



WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE IMPACT OF FOUNDATIONS OF EXCELLENCE® IN THE FIRST COLLEGE YEAR

Our participation in the project spawned collaboration among faculty/staff offices and personnel that has continued into the present. ~Augsburg College 03-04 Four-Year Founding Institution

First-to second-year retention has increased substantially since our involvement in the Foundations Project. ~Columbia College 03-04 Four-Year Founding Institution

This is one of the first times in our history where staff, faculty, and students in these diverse roles have worked together on a common project that is focused on students. ~Davenport University 05-06 Four-Year Cohort

The process captures the best aspects of self-study, evidence-driven decision making, assessment and student learning, and engagement of students in their learning. ~Steven Crow, Executive Director, Higher Learning Commission

The final product was an Improvement Plan which is aligned with the University's strategic plan... The FoE Project provided faculty the opportunity to participate in University discussions of general education reform resulting in significant improvements in general education and on-going assessment. ~Illinois State University 03-04 Four-Year Founding Institution

It [Foundations of Excellence] allowed us, in a structured fashion, to ask ourselves the types of questions that too often go unasked. Further, it forced us to provide evidence for our assertions. ~Indiana State University 05-06 Four-Year Cohort

A perhaps unintended consequence of this process has been the intellectual cross-fertilization of campus. Offices whose personnel rarely interact outside their unit have learned from others and others have learned from them. ~Indiana State University 05-06 Four-Year Cohort

The campus will continue to use the Foundations Action Plan in guiding our work with entering students. We do not consider it a "static" report but will continue to attend to the Dimensions as we seek improvement in our work. ~Indiana University, Purdue University Indianapolis 03-04 Four-Year Founding Institution

The collaboration with the Foundations network helped us to establish a better informed planning process. ~Indiana Wesleyan University 03-04 Four-Year Founding Institution

This project hasn't always been easy, but it has been invaluable in helping the College move forward to a more unified delivery of services to new students. The campus-wide discussions engendered through this project have been rich and rewarding. ~Kennebec Valley Community College 05-06 Two-Year Founding Institution

The Dimension work, especially specifying "concerns" certainly has been helpful in revealing areas in which we need to be more purposeful. ~Longview Community College 05-06 Two-Year Founding Institution

The FoE process was, without a doubt, a primary catalyst for the high priority status now given to the policies, practices and structures associated with the experience of all of our new students. ~ Madonna University 03-04 Four-Year Founding Institution

We now have greater presence of the faculty in all decisions made about the first year. ~Medgar Evers College of CUNY 03-04 Four-Year Founding Institution

The FoE process almost instantly gave the first year the attention and the priority it deserves... To be able to focus on improvement in the future rather than looking back was very appealing and much more energizing than the alternative retrospective analysis. ~Midland Lutheran College 05-06 Four-Year Cohort

The time frame created by our joint commitment [to Foundations of Excellence and reaffirmation of accreditation] assures that there will be sufficient focus on the first-year for long enough to make changes that can impact the campus culture. ~Missouri Southern State University 05-06 Four-Year Cohort

Our work in the Foundations project was the first time we saw interdivisional collaboration with teeth in it. ~Nazareth College of Rochester 03-04 Four-Year Founding Institution

We were aware of several issues (at least on an anecdotal basis), but the Foundational Dimensions have given us additional information to support our beliefs. ~Northeastern Illinois University 05-06 Four-Year Cohort

One thing I love about FoE is that it's a retention project that doesn't focus on retention for the sake of the institution; it focuses on retention for the sake of the student... In addition, we've found that the FoE assessment phase has made significant contributions to our HLC self-study. ~Oakton Community College 05-06 Two-Year Founding Institution

We have never seen anything that we've ever done that has had the impact on the faculty and staff that this project has. ~Pellissippi State Technical College 05-06 Two-Year Founding Institution

Foundations of Excellence project has been and still is one of the most rewarding experiences as a professional in higher education. The rewards from our institution's participation were visible from the beginning of the process. ~Salisbury University 05-06 Four-Year Cohort

The standards are not only aspirational, but they can also be used to measure our current level of excellence in our approach to the first year. ~Slippery Rock University 06-07 Four-Year Cohort

As a result of this involvement, we have been able to initiate a number of successful programs including a large-scale summer orientation, a freshman council (now a sophomore council as well!), a new position (coordinator of the FYE) and a summer reading program. Most importantly, we have been able to raise the success of our first-year students to a high priority for our top administrators. ~SUNY Brockport 03-04 Four-Year Founding Institution

We tied our work on the Foundations project to the campus's larger strategic planning effort. ~Texas A & M Corpus Christi 03-04 Four-Year Founding Institution

Participation in Foundations of Excellence has proven to be an ongoing transformative process. The project also contributed toward a greater sense of shared purpose, particularly between Academic and Student Affairs. ~ University of Wisconsin, Parkside 03-04 Four-Year Founding Institution

The faculty and administrators who are served on the various Dimensions committees gained a better understanding and appreciation of the work of others on campus who assist new students. ~University of Akron 05-06 Four-Year Cohort

The Foundations of Excellence process is one that is very methodical, systematic, and data driven. The process requires collaboration across an institution and provides numerous opportunities for dialogue around student success and engagement. ~University of Wisconsin Colleges 05-06 Two-Year Founding Institution

The focus on the first-year student, the opportunity to evaluate our policies and practices, and the awakening we have experienced as we discuss the Current Practices Inventory the steering committee has created a synergistic environment that has empowered the whole to resolve the problems we identify. ~Virginia Highlands Community College 05-06 Two-Year Founding Institution

The project has afforded us a richer and timely opportunity for greater and deeper realization/ implementation of our institutional mission. ~Wright State University 05-06 Four-Year Cohort

THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS, COLLECTED IN AN ANONYMOUS PROJECT EVALUATION, ARE POSTED WITHOUT ATTRIBUTION.

“[It has been the] best year as a college that we have had for many, many years...one of our most upbeat years. Whole message has been on excellence and that is pretty exciting.”

“Amazing. Silos are breaking down.”

“Why reinvent the wheel? We are getting the best of what's out there. This is a mature product.”

“FoE facilitates conversation and helps illuminate the ‘big picture’.”

“All are learning so much about the institution. Learning from each other.”

“You will never learn more about your campus, its strengths and weaknesses, than to go through this process. It will teach you more than any campus wide accreditation process. Because there are very few people involved in that accreditation and it happens infrequently, and this would be a good practice run...to see where you are...to know where the holders of knowledge are.”