Shanté Brown
Mellon Grant Proposal
December 2019

1: Title: Wellesley Empowered Learning Lab (WELL)

2. Description of the project and pedagogical goals

Purpose:

The purpose of The Wellesley Empowered Learning Lab (WELL) is to provide additional advising, coaching, and mentoring to first-year students who may have struggled in their first semester at Wellesley. Students whose records were reviewed by the Academic Review Board, or whose Shadow Grades suggest they may need additional support are the target participants. Students will be invited to participate in January 2020, and will be asked to apply to the program. While we anticipate inviting 65-75 students, we will need to cap participation at 15 students. Preference will be given to first-generation, low income and underrepresented groups.

The program will be facilitated through a collaboration between staff and faculty in a combination of large group sessions and individual coaching sessions. Current collaborators include Dean of First-Year Students, Shanté Brown, Director of the PLTC, Roberta Schotka and Faculty Director of the PLTC & Associate Professor of Mathematics Oscar Fernandez.

Description:

The Wellesley Empowered Learning Lab (WELL) for first-year students will provide students an opportunity to reflect on previous learning, develop and apply new learning strategies, evaluate current choices and decisions and create strategies for success for future semesters. All seminar sessions, meetings, topics and activities are designed to support and promote empowered learners: helping students engage in academic and life skill development, make informed academic and personal decisions, demonstrate responsibility and accountability, and invest in actions and relationships that support progress toward the Wellesley degree. To encourage self-reflection, students will be asked to journal following each session. Journal questions will be discussed with the group or individual instructor in the lab or coaching session following assignment.

Projected Outcomes

After participating in WELL students will:

1. Apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty.
2. Adapt and apply appropriate academic strategies to their courses and learning experiences.
3. Articulate how planning and prioritization of personal and educational goals impact academic success.
4. Demonstrate and access resources available for support during student transitions.

3. What is the research evidence supporting this teaching innovation?

Cuseo, Joe. (2015). Effective Teaching Strategies for the First-Year Seminar & First-Year Courses. 10.13140/RG.2.1.2036.3607.

Cuseo, Joe. (2015). Rhythms of the First-Term Experience: Transitioning from High School to Higher Education. 10.13140/RG.2.1.4547.2087.

Kuh, G. D., Shedd, J. D. , & Whitt, E. J., Andreas, R. E., Lyons, J.W., Strange, C. C., Krehbiel, L. E., & MacKay, K. A. (1991) *Involving colleges: encouraging student learning and personal development through out-of-class experiences*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Murphy, R.O. (1988). Academic and student affairs in partnership for freshman success. In M. L. Upcraft, J. N. Gardner, & Associates (Eds.), *The freshman year experience* (pp. 375-384). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Reason, R., Terenzini, P., & Domingo, R. (2006). First things first: developing competence in the first year of college. *Research in Higher Education, 47*(2), 149-176.

Young, D. G. (2019). 2017 National survey on first-year experience: creating and coordinating structures to support student success. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition.

4. How will I know if students have achieved the key learning outcomes/objectives?

The primary method of assessment for this project is grade based. I will be tracking students grades following each semester, communicating with faculty throughout the semester and working with them on any mid-semester warnings received. I will continue to track students who were invited who had received low grades (previously tracked for the class of 2022). I am also tracking the continued academic success of the first cohort of WELL students from January 2019. Not only will grades be compared to their first semester, they will also be compared to the first pilot group of WELL.

During each session we'll also be utilizing classroom assessment techniques to measure their engagement with our content, the amount of information they're retaining and where any confusion remains.

Through one on one conversations, coaches will make appropriate referrals to campus resources (Accessibility and Disability Resources, PLTC, Student Involvement, etc.) to help students navigate whatever issues they may be facing. Coaches will track which referrals they have made and student utilization of them.

Students will be asked to meet with their first-year faculty advisors twice during the program to discuss progress, in addition to building a positive relationship with an additional faculty member at Wellesley College.

Additionally, here are assignments built into the curriculum for students to complete. Their completion of these assignments will help us track their progress throughout the seven week program.

Lastly, each lesson plan for the sessions details which learning outcomes will be met, denoted at the top in a light blue box.

5. Basic information about the project

Please see the attached PDF for the curriculum.

6. Availability to develop the project

I am available from now through the winter break to develop this program. As it will begin during the second week of class my time over the break will be spent developing the program in January, with the exception of the week prior to classes starting,

Wellesley Empowered Learning Lab (WELL)

Purpose:
The purpose of The Wellesley Empowered Learning Lab (WELL) is to provide additional advising, coaching, and mentoring to first-year students who may have struggled in their first semester at Wellesley. Students whose records were reviewed by the Academic Review Board, or whose Shadow Grades suggest they may need additional support are the target participants. Students will be invited to participate in January 2020, and will be asked to apply to the program. While we anticipate inviting 65-75 students, we will need to cap participation at 15 students. Preference will be given to first-generation, low income and underrepresented groups.

The program will be facilitated through a collaboration between staff and faculty in a combination of large group sessions and individual coaching sessions. Current collaborators include Dean of First-Year Students, Shanté Brown, Director of the PLTC, Roberta Schotka and Faculty Director of the PLTC & Associate Professor of Mathematics Oscar Fernandez.

Description:
The Wellesley Empowered Learning Lab (WELL) for first-year students will provide students an opportunity to reflect on previous learning, develop and apply new learning strategies, evaluate current choices and decisions and create strategies for success for future semesters. All seminar sessions, meetings, topics and activities are designed to support and promote empowered learners: helping students engage in academic and life skill development, make informed academic and personal decisions, demonstrate responsibility and accountability, and invest in actions and relationships that support progress toward the Wellesley degree. To encourage self-reflection, students will be asked to journal following each session.

Projected Outcomes (*outcomes of each session are denoted in a light blue box on each lesson plan*)
After participating in WELL students will:
1. Apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty.
2. Adapt and apply appropriate academic strategies to their courses and learning experiences.
3. Articulate how planning and prioritization of personal and educational goals impact academic success.
4. Demonstrate and access resources available for support during student transitions.

The content below is tentative:

Week 1 (Feb 6)	Large group session -Kick off Dinner (60 min) Topic: Rethinking Learning	**Reflective Journaling:** What were some of my most powerful learning moments and what made them so?
Week 2 (Feb 13)	Individual coaching session (60 min) Topic: Getting to Know You Faculty advisor meeting	**Reflective Journaling:** Create a plan that you can stick with to motivate yourself when you hit an obstacle or when things get tough.
Week 3 (Feb 20)	Large group session (60 min) Topic: Time Management	**Reflective Journaling:** Do you think how you study currently is working for you? How can you revamp your study process?
Week 4 (Feb 27)	Individual coaching session (30 min) Topic: LASSI Debrief	**Reflective Journaling:** Describe a time you were most satisfied with a task, project or assignment. What were you doing? What did you feel? How do your values fit into that moment? How can you replicate this feeling?
Week 5 (Mar 5)	Large group session (60 min) Topic: Growth Mindset	**Reflective Journaling:** How do you know when you're fully prepared for an exam?
Week 6 (Mar 12)	Individual coaching session (30 min) Topic: Stress Management Faculty advising meeting	**Reflective Journaling:** How do you navigate stress in your personal and academic life? Describe your self-care plan and how you stick to it on a regular basis. If you don't have one, brainstorm some options that could be helpful.
Week 7 (Mar 19)	Large group session (60 min) - Closing session; Goal Setting	

Lab Session 1 Outline
Week of February 6

Outcomes Addressed:
1. Apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty.
2. Adapt and apply appropriate academic strategies to their courses and learning experiences

1. **Introductions**: Professional team; program; students
   Overview of program and our roles
   Schedule first coaching meeting as we're getting settled in

2. **Energizer**: Language of Life & Learning
   Select one card to describe your feelings about last semester
   Select one card to describe your feelings on your preparedness for this semester?
   Select one card to describe represent a helpful piece of advice you've received about your time at Wellesley?

   After students have selected their cards (pro-staff should select cards also), have them go around and share

3. **Topic**: Rethinking Learning
   Video: John Legend: Success Through Effort (youtube)
   Discussion: A time when you struggled? In pairs have them share a story about a time that they made their brains smarter. This leads to a discussion about how working hard, taking on challenges, and finding the right strategy can make people smarter.
   - What was the situation?
   - What was the outcome?
   - What was your strategy?
   - How can you apply that situation?

   Reflective Journaling: What were some of my most powerful learning moments and what made them so? *(Bring this question answered with you to first coaching session)*

4. **Wrap up**: Review plan for the program
   Timeline
   Resources: professional staff, ASCs, PLTC resources
   Meeting dates, times locations for next week

Coaching Session Outline
Session 1 -Week of February 13

Outcomes Addressed:
1. Apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty.
2. Adapt and apply appropriate academic strategies to their courses and learning experiences.

Introductions
Review current schedule and support systems
Topics to review in meeting
- Tell me about a time when you experienced academic success in college? Why do you consider that a success? What did you do to make it successful? Who helped you?
  - *Journal question from kick off: What were some of my most powerful learning moments and what made them so?*
- What are your most important values? How do you live out these values?
- Share a time when you felt actively engaged in learning? How did you feel? What was it that made you feel engaged?

Academic areas the student would like to improve on this semester (listen and offer suggestions)
- General study skills
- Following a study plan
- Using a designated study area
- Understanding textbook readings
- Time spent on reading assignments
- Preparation before class
- In-class note taking skills

- Class participation/engagement
- Test preparation
- Test taking or test anxiety issues
- Attitude towards class and/or professor
- Meeting with professor for help
- attendance

Personal concerns that might be impacting the student this semester (the goal here is for us to offer resources and see how we can assist students navigate through these issues).
- Physical illness or injury
- Financial circumstances
- Dating or other relationship issues
- Housing, roommate issues
- Social connections on campus
- Homesickness
- Amount of sleep

- Confidence
- Family communication
- Family commitments and responsibilities
- Use of alcohol or other substances
- Stress and/or anxiety
- Feeling and emotions
- Prescription medication adjustments

Tasks for the student to follow up on:

Reflection Journaling: What do you do when you encounter obstacles to success? *(Bring this question answered with you to the next lab session)*

Tasks for coach to follow up on:

Next meeting with the student: _____ **(week of February 27 if not earlier)**

Lab Session 2 Outline
Week of February 20

Outcomes Addressed:
1. Apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty.
2. Adapt and apply appropriate academic strategies to their courses and learning experiences.
3. Articulate how planning and prioritization of personal and educational goals impact academic success.

1. **Energizer**:

3. **Topic**: Time Management & Task Management

Rotational Graffiti (chart paper with questions around the room or circulate sheets. Students write quick answers to the questions. We then discuss them as a group.)
What gets in the way? What is stealing your study time?
How many hours per day will you be studying?
What are the ways in which you keep track of things?

Managing your time
3 tiered planning system
1. Semester calendars (Spring and Fall on a Page)
2. Weekly calendars (these will be electronic or planners)
Discussion: Does your planner work for you? What kind do you use, if any? Paper planner, cell phone calendar? Do you think it's best for you? What type might work even better?
3. To do lists

Handout: Getting Digitally Organized –takes time, but will pay you big dividends in fewer missed assignments and deadlines; Only review details if there is time
The Problem: you need to manage your time wisely so you can complete quality assignments in a timely manner.
The Fix: use an electronic calendar on your phone or computer (Google Calendar, Apple Calendar, etc) to manage time and track assignments and due dates.
- How to do it: Select a device and platform that you're most likely to use
  - Plug in schedule information –review syllabi provided for assignments, tests, quizzes and projects. Plug in important dates from the academic calendar
  - Do this for the full semester – set alerts, repeat your schedule weekly
    - Confused? Use YouTube and search: "set up Google calendar to repeat and remind"
  - Plug in a time each week to review your schedule –what's been completed, what needs to be moved to next week's to-do lists
  - Sync your phone with your calendar so that if you make changes, they appear in your online system and vice versa
If time remains, discuss additional apps/tools that can be used:
- Rescue Time –identifies your weekly time thieves
- Dropbox –sharing and sending large files effortlessly; think teamwork and projects

- Evernote –free tool that allows you to capture ideas, thoughts, images is a number of different ways: voice, notes, images; create lists, text attachments, share files
- Focus booster –based on the principles of the Pomodoro technique, for individuals who procrastinate and feel overwhelmed by tasks; designed to enhance focus and remove the anxiety from balancing time
- MyLifeOrganized (MLO) –difficult to manage all tasks, to-do lists and goals? Helps you to target what you should focus on to reach objectives. Generate to-do lists, with priority actions for immediate attention. Track your progress

Reflective Journaling: Do you think how you study currently is working for you? How can you revamp your study process? *(Bring this question answered with you to your next coaching session)*

4. **Wrap up**:

   LASSI -how to access and when to complete by (next Tuesday)

Coaching Session Outline
Session 2 -Week of February 27

Outcomes Addressed:
1. Apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty.
2. Apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty.
3. Articulate how planning and prioritization of personal and educational goals impact academic success.
4. Demonstrate and access resources available for support during student transitions.

Topics to review in meeting
- Time management: Weekly schedule, using Spring on a Page, allocated study time, time sent on clubs and orgs
- Organizational tools: how are assignments being tracked? Paper planner vs. digital organization
- *Journal question from last week: Do you think how you study currently is working for you? How can you revamp your study process?*
- Review the student's LASSI scores

LASSI Review

If scores range from 0-50 percent:
A score below 50 percent indicates that students must improve their study skills to avoid serious problems with succeeding in college. Students who score below 50 percent in three areas, they are encouraged to speak to a study skills counselor or attend one of the Center's learning skills workshops.

If scores range from 50-75:
A score from 50-75 indicates that a student may benefit from improving strategies in these areas.

If scores range from 75-100:
A score from 75-100 indicates that a student may not have to give a high priority to improving strategies in these areas, but the online modules may help students acquire new skills or ideas to further enhance learning.

Scales of LASSI

Attitude (ATT)
The Attitude Scale assesses students' attitudes and interest in college and academic success. It examines how facilitative or debilitative their approach to college and academics is for helping them get their work done and succeeding in college (sample item: I feel confused and undecided as to what my educational goals should be). Students who score low on this scale may not believe college is relevant or important to them and may need to develop a better understanding of how college and their academic performance relates to their future life goals.

Motivation (MOT)
The Motivation Scale assesses students' diligence, self-discipline, and willingness to exert the effort necessary to successfully complete academic requirements (sample item: When work is difficult I either give up or study only the easy parts). Students who score low on this scale need to accept more responsibility for their academic outcomes and learn how to set and use goals to help accomplish specific tasks.

Time Management (TMT)
The Time Management Scale assesses students' application of time management principles to academic situations (sample item: I only study when there is the pressure of a test). Students who score low on this scale may need to develop effective scheduling and monitoring techniques in order to assure timely completion of academic tasks and to avoid procrastination while realistically including non-academic activities in their schedule.

Anxiety (ANX)

The Anxiety Scale assesses the degree to which students worry about school and their academic performance. Students who score low on this scale are experiencing high levels of anxiety associated with school (note that this scale is reverse scored). High levels of anxiety can help direct attention away from completing academic tasks (sample item: Worrying about doing poorly interferes with my concentration on tests). Students who score low on this scale may need to develop techniques for coping with anxiety and reducing worry so that attention can be focused on the task at hand.

Concentration (CON)
The Concentration Scale assesses students' ability to direct and maintain attention on academic tasks (sample item: I find that during lectures I think of other things and don't really listen to what is being said). Low scoring students may need to learn to monitor their level of concentration and develop techniques to redirect attention and eliminate interfering thoughts or feelings so that they can be more effective and efficient learners.

Information Processing (INP)
The Information Processing Scale assesses how well students' can use imagery, verbal elaboration, organization strategies, and reasoning skills as learning strategies to help build bridges between what they already know and what they are trying to learn and remember, i.e., knowledge acquisition, retention and future application (sample item: I translate what I am studying into my own words). Students who score low on this scale may have difficulty making information meaningful and storing it in memory in a way that will help them recall it in the future.

Selecting Main Ideas (SMI)
The Selecting Main Ideas Scale assesses students' skill at identifying important information for further study from among less important information and supporting details (sample item: Often when studying I seem to get lost in details and can't see the forest for the trees). Students who score low on this scale may need to develop their skill at separating out critical information on which to focus their attention. Tasks such as reading a textbook can be overwhelming if students focus on every detail presented.

Study Aids (STA)
The Study Aids Scale assesses students' use of supports or resources to help them learn or retain information (sample item: I use special helps, such as italics and headings, that are in my textbooks). Students with low scores may need to develop a better understanding of the resources available to them and how to use these resources to help them be more effective and efficient learners.

Self-Testing (SFT)
The Self-Testing Scale assesses students' use of reviewing and comprehension monitoring techniques to determine their level of understanding of the information to be learned (sample item: I stop periodically while reading and mentally go over or review what was said). Low scoring students may need to develop an appreciation for the importance of self-testing, and learn effective techniques for reviewing information and monitoring their level of understanding or ability to apply what they are learning.

Test Strategies (TST)
The Test Strategies Scale assesses students' use of test preparation and test taking strategies (sample item: In taking tests, writing themes, etc., I find I have misunderstood what is wanted and lose points because of it). Low scoring students may need to learn more effective techniques for preparing for and taking tests so that they are able to effectively demonstrate their knowledge of the subject matter.

Tasks for the student to follow up on:

Reflective Journaling: Describe a time you were most satisfied with a task, project or assignment. What were you doing? What did you feel? How do your values fit into that moment? How can you replicate this feeling? (Bring this question answered with you to the next lab session)

Tasks for coach to follow up on:

Next meeting with the student: _____ (week of March 12 if not earlier)

Lab Session 3 Outline
Week of March 5

Outcomes Addressed:
1. Apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty.
2. Adapt and apply appropriate academic strategies to their courses and learning experiences.

1. **Energizer**: Storywise Cards

   Have students pick one card each

   After students have selected their cards (pro-staff should select cards also), have them go around and share

2. **Topic**: Motivation

   Growth Mindset

   FIXED mindset: We are who we are, and I can't do much to change that.

   GROWTH mindset: Anyone can change with enough work.

   What's your mindset?
   When you encounter an obstacle do you place blame or own your mistakes?
   Do you reflect on your life as "what have I done" or "what I will do"?
   Do you study for the test or do you study to learn?
   Do you value praising your talent/ ability or praising the effort you put into it?
   Do you approach your work as having to prove yourself or improve yourself?

   Different kinds of motivation
   - Intrinsic Motivation
   - Extrinsic Motivation

   Activity
   Describe a time you were highly motivated
   Describe what you felt during these times
   Recall a time you were lacking motivation -when you were bored, apathetic; share out your feelings in these moments
   Do you feel motivated or unmotivated most of the time when you're in class?

   Intrinsic Motivation
   Intrinsic motivators include fascination with the subject, a sense of its relevance to life and the world, a sense of accomplishment in mastering it, and a sense of calling to it.

   ++ Learning because you love it

   Students who are intrinsically motivated might say things like the following.

   - "Literature interests me."
   - "Learning math enables me to think clearly."
   - "I feel good when I succeed in class."

   Advantages
   Long lasting

Student-learning focused
Traditionally focused on the subject rather than the exam

Disadvantages
Focused on the individual student's interests
Can take a long time to figure out student interests

How to cultivate intrinsic motivation
Make a list of your favorite things
Reflect on times that you really enjoyed what you were doing
Participate in community events
Look forward to the feeling of satisfaction -of completing something you want to do
Deep learning is a form of reward -use that to "just do it"
Know your wants
Keep a journal -your dreams, things that make you happy

Extrinsic Motivation
Extrinsic motivators include parental expectations, expectations of other trusted role models, earning potential of a course of study, and grades (which keep scholarships coming).

Students who are extrinsically motivated might say things like the following.

- "I need a B- in statistics to get into business school."
- "If I flunk chemistry, I will lose my scholarship."
- "Our instructor will bring us donuts if we do well on today's quiz."

Advantages
Readily produce behavior changes
Require less effort
Not geared toward the individual student

Disadvantages
Distracts students from deep learning
Devising appropriate rewards or punishments can be difficult
Not a long term fix

Reflective Journaling: Describe a time you were most satisfied with a task, project or assignment. What were you doing? What did you feel? How do your values fit into that moment? How can you replicate this feeling? *(Bring this question answered with you to last coaching session)*

3. **Wrap up**:
    Last individual meetings next week --don't forget to schedule!

Coaching Session Outline
Session 3 -Week of March 12

Outcomes Addressed:
1. Apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty.
2. Articulate how planning and prioritization of personal and educational goals impact academic success.
3. Demonstrate and access resources available for support during student transitions.

Topics to review in meeting
- Growth Mindset -- how is the student utilizing the material we discussed?
- *Journal question from last week:* How do you know when you're fully prepared for an exam?
- Stress Management

Stress Management
> College Student's Stressful Event Checklist
> Discuss/Debrief – what are our highest ranked stressors and how can we reduce them?

Tasks for the student to follow up on:

Reflective Journaling: How do you navigate stress in your personal and academic life? Describe your self-care plan and how you stick to it on a regular basis. If you don't have one, brainstorm some options that could be helpful. (Bring this question answered with you to the next lab session)

Tasks for coach to follow up on:

Discuss with the student if you'd like to continue meeting after the program ends. If yes, go ahead and schedule your next meeting for after March 19.

Lab Session 4 Outline
Week of March 19

Outcomes Addressed:
1. Apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty.
2. Articulate how planning and prioritization of personal and educational goals impact academic success.
3. Demonstrate and access resources available for support during student transitions.

1. **Energizer**:

2. **Topic**: Goal Setting
   - Have students brainstorm 3 personal goals and 3 academic goals (for class, such as good grades, better social skills, or increased understanding of a topic.)
   - Ask students to choose one goal, then write the acronym SMART on a piece of paper.
   - Share 1 of each SMART goals.
     - As you debrief, prompt students to think of the smaller goals needed to meet some of their larger goals

3. **Wrap up**:
   Life & Learning Cards
   Select one card to describe your feelings about this semester so far
   Select one card to describe your outlook on the remainder of the semester
   Select one card to:

   After students have selected their cards (pro-staff should select cards also), have them go around and share.

   Review what we've covered --rethinking learning, time management, motivation & growth mindset, stress management, goal setting
   Utilizing campus resources
   Maintaining relationship with professional staff
   Last individual meetings next week --don't forget to schedule!