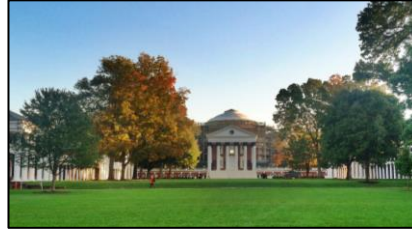


Meriwether Lewis Institute for Citizen Leadership
Summer 2018 Project Document
Reimagine the UVA Second Year Experience



How should the University work to improve the Second year student experience?

Here in our Bicentennial year, we seek your help as servant leaders and subject experts. We ask that your cohort of MLI Fellows undertake a project to help guide the University's renewal of the 2nd Year Experience. With the design thinking skills you've developed in ARCH 3070 with Prof. Elgin Cleckley, with your own recent experience with the current "second year UVA experience," and with your demonstrably creative problem solving skills, this summer we ask you to provide your input—as one among many University stakeholders—who are poised to reimagine, to renew, the UVA second year experience.

We've all heard about the "sophomore slump." Samantha Stainburn, writing for the *New York Times*, describes it in the following way:

"Pity the sophomore. You are feted as a freshman, but no one seems to care that you're back on campus. Quirky first-year seminars have been replaced by large foundation classes, making you doubt that major in econ or bio. You're not high enough up the totem pole to do fun stuff like join a research team or lead student organizations. With the newness of college gone, malaise sets in."—Samantha Stainburn, "The Sophomore Slump," *NYT*, 11/1/13.

The 2018 MLI summer project asks you to consider the possible reasons for the "malaise," and, more specifically, to propose what UVA as an institution can do to ameliorate students' reduced engagement with their second year UVA experience.



"Higher education can no longer ignore the sophomore slump. The sophomore year is the toughest year in college... We have to build on first-year programs to empower sophomore students to define the questions that will guide their academic journeys, to identify the opportunities and activities that will lead to their desired post collegiate careers, and to develop relationships with faculty members, staff members and peers who will mentor them along the way. --Inside HigherEd, Sarah Barber and Robert Thacker, 9/29/17¹

¹ <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2017/09/29/how-improve-retention-sophomore-students-essay>

As you think through the project we're asking you to undertake this summer, please consider the key framing pillars incoming President Ryan has identified as core tenets for the University: ***engaging community, engaging in discovery, and engaging in service to self, university and community***. As fellows of the 2020 cohort in the MLI Summer Institute, you are particularly well-positioned with this year's project, which is aimed at improving the second year, to have a profound, lasting impact on the way current students and future alumni will experience their life at UVA.

The charge of the MLI 2018 summer project is to propose ideas that will create the support second year students need as they continue to discover who they are, how they identify, engage with, and garner support from the people, places and processes within the varied communities at UVA, and what their academic, vocational, co-curricular and social goals will be in the second year and beyond. With an eye squarely on *improvement*, and using the design thinking strategies we summarize in ***Exhibit 1***, we ask you to identify experiences, structures, bureaucracies, organizations, and geographies, typical of the University's second year experience that you believe UVA should re-imagine, renew, or revise completely as it works to serve the second year student population.

* * *

With the success of more structured first year programs over the past decade, student affairs professionals across the country have turned to exploring how schools can better facilitate the transition from a structured first year experience to the less structured second year experience in ways that make the transition more fulfilling to students. As you begin to grapple with the project topic, consider references below from the past five years that indicate that engaged academic experiences in the classroom, mentoring by faculty or administrators, and demonstrable opportunities to connect with faculty lead to enhanced well-being and an ability to thrive in life after college. In particular, a 2014 Gallup-Purdue Index poll identified six key markers for student success that, even more than the type of school the graduates attended (for example, public or private), correlated to both success in college and success in "long-term life outcomes such as employee engagement and well-being."²

The "Big Six" collegiate experiences focused on community support, career, and extracurricular fun and service outside the classroom.

1. I had at least one professor at [college] who made me excited about learning.
2. My professor(s) at [college] cared about me as a person.
3. I had a mentor who encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams.
4. I worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete.
5. I had an internship or job that allowed me to apply what I was learning in the classroom.
6. I was extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations while I attended [college].

² Seymour, Sean and Lopez, Shane, "Big Six" College Experiences Linked to Life Preparedness," Gallup Press Release, Washington, D.C., April 8, 2015. <http://news.gallup.com/poll/182306/big-six-college-experiences-linked-life-preparedness.aspx> [Accessed: May 28, 2018]

“Gallup's research has shown that these collegiate experiences are related to college graduates' long-term well-being, which encompasses more than just physical health. It measures how individuals feel about and experience their daily lives across five elements: purpose, social, financial, community and physical.”³ **Exhibit 2** provides a more detailed breakdown of percentages of student responses to each of the “Big 6” markers. Similarly, **Exhibit 3** provides data from a 2015 Ruffalo Noel Levitz report pertaining *specifically to student ratings of the second year experience* that may be of interest as you begin to immerse yourself in the MLI project.⁴

Just as importantly, you’ll want to look at the [Student Experience at the Research University \(SERU\)](#) study conducted annually by UVA since 2013. A brief review of the 2016 data from the SERU study revealed that, relative to **all other years of students** at the University, second year students reported lower satisfaction with, and less effective academic interactions in relation to, the courses they took in the second year. **Exhibit 4** provides a list of UVA sites that speak directly to the second year experience.

The UVA SERU results summarized in *Figure 1* to the right, revolve around academics, though your charge, of course, is larger in scope. While you might start with the survey, you certainly won’t stop there. Remember, *your* second year experience may not reflect the *typical* second year experience. As with any good design project, empathy interviews are important—and starting with the members of your own group may illustrate the multiplicity of student second year experiences across the University.

2nd years reported significantly lower frequency of the following academic behaviors for the past academic year:
Contributed to a class discussion
Brought up ideas / concepts from different courses during class discussions
Asked an insightful question in class
Made a class presentation*
Had a class in which the professor knew or learned your name*
Worked on class projects with classmates outside of class
2nd years reported significantly lower satisfaction with:
Access to small classes
Ability to get into a major that you want*
Value of your education for the price you are paying

Figure 1: Selected highlights of SERU 2016 compiled by members of the OVPSA in 2018.

Throughout the project, you’ll work in assigned **five person groups**. Your initial conversations might focus on how the transition from first to second year can encourage increased independence and continue to provide necessary support for personal growth.



³ Busteded, Brandon and Auter, Zac, “Career-Relevant Education Linked to Student Well-Being,” *Gallup blog*, Feb. 13, 2018. http://news.gallup.com/opinion/gallup/226934/career-relevant-education-linked-student.aspx?g_source=link_WWWV9&g_medium=related_insights_tile2&g_campaign=item_228320&g_content=Career-Relevant%2520Education%2520Linked%2520to%2520Student%2520Well-Being [accessed: May 28, 2018.]

⁴ Ruffalo Noel Levitz, “2015 Report Attitudes of Second-Year College Students That Influence College Completion,” 2015. http://learn.ruffalonl.com/rs/395-EOG-977/images/2015_Attitudes_of_Second_Year_Students.pdf

You might consider the following, among many possible, questions as you start the project.

- Why should UVA be grappling with this issue at this time?
- Who governs the second year experience? If not one person, who are the many stakeholders? What are their areas of governance?

How do we support students as they transition from an intensive first year residential experience to a less structured second year experience?

- How do we **enhance** relationships, **bridge** existing communities, and **create** new communities for those who have not yet found one?
- How do we serve a **diversity** of communities, including transfer students who have not had the benefit of the first-year experience?
- How do we encourage **resiliency** in the face of change and challenge among communities?

How do we help to shape the academic and vocational self-efficacy of our second year students?

- Are students engaging in **personal and intellectual discovery** during their second year, and how do we improve what elements exist to help them do so?
- How are second years **engaging with faculty** during this year to help navigate important academic choices?
- How do we encourage **resiliency** in the face of difficult academic, personal, and vocational challenges?

These questions, of course, are not exhaustive; they are not a check list of what to consider, but rather a starting point to prime your group's approach to the project as a whole.

As your recommendations become more clear, consider larger questions of which the 2nd year experience may be a part. How does the implementation of your ideas make sense within other larger plans for student engagement and involvement? How much will your ideas cost? Where will you get the funds? Make sure to include well-considered, feasible budgets for your proposals. Make sure to locate your proposal within viable relationships to overarching organizational and political structures at the University.



As with any project, you'll want to keep in mind the **key decision makers** – and the audience you ideally will persuade – for the project. Your audience of key decision makers includes, but is not exclusive to:

- **Allen Groves**, Associate VP for Student Affairs & University Dean of Students
- **Marsh Pattie**, Assistant VP for Student Affairs & Associate Dean of Students
- **Dirron Allen**, Assistant Dean of Students & Director of Student Activities
- **Nicole Eramo**, Executive Director for Planning & Assessment, VPSA, and Second Year Council Advisor
- **Julia Bartus-Dobson**, Assistant Director, Student & Young Alumni Program, Alumni Association – and Second Year Council Advisor
- **Everette Fortner**, Director of the UVA Career Center
- **Carrie Rudder**, Director of the Career Counseling and Advising Team
- **Maurice Apprey**, Dean of the Office of African-American Affairs
- **Vickie Gist**, Assistant Dean of Students and Director, Multicultural Student Services
- **Rachel Most**, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Academic Programs
- **Association Deans:**
<http://college.as.virginia.edu/association-deans>
- **Aaron Laushway, Sarah Dodge, John Cheney**, Housing & Residence Life, and the Transfer Student Experience
- **Brian Cullaty**, Director of Undergraduate Research Opportunities
- **Katie Densberger**, Clemons Total Advising Center
- **Adrien Harraway**, Associate Athletics Director for Student Services
- **Winnie Tsao**, Career Peer Educator Program
- **Eleni Orfanides**, Transfer Peer Advisor Program
- **Omar Elhaj**, outgoing SYC President
- **Ally Kammerman**, outgoing SYC VP
- **Jason Anderson**, incoming SYC President
- **Kristin Myers**, incoming SYC VP

Keep the audience of key decision makers in mind as you frame your research, as you conduct your interviews, and as you create each of the deliverables for the MLI Project. Pay close attention to the multiple audiences' potentially overlapping, or even conflicting, agendas. You are entering a space with the MLI project in which multiple department, administrative and student groups have already been conducting research and have started to develop their own agendas in relation to the questions and concerns undergirding the second year experience project. You will be most successful if you consider your project, and your interactions with members of the community, with a clear sighted understanding of what is important, and why, for the multiple stakeholders who will be responsible for implementing the 2nd year revision.

The MLI 2nd Year Experience Project Sequence & Deliverables

1. **Monday 6/4 Review of Design Thinking Methodology with Prof. Elgin Cleckley**
2. **Friday 6/8 2:00pm Initial Project Idea Pitches**
 - a. 2 min. pitch & short write-up of *initial* insights & *working* ideas

3. Monday 6/18 2:00pm Project Update Briefings

- a. 3-5 min briefing
- b. Preliminary proposal deck

You will share a succinct oral explanation of your current proposal for the Second Year Renewal Project. You may choose the format you think best reflects your analysis of the problems and opportunities as you have framed them and your working solution(s) at this point. However, you are required to include the following two elements:

- 1) A 3-5min. briefing to the fellows, faculty, and invited guests
- 2) An 6-8 slide working deck that:
 - Includes a potential title slide for your final presentation
 - Provides a working executive summary of your proposed ideas
 - Demonstrate in 1-2 slides a SAS argument, balanced design, & supporting evidence
 - Captures *visually* your thinking about user/consumer experience (2D or 3D)
 - Shares initial results from any polling or quantitative feedback from stakeholders
 - Includes a *developing* list of secondary sources informing your project
 - Includes a list of current and pending interviewees (Names, dates, key take-aways)

Create audience-centered, client ready materials that make your ideas easy to follow or visualize, and design the presentation of your ideas with the ultimate audience of students, faculty, alumni, and UVA administrators firmly in mind. Use **data, story and argument** to convey your ideas with clarity.

Please submit your preliminary decks to the MLI Faculty Team (Ballinger, Gould, Lampkin, and Pentz) via email and during the scheduled briefings **at 2:00pm, Monday, June 18**. MLI faculty will attend your briefings, review the materials you provide, offer feedback, and meet with your group to discuss the next step in your process.

4. Monday 6/25 1:30pm Project Budget Proposals

- a. Working Budget for your proposed Second Year Renewal project

Using excel, the tools you learned from Prof. White, and your research into current and likely costs for your proposal, create a working, rational and defensibly viable budget for your project. Be ready to email your budgets to the MLI Faculty Team (Ballinger, Gould, Lampkin, and Pentz) in the classroom at 1:30pm at the start of the scheduled Communication session.

5. Friday 6/29 5:00pm Final Client Deck

- a. Professional, client ready slide deck

Among your final deliverables will be a **client deck** of approximately 20 slides, with additional exhibit or appendix slides—no more than five, in which you share your final proposal for the Second Year Renewal project. The client deck is just one, tangible, portable document administrators can access during future discussions of the second year experience.

Please submit the client deck portion of your project both electronically and in print format to the MLI faculty by **5:00p.m. Friday June 29** so that we can make it available to audience members prior to your group presentations on Monday.

The order, scope, design style, and emphasis with which you present your comprehensive plan for the Second Year Experience will, naturally, vary across groups. You will want to make sure that your deck: clearly states the reasons for any proposed changes for the second year experience, explores in sufficient depth which problem(s) you're solving for the University through your proposed changes, and provides a detailed, well-researched, logically organized, elegantly articulated and persuasive argument in support of your proposed ideas.

6. Monday 7/2 10:00am Final Group Presentation

a. Public Group Presentation of 2nd Year Renewal Proposals

The final component of the MLI Project allows you to share your work with your peers and the public in a professional and persuasive manner that aligns with the way in which traditional organizations (including the University) vet new ideas. Each group will have a 30 min. time slot within which to present their ideas from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. on **Monday July 2nd**. Group presenting order will be announced **Friday, June 29th**.

Your public presentations will use a group presentation format. While you should plan for 15 minutes of presented content and 15 minutes of discussion and Q&A, *you are free to bring in prototypes, mock ups, videos, interactive components, or any other materials* you believe will help the audience visualize your ideas and give them the information they need with which to make a decision about the viability of your ideas. You are encouraged to incorporate video into your deliverables, but it is not required. Your goal is to help the audience envision and experience your ideas in ways that make those ideas compelling. Everyone in your group should have an opportunity to present and speak before the gathered audience.

The audience will consist of your peers, your MLI faculty, invited key stakeholders and decision makers already involved with the drive to renew the 2nd Year Student Experience at UVA. The goal is—quite literally—to persuade the stakeholder audience to see the value of, and adopt, your ideas. Again, you have the opportunity to improve the second year experience, and indeed the nature of a UVA education, for current and future generations of students.

Exhibit 1: As you work through your MLI summer project, employ and build upon the Design Thinking 5 Step Method that served you well in ARCH 3070

Design Thinking 5 Step Method

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| (1) Issue Identification | (4) Design |
| (2) Data Collection | (5) Presentation for Implementation |
| (3) Analysis and Synthesis of Information | |

I. Identifying the Issues. Empathy Exercises—Potential Approaches (not prescriptive)

Imagine your first year self, and create a list of characteristics that relate to that person and time:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ○ Where did you live? | ○ What were the collective spaces that were characteristic of your 1 st year? |
| ○ What did you experience? | ○ How did you define community? |
| ○ What were the social elements of your 1 st year? | ○ How did you define service? |
| ○ What were the elements of your curriculum? | ○ How did you define discovery? |
| ○ How did you engage with the community? | |

Imagine your second year self, and create a list of characteristics that relate to that person and time:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ○ Where did you live? | ○ What were the collective spaces that were characteristic of your 2 nd year? |
| ○ What did you experience? | ○ How did you define community? |
| ○ What were the social elements of your 2 nd year? | ○ How did you define service? |
| ○ What were the elements of your curriculum? | ○ How did you define discovery? |
| ○ How did you engage with the community? | |

Persona Mapping:

- Based on your own characteristics and those of your class, develop personas representative of the defined characteristics above.
- **Map** these personas through their first and third year at UVA.
- **Identify hot spots** of stress and high/low energy throughout this calendar

Identify:

- In your own experiences, where are areas for improvement, and what are best practices to be carried forward?
- What are the identified areas and issues you would like to address?

II. Collecting Data

- What *sources* of information are available to me?
- In what *form or structure* can I collect data regarding this issue?
- What data has *already* been collected, and am I being repetitive?
- Is my group being *inclusive and comprehensive* of the sources of data we are collecting?
- What contexts do I need to consider as I collect this data?
- ****You will find previously collected data on your Collab site under the 'Resources' Tab.****

III. Analysis and Synthesis of Information

- What is the best form of understanding this data – visually, verbally, orally, in written form?

IV. Design

V. Presentation for Implementation

Exhibit 2: Gallup Poll summary of “Big 6” student experiences with % of students surveyed who indicated they had experienced one of the key elements to collegiate success.

The Undergraduate Experience: Support and Experiential Learning

	% Strongly agree
Support	
I had at least one professor at [College] who made me excited about learning.	63
My professors at [College] cared about me as a person.	27
I had a mentor who encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams.	22
Strongly agree with all three support statements	14
Experiential	
I worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete	32
I had an internship or job that allowed me to apply what I was learning in the classroom.	29
I was extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations while I attended [College].	20
Strongly agree with all three experiential statements	6
Strongly agree with all six statements	3

Gallup-Purdue Index

Feb. 4-March 7, 2014

GALLUP®

Relationship Between “Big Six” and Preparation for Life After College

"[College] prepared me well for life outside of college."

	None of Big Six	One of Big Six	Two of Big Six	Three of Big Six	Four of Big Six	Five of Big Six	All of Big Six
% Strongly agree	5	17	30	43	58	69	82

Gallup-Purdue Index

Feb. 4-March 7, 2014

GALLUP®

Exhibit 3: Survey data from “2015 Report from Ruffalo Noel Levitz—Attitudes of Second Year Students,” suggests a universality of less than ideal perceptions about the second year experience.

http://learn.ruffalonl.com/rs/395-EOG-977/images/2015_Attitudes_of_Second_Year_Students.pdf (See Institute website for full report.)

Table IV: Second-year student satisfaction (institutional impressions)

This table shows the mean satisfaction scores of student respondents to 13 survey items using the seven-point rating scale shown below.

All survey items	Percent of second-year students in agreement					
	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	Male students	Female students	OVERALL percentages
Degree of academic challenge in my classes here	5.75	5.55	5.71	5.59	5.68	5.65
My overall experience as a student at this institution	5.76	5.46	5.84	5.59	5.64	5.62
Variety of majors available here	5.37	5.35	5.47	5.31	5.41	5.38
Level of interaction with other students	5.62	5.18	5.31	5.38	5.35	5.36
Social life (both on and off campus)	5.46	5.25	5.27	5.33	5.33	5.33
Variety of courses available in my (desired) major	5.37	5.23	5.41	5.26	5.33	5.31
Sense of belonging to the college community	5.55	5.05	5.28	5.26	5.27	5.27
Frequency of interactions with my instructors	5.45	4.99	5.52	5.23	5.23	5.23
Opportunities to get involved in activities and events associated with my (desired) major	5.23	4.93	4.95	5.03	5.05	5.05
Leadership opportunities in student government and other organizations	5.18	4.95	4.99	5.02	5.05	5.04
Frequency of communication with my academic advisor	5.10	4.71	5.26	4.88	4.95	4.93
Availability of service learning, internships, and/or other work experiences associated with my career interests	5.09	4.78	4.78	4.87	4.91	4.90
Adequacy of financial assistance available to me	4.88	4.77	5.32	4.96	4.85	4.89

The figures shown in Table IV are the mean responses to this seven-point scale.



Exhibit 4: Selected UVA websites designed to address/support the second year student experience that may be of use as you begin the MLI 2018 summer project

- <https://vpsa.virginia.edu/communications/2017/important-message-parents-second-year-students>
- <https://career.virginia.edu/explore-0/guidance-academic-year/second-year-students>
- <https://parenthandbook.virginia.edu/student-life/housing/second-year>
- <https://college.as.virginia.edu/sites/college.as.virginia.edu/files/AdviceForSecondYears.pdf>
- <https://career.virginia.edu/blog/2017/oct/connecting-your-student-organization-your-future-second-year-council-syc>
- <https://ias.virginia.edu/university-stats-facts/undergraduate-gpa>
- <https://ias.virginia.edu/university-stats-facts>
- <http://s3.amazonaws.com/cville/cm%2Fmutlimedia%2F20160219-BOV-housing-presentation.pdf>