

## Helping Student Succeed in College: Continuing to Explore Meta-majors and Career Pathways in Gateway Courses

Tallahassee Community College  
August 4, 2015

### **TITLE III: A FRAMEWORK FOR SUCCESS: INCREASING ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH MULTI- YEAR CAREER PATHWAYS**

- Five-year federal grant to help improve success rates for low-income and first generation students
- TCC's grant initiative involves helping students determine their path early on to increase the likelihood of degree completion

## Rationale

- unclear goals and lack an understanding how to link academic and career goals
- overwhelmed with too many options
- change their major multiple times
- changes of degree completion decreases
- 17% - 3 or more, 57% - 2 times, 61% - 1 time, 65% - never

## TCC's Two-Ponged Approach

- Guiding students from admission through graduation by
  - 1) creating an orientation, assessment, and advising protocol that embraces meta-majors and career pathways
  - 2) enriching the current curriculum of required introductory college-level gateway courses with active, experiential learning contextualized to each of the meta-majors.

## Career Related Activities in Gateway Courses

- 23 gateway courses associated with the various 8 meta-majors
  - common prerequisites to majors within the meta-majors
  - go through a three-year process that includes designing, piloting, and implementing new strategies/assignments/content

## Career Related Activities in Gateway Courses

- Goals:
  - Demonstrate connection between academic skills and knowledge with knowledge and skill in chosen field
  - Gain career-related experience through research, service-learning, internships, or other means
  - Use active, collaborative, and experiential learning strategies

## Gateway Courses

- College Composition
- College Algebra
- Lib Arts Math I/II
- Introductory Stats
- General Psychology
- Human Development
- Principles of Sociology
- National Government
- Macroeconomics
- Intro to Anthropology
- History of the US II
- Biology for Majors
- General Chemistry I
- General Physics I
- A&P I
- Intro to Humanities
- Art Appreciation
- Music Appreciation
- Theater Appreciation
- Intro to Literature
- Philosophy
- College Success

## College Success Options (now a general education requirement)

- SLS 1510 College Success
- SLS 2261 Leadership Development

## College Success

- Picking up where we left off with Orientation
  - Sig3 Full Assessment
  - Research project involving meta-majors and career options
- This is in addition to the other college related skills that are being taught in this course

## Examples of how experiential learning might be included in the gateway classes.

- In a college algebra course a formula may be applied to a specific real world example, showing students what to expect in their STEM or Health Science careers.
- In a humanities or history course students might take field trips to see local professionals work with artifact interpretation and preservation.
- Students taking composition might research a specific social or culture problem in their career field of interest to analyze in a required problem analysis essay.

## End result?

- Students are able to:
  - chose a pathway early on
  - make connections between career interests and coursework
  - sustain focus through to completion

## Questions?

Sarah Smitherman  
Director of the Title III Academic Pathways Project  
and Activities Coordinator  
[smithers@tcc.fl.edu](mailto:smithers@tcc.fl.edu)  
850-201-9872