

## Registering and Orienting First-Year Students (June 2010)

*Can you briefly update me on how you are registering and orienting your first-year students? For example, are you staging summer orientation sessions? Are you hosting on-campus OR online academic advisement and academic registration? Are you using student/peer leaders to support first-year students through any or all of these processes?*

### **Birmingham-Southern College**

We've begun a revised version of our summer orientation program this year. We are hosting 3 Friday summer Orientation sessions – one was last Friday, and the next two events occur the next two Fridays. In the morning, incoming students are going on extended campus tours where they stop at various spots around campus and have discussions about academic life, social life, residence life, etc. from a student perspective.

New students are being advised in groups and turning in course preferences at the summer sessions. For those few who cannot attend, I believe phone calls are being made to advise them.

Students are leading the student portion of our summer program. They do the welcome session, perform an entertaining opening skit, and lead the tours and discussions with incoming students. They are also involved in the parts of the program for parents in various ways, i.e., we have an "Ask-a-Student" panel for parents.

Not to toot our own horn too much, but the feedback we've received in our online evaluations so far is very positive. We'll share more with anyone interested in details.

### **Davidson College**

Orientation is 4 days prior to the start of classes in August. In addition, we have a summer long wilderness experience for entering first-year students. Each session is 8 days and we do three sessions during the summer.

As for registering, they do so online initially and largely on their own. However, we do have faculty advisers ready to assist them on a call-in basis if necessary. They meet with their advisers during orientation and go through their own drop/add prior to allowing access by upper class students.

### **Trinity University**

Registering and orienting first-year students happens during the first week of New Student Orientation. There are no summer orientation sessions; some online placement testing. In August, we use RAs in a unique Resident Mentor position. They work with advising groups – their residents – and the adviser. Two advising groups of 9 – with one adviser each.

### **University of Richmond**

We register students online in July with the help of peer advisors who call each student in bunches.

Regular Orientation begins the Wednesday before classes begin the following Monday. Pairs of student OA's manage groups of 22 new students throughout the program.

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Students may choose to come back for a pre-orientation the Sunday before the Wednesday of regular orientation. The interests are outdoor camping, academic (12 mini-classes facilitated by a professor who agrees to also be their academic advisor until they declare a major), international student pre-O, and minority student pre-O. About 350 of our 800 new students choose one of these options. Also, the varsity athletes (about 70) are back early for practice before regular Orientation. They cannot do a pre-O.

### **Washington and Lee**

One orientation before classes begin. Online “pre-registration” over the summer so students can begin thinking about their schedules with registration during Orientation. Upper-class orientation leaders “run” orientation. First-year residence hall advisers go through orientation with students. Students move through the process “by hall” as assigned through their residential assignment. The first-year residence hall advisers have additional training working with first-year students and live with/advise FYs throughout the year. Each FY RA also has a peer counselor, as trained through Counseling Services, assigned to him/her for assistance with mental health issues.