

Editor's Introduction

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Summer Academe provides university administrators and faculty with recent research, case studies, and information about issues and topics as they relate to summer sessions at colleges and universities throughout the country. *Summer Academe* examines issues pertaining to summer session administration and pedagogy applicable to summer session administrators, faculty and staff members seeking better information with which to produce, market, administer and evaluate their programs within the larger campus context.

How can we make our summer session programs better? How can we reach students who will benefit from the differences in timing, structure and scheduling of Summer Sessions? Are we continually producing Summer Session courses of the highest academic quality and value, and is it possible to achieve even higher academic outcomes for students through Summer Session courses? These are a few of the questions that articles in Volume 6 address. Explored are issues that specifically impact Summer Session planning and decision-making, but also highlight how Summer Sessions can and should be an integral part of broader campus-wide portfolios.

Why do students decide to attend Summer Session and why do they attend any given institution? Donna M. Fish and Thomas F. Kowalik

examine these questions in “Institutional Marketing Approaches, Student Decision Points and Motivational Factors Affecting Student Decisions to Participate in Summer Session and Attend a Particular Institution.” Their research study presents six major questions regarding motivation for attending Summer Sessions and factors influencing the choice of Summer Session institution by students. The results give Summer Session directors better information on which to base their marketing decisions and to allocate marketing dollars.

In “Organic Chemistry: Intensive Format or Traditional Format,” Lucas Nyenty Arrey examines two types of learning approaches, traditional learning/peer led team learning (PLTL) and Intensive learning/study groups. His study evaluates the effectiveness of the intensive course study, the impact of intensive study on student motivation for learning, and content mastery. Nyenty Arrey taught organic chemistry in both intensive (Summer Session) and traditional-semester formats using the same text, syllabus and exams and then compared the final grades in order to draw conclusions.

Much like Nyenty Arrey, Bill Kops delves into how to ensure the quality of academic programs taught in a compressed format. In “Best Practices: Teaching in Summer Session,” Kops examines how faculty approach teaching in a compressed or intensive format, and identifies how teaching strategies differ from those used in regular-length courses. This research suggests that Summer Session faculty may need to shift their focus from content delivery to learning outcomes in order to achieve the greatest student success.

Further addressing the issue of intensive course quality, Howard Martin and Kathleen Bartzen Culver consider how to provide “ammunition to both university leaders and summer session directors to strengthen their case for summer session intensive courses” in “Concentrate, Intensify, or Shorten?: Short, Intensive Courses in Summer Sessions.” In this article they review available data regarding the literature and history of intensive courses, and find no significant difference in success rates between intensive and traditional semester based instruction.

In 2002, the University of Colorado at Boulder established the ‘Faculty in Residence for Summer Term’ (FIRST) program to enhance the range and quality of Summer Session courses by encouraging CU-Boulder academic departments to invite distinguished scholars from other universities to teach Summer Session courses. It was expected that visiting faculty would expose Summer Session students to broader cultural ideas and academic content from throughout the U.S. and beyond. Anne K. Heinz and Alcina C. Louis’ “University Summer Session Programs: The Role and Effect of Visiting Faculty” examines a six-year

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period of the FIRST program in order to quantify these assumptions, as well as look for potential enhancements to the program.

The key challenge for Summer Session faculty and administrators reappears in varying forms in each of these articles: How to establish and maintain the highest standards of Summer Session instruction and then transmit that message of quality to both internal campus-wide administrators and potential students. The information found and lessons learned in this Volume should help faculty and administrators meet changing student needs and demands for successful, intensive, learning opportunities at colleges and universities throughout North America.