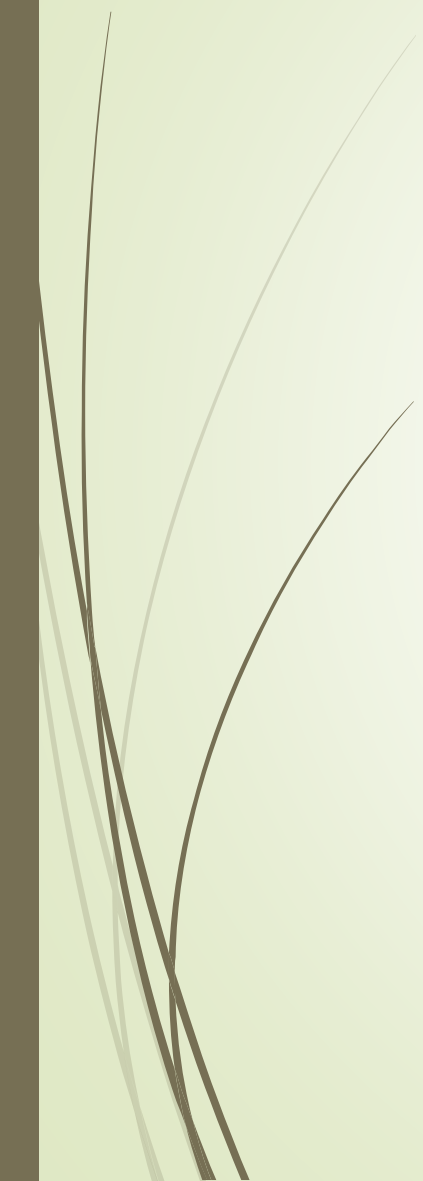



Thriving in College

Center for Teaching Excellence Reflective Practice
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Think about a time as an undergraduate when you felt fully engaged intellectually, socially, and emotionally. Write about what was happening at that time and what you think contributed to your feeling fully engaged.



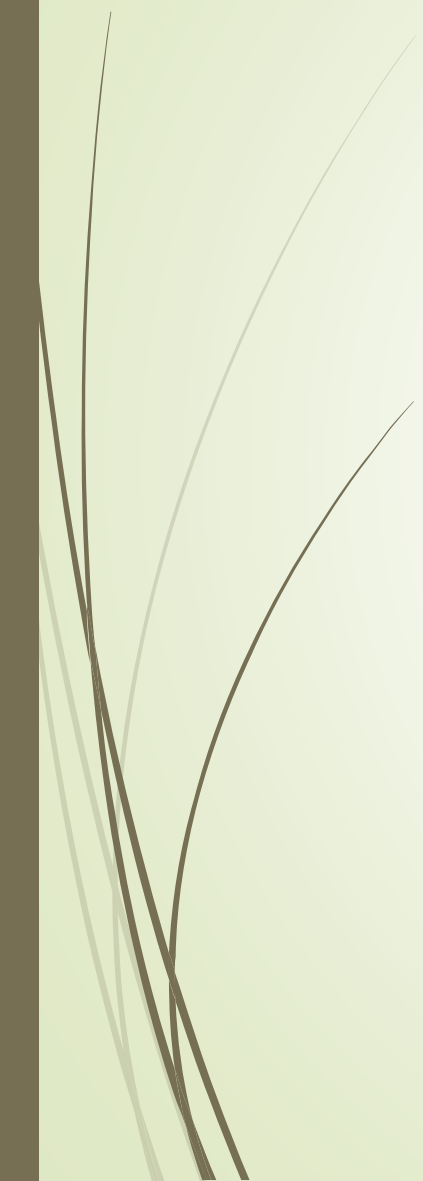
Thriving



- ▶ “Thriving implies more than just surviving in the college environment; it conveys that a student is fully engaged intellectually, socially, and emotionally, and is experiencing a sense of psychological well-being that contributes not only to his or her persistence to graduation, but also to success in life” (Schreiner, Pothoven, Nelson, & McIntosh, 2009, p. 4).
- ▶ **An important aspect of the components of thriving is that they are amenable to change.**



Components of Thriving

- Academic Thriving
 - Intrapersonal Thriving
 - Interpersonal Thriving
- 



Academic Thriving

- ▶ Engaged Learning

- ▶ Students are “psychologically engaged in the learning process; they are meaningfully processing course material, making connections between what they already know or are interested in and what needs to be learned” (p. 6).

- ▶ Academic Determination

- ▶ “Characterized by a powerful motivation to succeed in college and the willingness to invest the necessary effort to do so” (p. 7)
 - ▶ Effectively manage time and multiple demands
 - ▶ Have clear educational goals and ways to achieve them



Intrapersonal Thriving

➤ Positive Perspective

➤ “Students who thrive have an optimistic way of viewing the world and their future, with the result that they tend to be more satisfied with their lives and enjoy the college experience more. . . . A positive perspective is a way of viewing reality and coping with it proactively” (p. 7).

- Take a long-term view and see from multiple viewpoints
- Less likely to overreact
- Can put things in perspective
- Can find positive benefit in negative situations



Interpersonal Thriving

- ▶ Social Connectedness

- ▶ “Having good friends, being in relationships with others who listen to them, and feeling connected to others so that one is not lonely all combine to form this factor” (p. 8).

- ▶ Diverse Citizenship

- ▶ “A combination of openness and valuing of differences in others, along with a desire to make a contribution to one’s community and confidence to do so” (p.8).

- ▶ Give time to help others

- ▶ Respond to others with openness and curiosity

- ▶ Want to make a different in the larger society



Thriving for Specific Student Populations

- First-Year Students
 - Students of Color
 - Sophomores
 - Transfer Students
 - High Risk Students
 - Seniors
 - Graduate Students
- 



First-Year Students

- ▶ **Degree goal**

- ▶ Educational aspirations

- ▶ **Campus involvement**

- ▶ Things they choose versus those chosen for them

- ▶ **Psychological sense of community**

- ▶ Feeling that they belong within a community, have a voice, and can connect with others in meaningful ways



Students of Color

➤ **Sense of belonging**

- Psychological affiliation with the campus
- This is a primary element for Black and Asian students

➤ **Spirituality**

- Pursuit of the sacred, often within religion
- This is a primary element for Black and Hispanic students

➤ **Interaction with faculty**

- Formal (research project) or informal (having coffee)



Sophomores

➤ **Being connected**

- Sense of community
 - Largest contributor to Sophomore thriving
- Interaction with faculty
 - Conversations about careers is most important, followed by conversations about academics

➤ **Cognitive connections**

- Linking current circumstances to future career

➤ **Spirituality**



Transfer Students

- ▶ **Interaction with faculty**

- ▶ Most important factor for Transfer student thriving

- ▶ **Sense of community**

- ▶ Second most important factor

- ▶ **Campus involvement**

- ▶ When they're able to participate in activities on campus, they report higher levels of thriving and stronger sense of community



High Risk Students

- **Success mindset**

- Refusal to dwell on the negative
- Belief that their family deserved for them to succeed
- Desire to prove they could be successful

- **Academic strategies**

- Establishing goals
- Using academic resources
- Learning about themselves in order to engage in learning

- **Supportive relationships**

- With a parent, family/siblings, faculty, God

- **Meaningful involvement**



Seniors

➤ Curiosity

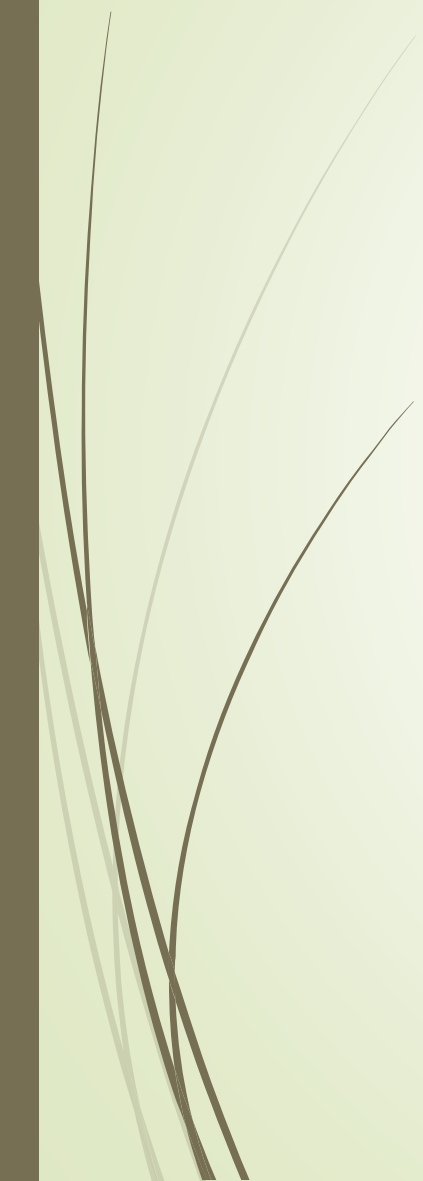
- Embracing uncertainty
- Seeing failure as a learning experience
- Accepting experiences of discomfort as beneficial

➤ Drive and Passion

- Intrinsic motivation
- Self-awareness to enhance passions
- Used passions for decision-making and sense of purpose



Graduate Students

- ▶ Engaged in learning and practical application of learning
 - ▶ Strong sense of community and social connections with faculty and peers
 - ▶ Good fit with the faculty and program
 - ▶ Positive perspective/coping mechanisms on balance issues
- 

Thriving by Student Group

First-Years

Degree Goal

Campus Involvement

Psychological Sense of Community

Transfers

Interaction with Faculty

Sense of Community

Campus Involvement

Students of Color

Sense of Belonging

Spirituality

Faculty Interactions

High Risk Students

Success Mindset

Academic Strategies

Supportive Relationships

Meaningful Involvement

Sophomores

Being Connected

- Sense of Community
- Interaction with Faculty

Cognitive Connections

Spirituality

Seniors

Curiosity

Drive and Passion

Graduate Students

Engaged in learning and practical application of learning

Strong sense of community and social connections with faculty and peers

Good fit with the faculty and program

Positive perspective/coping mechanisms on balance issues



References

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- ▶ Schreiner, L.A., Louis, M. C., & Nelson, D. D. (Eds.). (2012). *Thriving in transitions: A research-based approach to college student success*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.

www.thrivingincollege.org