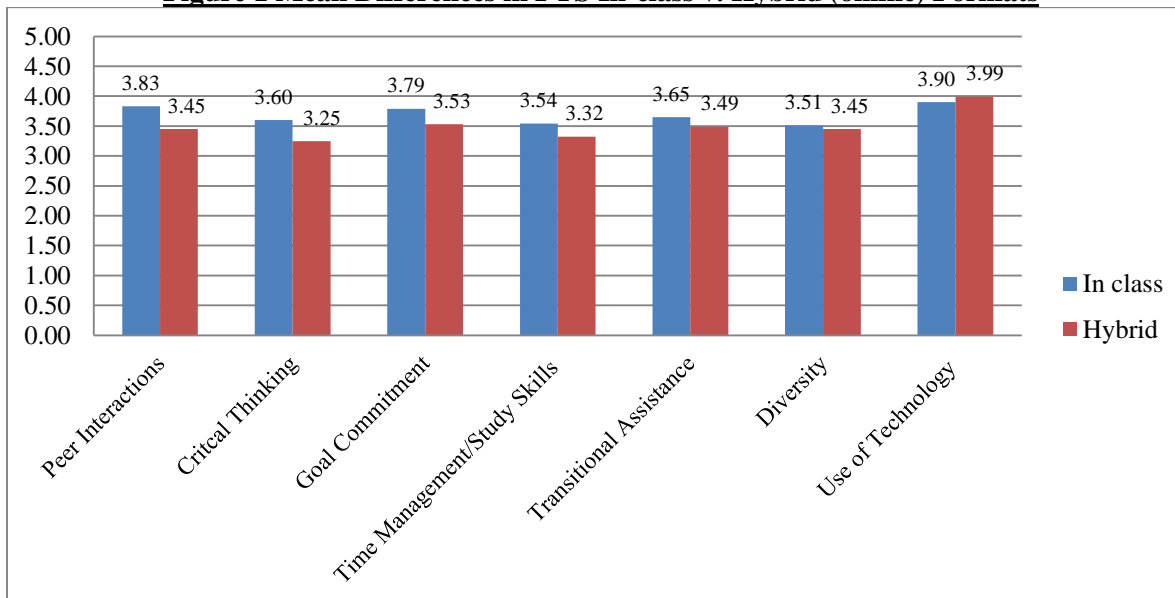


Table 1: Main Constructs: Differences and Significance

Construct	Mean (In class)	Mean (Hybrid)	Mean Difference	Reliability (α)	Effect Size (r)	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Peer interactions**	3.83	3.45	.38	.74	.18	3.49	.001
Critical Thinking	3.60	3.25	.35	.91	.16	2.97	.004
Goal Commitment	3.79	3.53	.26	.89	.11	1.99	.048
Time Management and Study Skills	3.54	3.32	.22	.93	.10	2.00	.047
Transitional Assistance	3.65	3.49	.16	.93	.08	1.45	.151
Diversity	3.51	3.45	.06	.91	.02	.482	.631
Use of Technology	3.90	3.99	.08	.86	-.04	-.686	.494

Table 2: Individual Constructs and Question Item Breakdown

Use of Technology ($\alpha=.87$)					
	Mean (in class)	Standard Deviation	Mean (Online)	Standard Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Send and receive emails from my IUPUI e-mail account	3.78	1.36	3.76	1.30	.893
Use IUPUI Oncourse technology	4.01	1.20	4.19	1.06	.124
Time Management and Study Skills ($\alpha=.94$)					
Set priorities so I can accomplish what is most important to me	3.77	1.20	3.71	1.09	.619
Manage my time and meet my responsibilities	3.70	1.20	3.57	1.06	.258
Establish an effective study schedule	3.51	1.29	3.23	1.19	.032
Prepare for tests and exams**	3.21	1.36	2.76	1.23	.001
Critical Thinking ($\alpha=.93$)					
See multiple sides of issues	3.55	1.28	3.15	1.26	.004
Evaluate the quality of information	3.59	1.22	3.34	1.09	.043
Critically examine ideas and issues	3.54	1.26	3.26	1.13	.026
Actively participate in class discussions**	3.78	1.22	3.27	1.32	.001
Transitional Assistance ($\alpha=.94$)					
Manage and cope with stress	3.29	1.34	3.08	1.31	.132
Succeed Academically	3.79	1.27	3.50	1.19	.029
Adjust to college life	3.90	1.23	3.60	1.24	.026
Feel able to meet the demands and expectations of college	3.73	1.24	3.60	1.08	.276
Made a successful transition to IUPUI	3.78	1.27	3.71	1.20	.602
Find my way around campus**	3.80	1.32	3.19	1.32	.000
Locate campus resources (e.g. Writing Center, Math Assistance Center, Bepko Learning Center, Advising, or Career Services)	4.18	1.11	3.85	1.08	.007
Participated in campus sponsored activities and events	2.97	1.37	3.00	1.29	.809
Feel connected to IUPUI	3.54	1.29	3.37	1.16	.206
Goal Commitment ($\alpha=.89$)					
Decide on a major or future career	3.65	1.38	3.30	1.33	.022
My personal goals	3.89	1.20	3.66	1.20	.094
My motivations for attending college	3.90	1.28	3.63	1.29	.067
Diversity ($\alpha=.92$)					
Developed appreciation of social and cultural diversity	3.47	1.34	3.46	1.30	.957
Discussed ideas with students with views different from my own	3.55	1.29	3.40	1.20	.254
Peer Interactions ($\alpha=.83$)					
Work with other students on class assignments	3.70	1.27	3.68	1.09	.877
Established close friendships**	3.70	1.35	2.95	1.31	.000
Met new people	4.06	1.63	3.75	1.21	.030

Note: Bolded items indicate significance of .05

** indicates significance of .001

References

Porter, S.R., & Swing, R.L. (2006). Understanding how first-year seminars affect persistence. *Research in Higher Education, 47*(1), 89-109.

Schnell, C. A., & Doetkott, C.D. (2003). First year seminars produce long-term impact. *Journal of College Student Retention, 4*(4), 377-391.