

FYS Fellows Survey Data

Fall 2022

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Your Experience, Your Voice

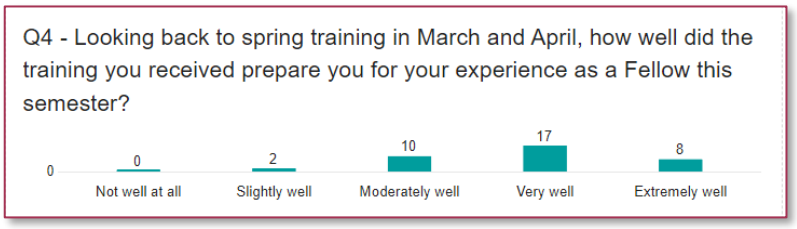
This report summarizes the response data and reflections of First-Year Seminar Fellows who completed the end-of-term Fall 2022 survey.

The insights Fellows provided into their training, their work, and their relationships with students and faculty mentors will help us improve training design, faculty development, and program operations for the coming academic year.



March-April Training

Most Fellows reported that their spring training held up well when working their assignment in Fall 2022.



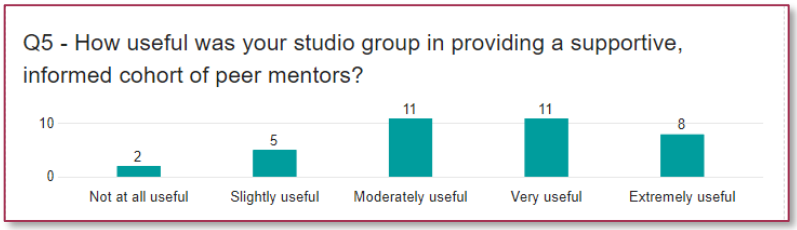
Comments from Fellows

- The training was good; however, I forgot a lot of it by fall, so maybe offer some training in the spring and some in the first week of the fall semester.
- A bit more about some of the on-campus events (like Greek life or even about degree planner) so we can point students in the right direction.
- More diversity training.
- I would provide virtual options.
- It would be cool if there was more experience in handling less active classes, with ways to be more engaging.
- I personally think the fellows' training really only helps new fellows. I think there should be separate trainings for the different levels of fellows.

" I would like to see more training that involves the faculty with their fellows. I think the faculty/fellow relationship can be the most difficult aspect and training together for some parts would be helpful. It would be nice if this training left the fellows more aware of how their professor needs them in the classroom. "

Studio Groups

The feedback on studio groups was mixed. Although a majority rated them as "very" or "extremely" useful, several Fellows suggested ways to raise the interest level in and the value of attending studio group meetings.



" Studio Group ends up being the same thing every week and at some points seems not useful. Once a month would be

" Offer Zoom studio

Comments from Fellows

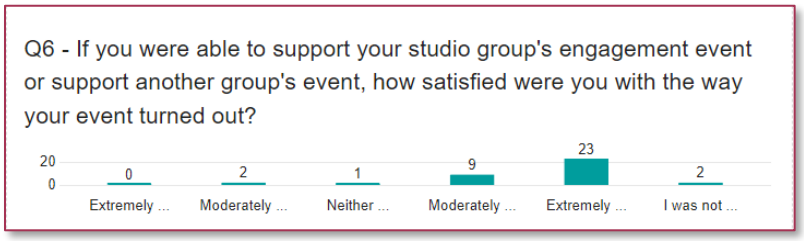
- Larger groups I feel would be useful.
- Only have meetings once a month.
- Improve on the way the meetings are run and have the groups fill out their part of the form and talk about it to the group.
- It felt like sometimes the discussion was forced.
- No studio groups or make them optional.
- Honestly, I loved studio groups. Best part of FYS in my opinion. I love the community that they can be. I have many good friends that I met for the first time in FYS studio groups. I think it would be cool if there was time set aside to hear about how situations from previous meetings had been resolved. It would make it feel more meaningful.
- We talked about the same things every meeting and doing it every week wasn't that useful.
- Not meeting every other week. It just got really repetitive.





Engagement Events

Fellows' events received overwhelmingly positive reflections, along with ideas about how some events might be improved.





Comments from Fellows

- Somehow getting more students involved.
- Trying to get a minimum number of fellows to help because some events were hard to staff.
- Better organization from Fellows.
- I helped with the cotton candy event. It was so popular that I wish that the event was longer, we had more supplies, and that we let people spin their own sugar. I had to go to class, but I had a feeling some people in line weren't able to get any cotton candy because we probably ran out of supplies, and a lot of people wanted to spin their own, but we had to tell them no.
- Just getting the word out, but I feel as though the event I assisted with went well.

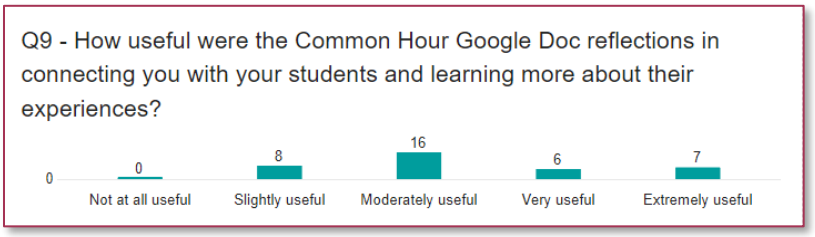


" Personally, my favorite engagement events were August-October on the patio in the middle of the day. There is an excitement that is really fun to get caught up in. I do not have any ideas to make it better, but I will say it is awesome to be allowed to plan these engagement events and the support

Common Hour Student Reflections

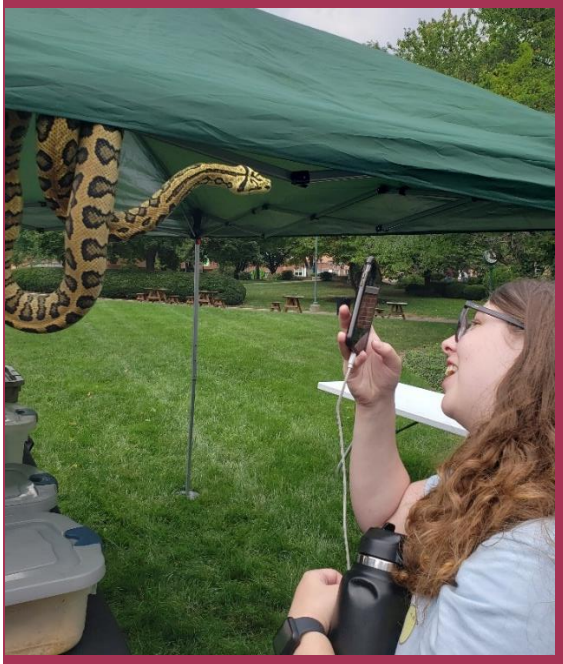
This year saw significant changes to the accountability components of the online Common Hour lesson curriculum, including a graded knowledge check quiz at the end of each lesson and required responses to reflection questions in a Google Doc that was shared with the student's FYS Fellow.

The Google Doc format required more time from Fellows to read and respond to each student. Designed to increase one-to-one communications between students and peer mentors using a single shared document, Fellows reported that the docs proved cumbersome and only moderately useful.



Comments from Fellows

- Have a separate doc that the students send each week.
- I didn't see students put a lot of thought into it.
- Have class reminders so they don't suffer from their grade. Also, don't allow the students to provide one-word answers.
- I think there should be a way to have an alert sent out if someone does complete a reflection. During the semester I would flip back so many times because I forgot who did complete them and who I had to respond to yet.
- No changes, they were easy to follow.
- I think if I had taken more time to explain the reflections to the class and asked them to ask a silly question if they did not have one about the lesson it would have been more useful. I will say cross checking between the data and the reflections is extremely tedious. In talking with other fellows I heard that it was overwhelming for them.
- Make the reflections shorter or just have that count for the common hour points.



" Only require fellows to respond to reflections when students ask a question. When asked, most of my students said they don't look back at my responses to their

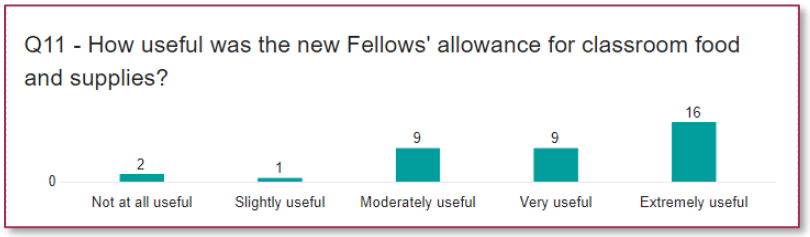
" Replying to every single one took quite a long time. I think I wouldn't make it mandatory to

" Students did not take them seriously and it made it irrelevant and



Classroom Allowance

The $50.00 allowance allocated to each Fellow for food and activity supplies in their FYS class meetings was a popular addition to the program this year. A total of 25 (two-thirds of all Fellows) made use of these funds, spending an average of $35 per class. Improvement next year could address ways to get students involved in how the funds are spent and raise awareness of the allowance among Fellows.



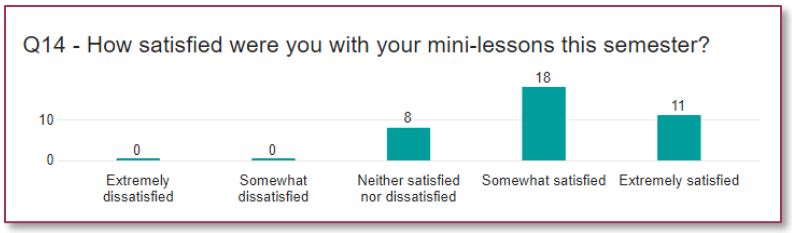


Comments from Fellows

- Sometimes I forget it is there!
- I asked my students what they would want and did not get much of a response.

Mini-Lessons

Fellows were mostly satisfied with the mini-lessons they gave in their FYS classes. Some noted that this challenging task needs ongoing development and support to help Fellows increase their satisfaction with delivering lessons effectively.



Comments from Fellows

- Need more ideas and even access to some sample information (like short clips that organizations on campus say about themselves to let students know more).
- Advice for how to engage students in the mini-lesson and recommended topics. I did not get much feedback from my students.
- Opportunities to build confidence and ask upperclassmen questions about tips and tricks.

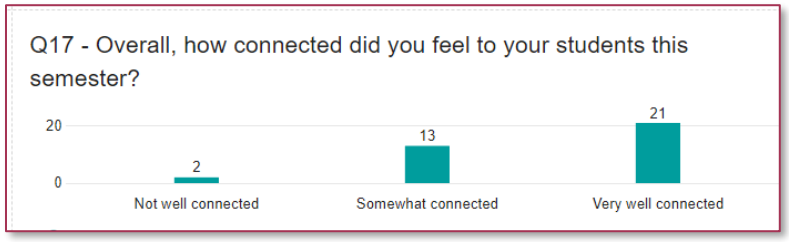
" I think the quality of mini-lessons could be improved if they were peer-reviewed in studio groups. This would add a decent amount of time but it

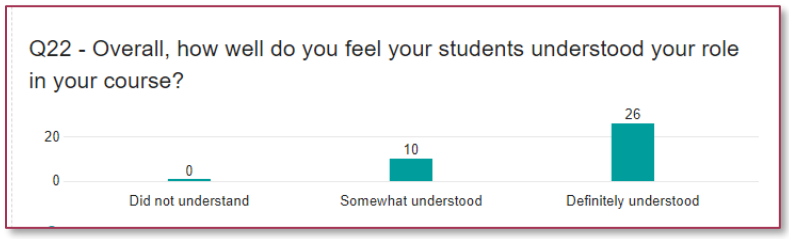




Connection with Student Mentees

A majority of Fellows reported that they felt well-connected to their FYS students and that their students understood the Fellow's role in their course. There is room for improvement to help students make the most of the Fellow's knowledge, experience, and dedicated time.







Job Fulfillment

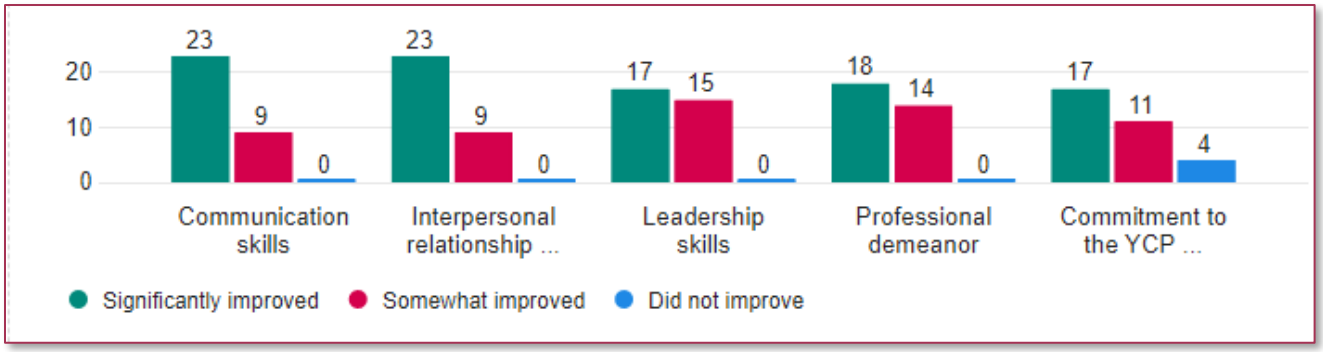
Most Fellows reported feeling "very fulfilled" in their FYS role. Job satisfaction is key to effectiveness and retention of Fellows, so this is good news for our program.

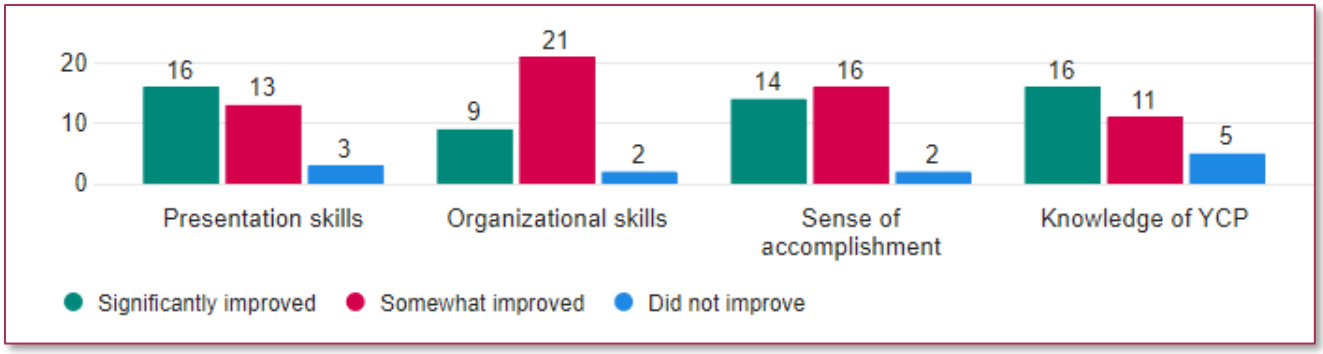




Professional Development

Communication and interpersonal skills were the most highly rated areas of personal growth reported by Fellows. Peer mentoring in FYS also contributed significantly to enhanced leadership skills, professional demeanor, commitment to the YCP community, presentation skills, and knowledge of YCP.









Implications

Based on this survey and additional input gathered from Fellows in one-to-one meetings with the Director of First-Year Experience, the following changes are being considered for Spring – Fall 2023:

Training

- Move some routine components of training to online modules in Canvas.
- Hold separate trainings for returning Fellows to focus on Fellows' leadership roles.
- Incorporate a faculty panel into a training session.
- Devote more time to developing and practicing mini-lessons.
- Extend Rev-Up training in August to include a more comprehensive review of spring training as well as more support for new Fellows.



Studio Groups

- Reduce the number of groups to increase group size.
- Offer an online option for some groups.
- Scale back group frequency to once every three or four weeks.



Engagement Events

- Address supply issues that arose at some events this year, making sure each event is well-stocked.
- Confirm early and often that each event has enough Fellows staff to operate smoothly. Having larger studio groups will assist with this.

Common Hour

- Have student reflections be optional, not counted toward lesson completion.
- Change the format of student reflections and questions so it is easier for Fellows to receive and respond to them.

Classroom Allowance

- Incorporate use of the allowance into a fall Fellows Canvas calendar that generates automatic reminders.
- Develop strategies to increase FYS student involvement in spending decisions.

Mini-Lessons

- Offer mini-lesson practice sessions early in the fall semester for Fellows to try out new ideas and receive feedback.

Thanks to all Fellows for your feedback and suggestions.

See you in spring training!



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