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Early History of the First-Year Seminar at KSU

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EARLY HISTORY OF THE FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR AT KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY

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A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of

Master's of Science in First-Year Studies

Faculty of First-Year and Transition Studies

Accepted by:

Dr. Ruth Goldfine, Chair

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ABSTRACT

This study reviews the early history of the first-year seminar at Kennesaw State University, focusing specifically on the administrative home of the seminar and the impact of the creation of the University College in 2004 upon the first-year seminar. Though KSU was late to join in the national first-year movement, once the university embraced the concept it was quick to create a name for itself, moving beyond its contemporaries in innovations for the first-year student experience.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

When the initial 1,014 students enrolled at Kennesaw Junior College in the fall of 1966, neither they nor the school's burgeoning administration, faculty, and staff could have anticipated the explosion of growth that would henceforth characterize the young junior college. The historian Thomas Scott noted that "at least once a decade, Kennesaw has advanced to a higher level"; after ten years of KSU's existence as a two-year school, the Board of Regents authorized its conversion into a senior college and, less than a decade later in 1985, Kennesaw enrolled its first Masters' degree students.¹ In 1996, Kennesaw attained university status, becoming Kennesaw State University and, in 2007, enrolled its first doctoral students. From 1,014 students in the fall of 1966, student enrollment exploded to an unprecedented 35,018 in the fall 2016 semester, which marked the fiftieth anniversary of the first class.

Little more than fifty years after first opening its doors as Kennesaw Junior College and thirty years since its inaugural first-year seminar in the fall of 1983, Kennesaw State University has become a leader in the area of first-year programs and experiences. Its peers, both national and international, and various higher education organizations have recognized and applauded its efforts in the newly emerging field of first-year studies. For example, Kennesaw State University is one of a select group of universities—and the only one located in Georgia—selected by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities to be a part of its Re-Imagining the First Year of College initiative. Similarly, Kennesaw State University's position as a leader in the field of first-year studies was demonstrated when, in 2016, visitors from South Africa, Qatar University, and Nagasaki International University came to speak with members of its Department of First-Year and Transition Studies to discuss how initiatives begun at Kennesaw could benefit students at their own universities.² Having started as a two-year

¹ Thomas Scott, *Kennesaw State University: The First Fifty Years* (Kennesaw: Kennesaw State University Press, 2013), ix.

² Paul Floecker, "Global recognition for first-year programs," *KSU News*, February 20, 2017.

institution and been an institution continually in transition, how did Kennesaw State University's first-year seminar come into being and how has it evolved throughout the institution's history?

In this study, the researcher examined the historical interventions for first-year students at Kennesaw State University, focusing specifically on its first-year seminar (KC 101, which later became KSU 1101) and the creation of University College in 2004. The first-year seminar is an integral part of the first-year student experience, and it is important to examine its history within KSU to fully understand its impact on campus. Drawing on research within the discipline of first-year studies, historic materials located within the KSU Archives, and the knowledge and experiences of several KSU employees, this study places the development of KSU's first-year seminar and the creation of the University College within the broader historical context of the institution, higher education, and the first-year movement. Expected outcomes included an institutional timeline detailing the creation and evolution of KSU's first-year seminar and University College. In examining these two key parts of the first-year experience at KSU, the researcher gained an understanding of how KSU's first-year student experience fits into the national first-year movement.

Upcraft, Gardner, and Barefoot have stated that there is "overwhelming evidence that student success is largely determined by student experiences during the first year" and, perhaps partly as a result, "the largest proportion of institutional leaving occurs during the first-year and prior to the second year."³ Given that the largest proportion of institutional leaving takes place during the first-year, it is important to examine the types of services offered to first-year students by institutions of higher education and to understand their impact on the first-year student and the student's ultimate success at the institution. Similarly, because of the correlation between the first-year experience and the retention,

³ M. Lee Upcraft, John Gardner, and Betsy Barefoot, *Challenging and Supporting the First-Year Student* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 1, 28.

progression, and graduation of a student at a given institution, it is important to examine services for first-year students in the transition from high school to higher education.

This research will contribute to the general understanding of the success of first-year college students and the historical interventions in place at Kennesaw State University to support them. As was indicated by the visit of representatives from South Africa, Qatar University, and Nagasaki International University as well as KSU's participation in the Re-Imagining the First Year College initiative, Kennesaw State University is a demonstrated leader in the field of first-year studies internationally and, as evidence will show, emerged long ago as a national leader in the field. It is important, as other institutions look to KSU as a leader in the emerging discipline of first-year studies, to understand the evolution of the first-year experience at KSU. Dr. Betty Siegel, the second president of KSU and an active supporter of the KC 101 first-year seminar, reflected that "we have to have story-tellers."⁴ Without understanding the historical context of KSU's first-year seminar, one cannot begin to understand the present, much less the future. In this study, the history of the first-year seminar at KSU between 1983 and 2007 is examined. Documentary evidence regarding KC 101 is more readily available than that regarding its later incarnations, KSC 101 and KSU 1101, allowing the researcher to paint a fuller picture of the earlier history than of the later. Similarly, the interviews conducted by the researcher focus on the early history of the first-year seminar and of KSU. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, later researchers should focus on the more recent history of KSU 1101 as more documentary evidence becomes available.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research study was driven by three key research questions:

⁴ Betty Siegel, interview by Thomas Scott, Ann Pullen, and Dede Yow, *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 25.

- How does the development of the KSU first-year seminar fit in with historical developments in higher education?
- Having started as a two-year institution and been an institution continually in transition, how did Kennesaw State University's first-year experience come into being and how has it evolved throughout the institution's history?
- Where has the first-year seminar historically been housed at KSU?

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this study, the following terms were used as defined below:

- First-year seminar – A small discussion-based course in which students and their instructors exchange ideas and information, the content of which is designed to facilitate the growth and development of entering first-year students
- Junior college – College offering courses for two years beyond high school, either as a complete training or in preparation for completion of a degree at a four-year college
- Senior college – College offering the regular four-year courses traditionally required for a bachelor's degree; when contrasted with a "junior college" (see above definition), the upper division (or last two years) of a four-year college
- University College – Academic unit that provides structure and organization to various student success services, which may include services impacting first-year students such as creating and maintaining a first-year seminar

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

THE JUNIOR COLLEGE OF THE 1970s

Historians of American higher education have often christened the postwar era, in which the United States stumbled from hot war to cold war and expanded its status as a world power, as the “Golden Age” of higher education. As John R. Thelin, a historian of American higher education, noted, American higher education in the postwar era was dominated by the “three P’s of prosperity, prestige, and popularity,”⁵ and Dr. Thomas Scott, author of *KSU: The First Fifty Years* and an expert on Georgia history, stated that Americans of all ages benefited from “enlightened policies at federal, state, and local levels.”⁶ Fuel for these enlightened policies came in part from an expansion in federal funding and in federal grant opportunities available to higher education institutions. Scott stated that “between 1940 and 1960 federal grant dollars flowing to American universities increased one hundred-fold,” a development that reflected the rise in American affluence which also came to define the postwar era. The cold war that had risen out of the ashes of World War II kept military spending high, ensured jobs were plentiful, and influenced the expansion of federal grants to higher education institutions. The expansion of federal grants was the direct result of the military’s conscription of college professors and scientists into the war effort and, ultimately, the Manhattan Project, and the resultant impact of these educators on the war’s conclusion in favor of the Allied forces.

The baby boom, which began as World War II was ending and lasted until around 1964, was an integral factor in the expansion of American higher education during the postwar era. Scott credited the baby boom as the force that made the postwar era, and the 1960s in particular, a pivotal point in the history of American higher education. As the children born of the baby boom grew, their communities

⁵ John Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2004), 260.

⁶ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 4.

scrambled to provide the necessary educational opportunities for them. In the 1950s, these communities focused on meeting the K-12 demand, but at the end of the decade focus shifted to making preparations at the collegiate level. Adding to the increased demand for higher education opportunities was the passage of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (popularly known as the GI Bill) in 1944, though "few expected much of the government's college plan."⁷ It thus came as a surprise when veterans began applying by the thousands and, eventually, by the millions, putting an increased strain on a system already flooded with baby-boomers.

As a result of the increase in federal funding and in response to the massive increases in student enrollment, the postwar era "saw a remarkable expansion of junior and community colleges," an expansion that allowed millions of working Americans to attend college at nontraditional ages without having to uproot themselves and relocate.⁸ Hailed as a "uniquely American invention," junior colleges appeared in communities across the nation, often at the behest of the local constituency.⁹ Junior colleges typically offered a curriculum that represented "the first two years of work toward a bachelor's degree" and were seen as an institution apart from upper-division and graduate programs.¹⁰ Such was the case with Kennesaw Junior College in 1963. Classifications such as "junior college" and "research university" were the result of an initiative spearheaded by the Carnegie Corporation. Their sponsored taskforce attempted to make clear the differences between a "university" and a "college" and produced the Carnegie Classifications, which categorized higher education institutions by a range of operational definitions. Classifications included "research university," "doctoral-granting university," as well as "junior college" and a host of others.¹¹ Though the taskforce had intended to create a neutral categorization of institutions, their intentions were quickly misinterpreted by institutions of higher

⁷ Thelin, *History of American Higher Education*, 263.

⁸ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 6.

⁹ Thelin, *History of American Higher Education*, 250

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 250.

¹¹ Thelin, *History of American Higher Education*, 319.

education and the public as a hierarchical structure. Institutions competed against one another to meet the operational definitions for those categories deemed more prestigious, often at the expense of student success. Thelin called this phenomenon “the habitual push for prestige.”¹²

Significantly, the explosive growth in student enrollment was not accompanied by an expansion of student services and, despite the added strains, academic business as usual continued. By the 1970s, the buoyant mood pervasive amongst those working in higher education in the 1950s had dissipated and been replaced with the sense of an impending storm. That storm broke in 1975, when a drastic decrease in enrollment across the nation prompted higher education institutions and administrators to reexamine their approach to student services and student success. The causes for this decrease in enrollment were numerous and ranged from external problems, such as “stagflation, the ... phenomena of double digit annual inflation coexisting with declining productivity in the national economy,” to internal, such as previously discussed “push for prestige” among institutions between 1970 and 1980.¹³

In 1971, the Newman Report, sponsored and published by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, emphasized the need to reexamine the traditional approach by higher education institutions toward student services and student success. The report’s authors emphasized that “the needs of society and the diversity of students now entering college require a fresh look at what ‘going to college’ means,” and highlighted emerging trends in higher education that were of particular concern. Specifically, they noted “disturbing trends toward uniformity in higher education institutions, growing bureaucracy, overemphasis on academic credentials, isolation of students and faculty from the world—a growing rigidity and uniformity of structure that makes higher education reflect less and less the interests of society.” In conclusion, the report’s authors “encouraged new education enterprises,” which

¹² Thelin, *History of American Higher Education*, 320.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 320.

represented a shift toward “social justice” and away from “academic business as usual.”¹⁴ “Quantitative changes had elicited qualitative changes in the character of the American campus,” according to Thelin, though he observed that the report “was a hollow victory” because it left “the inner workings of colleges and universities in disarray, with diminishing coherence of curriculum and declining confidence in what the college experience meant.”¹⁵

The enrollment decline of 1975—and, as Thelin notes, “the fear of a continued downward slide”—had the lasting effect that institutions of higher education and administrators recognized the rights of students as consumers and as members of their campus community.¹⁶ Administrators paid more attention to the needs of new students and their parents in the provision of institutional services and curricula and acknowledged part-time and non-traditional students “as constituencies that warranted courtesies and accommodations” while student services such as career planning offices, state-of-the-art fitness facilities, and improved dormitories proliferated across campuses.¹⁷ Indifference on the part of faculty and administrators toward “attrition rates of 25 percent or more of an entering freshman class” was no longer acceptable in the campus culture.¹⁸ It is in this flowering of student services and student success initiatives that the origins of the modern First-Year Experience movement can be found.

Higher education administrators and faculty had become increasingly aware of gaps in academic preparation for college and were becoming further aware that the issue was widespread through a variety of institution types. To put it simply, the failure rates in entry-level English composition, mathematics, and science courses made it clear that the successful completion of a high school

¹⁴ Thelin, *History of American Higher Education*, 320.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 322.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 326.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 326-327.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 329.

curriculum “provided no assurance that [students possessed] the requisite knowledge a university ... instructor presumed.” In the view of institutions of higher education, the high failure and attrition rates meant that they were “unintentionally investing a large proportion of limited resources in freshman students who often did not persist.”¹⁹ To combat high rates of failure and attrition, higher education institutions invested in student services geared toward supporting those students who struggled to stay afloat academically; what had once been, as Thelin remarks, “left to chance” was now “a deliberate concern—and investment.”²⁰ “As a means of preserving themselves,” Koch and Gardner noted, “and avoiding drastic financial cutbacks, universities focused more attention on efforts that would help them retain the students that they already had.”²¹ Programs that were proven to increase retention were sought by colleges and universities, and it was in this way that attention was again drawn to first-year initiatives.

THE FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR: HISTORICALLY AND TODAY

First-year initiatives, among which the first-year seminar course was most frequently referenced and utilized, were not a new development in the history of American higher education. Gordon noted the existence of first-year faculty advisers at John Hopkins University in 1877, which preceded the creation of a credit-bearing first-year seminar, as well as the existence of a “board of freshman advisers” at Harvard University in 1889.²² In 1911, Reed College was the first institution to launch a first-year orientation seminar. Brubacher and Rudy observed that by 1925-1926 eighty-two institutions²³ had

¹⁹ Thelin, *History of American Higher Education*, 330.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 330.

²¹ Andrew Koch and John Gardner, “A History of the First-Year Experience in the United States During the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries: Past Practices, Current Approaches, and Future Directions,” *The Saudi Journal of Higher Education* 11 (2014), 18.

²² Mary Stuart Hunter and Carrie W. Linder, “First-Year Seminars,” in *Challenging and Supporting the First-Year Student*, ed. M. Lee Upcraft, John Gardner, and Betsy Barefoot (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 278.

²³ John S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition: An American History 1636-1956* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), 331.

followed suit, including “Princeton, Indiana, Stanford, Northwestern, John Hopkins and Ohio State.”²⁴

Little more than ten years later, in 1938, nine out of ten first-year students attending college were required to take a first-year seminar or orientation course.²⁵ This was, however, according to Koch and Gardner, the apex of first-year seminar offerings until the enrollment crisis in 1975 prompted higher education institutions to utilize them once more.

In the words of Thomas Jones, the President at the University of South Carolina (USC), the university brought back the first-year seminar to “teach students not to riot.”²⁶ Student activism in the sixties had manifest through sometimes violent riots and protests and, in addition to decreasing attrition rates, college administrators were working to facilitate civil discussions between students, faculty, and administrators. To do so, he decided to bring back the first-year seminar, which had existed previously at USC but was not currently being taught. The revival of the course at USC, called University 101, did not occur without arousing criticism from faculty (who felt that the course content was too remedial) and was jeopardized when Jones resigned his position at the end of the 1974 academic year. A director was sought, but of the four final candidates, the first two who were offered the position turned it down. The third candidate, an untenured faculty member by the name of John Gardner, accepted.²⁷ Fortuitously, Gardner was among the faculty first trained to teach University 101, and he set out “to add more traditional course structure and academic content to University 101, boost student enrollment, and provide credible research data to prove that the students and the University benefited from offering the course.”²⁸ In conjunction with one of his associates, Paul Fidler, a fellow faculty member and

²⁴ Koch and Gardner, “History of the First-Year Experience,” 16.

²⁵ Virginia P. Gordon, “Origins and Purposes of the Freshman Seminar,” in *The Freshman Year Experience: Helping Students Survive and Succeed in College*, ed. M. Lee Upcraft and John Gardner (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989), 187.

²⁶ Elsie Watts, *The Freshman Year Experience, 1962-1990: An Experiment in Humanistic Higher Education* (Kingston, ON: Queens University Press, 1999), 246.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 274.

²⁸ Koch and Gardner, “History of the First-Year Experience,” 17.

administrator who had focused his research efforts on student learning outcomes, Gardner conducted an assessment of the University 101 course. By the start of 1975, Gardner and Fidler provided results that demonstrated “a statistically significant positive difference on retention for University 101 students when compared with students who did not take the course” and found that those students who did enroll in the course “were more likely to return for the start of the next academic year.”²⁹ The results convinced the President of USC to keep the course so long as students remained interested in it.

Gardner went on to conduct several presentations at other universities (including the nascent Kennesaw College) about the success of University 101 and to work with other institutions to pilot their own versions. In 1981, Gardner decided to host a national conference on the topic of the first-year seminar at the University of South Carolina. According to Koch and Gardner, the success of the conference so exceeded the expectations of its organizers that Gardner subsequently held the conference on a recurring basis under the title “The Freshman Year Experience.”³⁰ In doing so, Gardner provided the nascent first-year movement both a focal point and a name.³¹ Since then, according to Hunter and Linder, “first-year seminars have proliferated on college and university campuses,” though in the 1990s the terminology shifted from “freshman orientation course” to “first-year seminar.”³² This shift reflected an increasing academic rigor (from “course” to an “academic seminar”) as well as an increased acceptance by the wider campus community, while the use of the term “first-year” acknowledged a more diverse entering class than the term “freshman” had.

Hunter and Linder have found that most first-year seminars fit into one of five categories, though it should be noted that individual seminars often combine elements from several categories. The first of the five is the extended orientation seminar, which focuses on “student survival and success

²⁹ Koch and Gardner, “History of the First-Year Experience,” 17.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

³¹ Watts, *The Freshman Year Experience*, 343.

³² Hunter and Linder, “First-Year Seminars,” 278.

techniques.”³³ The extended orientation seminar, the most frequently reported type of first-year seminar, is offered in a variety of combinations at institutions across the country. The next category is the academic seminar, of which there are two types: “those with uniform content across all sections and those with topics that vary from section to section.”³⁴ Like the extended orientation seminar, academic seminars (with or without uniform course content) are offered across the country in various structures and combinations but differ in that the focus is placed primarily on an academic theme, such as critical thinking. The remaining three categories, professional, discipline-linked, and basic study skills seminars, are reported less frequently than the previous two and, according to Hunter and Linder, comprise “less than seven percent of reported first-year seminars.”³⁵ Professional and discipline-linked seminars are geared toward preparing students for entry into a given academic or professional field, while basic study skills seminars are typically offered to students “lacking appropriate college-level academic skills.”³⁶

Unlike many courses in traditional disciplines, the first-year seminar is taught in small sections, each section having typically between eighteen and twenty students enrolled, to create a community within the classroom. More than any other course, the first-year seminar utilizes a variety of instructors from various backgrounds, including faculty, academic advisors, student affairs professionals, administrators, and even upper-level undergraduate students. Recent research indicates that the number of institutions which use faculty members to teach the first-year seminar has increased steadily since 1988; in 2000, 89 percent of institutions with a first-year seminar reported utilizing faculty to teach the course.³⁷ Conversely, national trends in the first-year seminar indicate a shift toward a more

³³ Ibid., 279.

³⁴ Hunter and Linder, “First-Year Seminars,” 279.

³⁵ Ibid., 280.

³⁶ Ibid., 280.

³⁷ National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, *The 2000 National Survey of First-Year Seminar Programs: Continuing Innovations in the Collegiate Curriculum* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2000).

traditional course structure, including a shift toward more academic content, offering the first-year seminar for a letter grade and credit hours, and requiring first-year students to take the course.

Of all the curriculum initiatives focused on the first-year, the first-year seminar is by far the most prevalent, existing in some form on nearly 74 percent of campuses in the United States.³⁸ Hunter and Linder attribute this popularity to the fact that “an academic course offers a time-honored structure through which orientation efforts can be continued beyond the first-week and student development and retention theories can be put into practice.”³⁹ The first-year seminar, simply put, provides a logical structure for encouraging and supporting student engagement within the classroom and within the greater campus community. It is important to note, however, that while new seminars are created at institutions across the country each year, many existing seminars are also dissolved.⁴⁰ For example, in 2000, only thirty-one percent of reported first-year seminars had been in existence for more than a decade.⁴¹ Successful first-year seminars, as defined by Barefoot and Fidler⁴², are those that have been sustained over a period of time and receive campus support. This support manifests in several ways: compensation for instructors, instructor training and development, and the involvement of students, faculty, and student affairs professionals in the seminar design and instruction.

Barefoot and Gardner⁴³ have argued that first-year seminars are among the most-assessed and measured of all undergraduate curricular interventions. As has already been noted, the introduction of a first-year seminar may prompt criticism from the wider campus community. Proponents of the first-year

³⁸ National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, *The 2000 National Survey*.

³⁹ Hunter and Linder, “First-Year Seminars,” 276.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 280.

⁴¹ National Resource Center, *The 2000 National Survey*.

⁴² Betsy Barefoot and Paul Fidler, *The 1994 National Survey of Freshman Seminar Programs: Continuing Innovations in the Collegiate Curriculum* (Columbia, SC: National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, 1996).

⁴³ Betsy Barefoot and John Gardner, “Introduction,” in *Exploring the Evidence, Volume 2: Reporting Outcomes of First-Year Seminars* (Columbia, SC: National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, 1998).

seminar, then, “continually search for evidence that these courses have a positive impact on both the students enrolled and the institution itself.”⁴⁴ The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition collects and publishes research on first-year seminars in academic journals and conducts national surveys. Similarly, hundreds of institutions across the nation conduct formal program assessments that have attributed positive persistence, learning, and social outcomes to the first-year seminar. Though some studies have indicated that the first-year seminar has either a mixed impact or no impact on first-year students, the overwhelming majority of research on the first-year seminar has indicated a positive impact on persistence, grade-point average, graduation rates, student involvement in campus activities, and student attitudes toward and perception of higher education.⁴⁵

ADMINISTRATION AND STRUCTURE OF FIRST-YEAR PROGRAMS

Evenbeck et al. argue that “few movements in higher education have had more success with colleges and universities around the world than that of the first-year experience,” with campuses across the world adopting similar programming on their own campuses.⁴⁶ As more campuses have adopted the first-year seminar or similar programming, there has been an increasing number of strategies for coordinating and conducting this work on the behalf of transitioning students. These strategies range from “loosely connected working groups” to “highly organized structures.”⁴⁷ Because creating a first-year seminar and the partnerships necessary for supporting one is often “new work” for an institution and dependent upon institutional factors, identifying the focal point of this work is often an evolving process with many possible end results. This effort is complicated by the number of academic units that

⁴⁴ Hunter and Linder, “First-Year Seminars,” 288.

⁴⁵ Hunter and Linder, “First-Year Seminars,” 288.

⁴⁶ Evenbeck et al., *Organizing for Student Success: The University College Model* (Columbia, SC: National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, 2010), xiii.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, xiii.

participate in assisting first-year students make a smooth transition to college: the admissions office often serves as the initial contact for first-year students, but quickly hands off the new students to the orientation office, which serves the student before classes start. After classes begin, first-year students may find themselves working with academic advisors or faculty members who teach courses such as the first-year seminar. Transitioning first-year students into college is reminiscent of the old adage “it takes a village to raise a child,” and an increasing number of campuses have examined their institutional village, its organization, and its impact on the transition of first-year students.

In 2007, the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education created a five-category typology for institutional structures to standardize their reporting. The first of category is a *comprehensive single unit or administrative structure*, which provides campus-wide oversight and alignment of first-year efforts. It also (a) appears on the campus organizational chart, (b) has a director, and (c) has a recurring operational budget.⁴⁸ The university college model is an example of the comprehensive single unit or administrative structure. Instead of treating first-year seminars and programming as “afterthoughts” by adding them to either student success divisions or discipline-based academic units, the university college model provides a structure for increased collaboration among the various units that participate in a first-year student’s transition. The second type of administrative structure described by Gardner is a *single unit or administrative structure*, which meets some, but not all, of the criteria listed above. A *formal coordinating body* administers a broad range of first-year programming and “has institutional authority for oversight and alignment of first-year initiatives,” though it does not provide daily administrative leadership to any one component of the first-year student experience.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Evenbeck et al., *Organizing for Student Success*, 2.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

An administrative structure consisting of multiple administrative units, with each unit having responsibility for a particular aspect of the first-year student experience, must cooperate to “administer and align first-year policies, practices, and programs” and depends particularly on effective communication to function well.⁵⁰ These types of structures, called *multiple administrative structures*, differ from discrete structures in the degree of cooperation between the administrative units. *Discrete structures* provide individual oversight for each aspect of the first-year student experience, such as orientation or the first-year seminar. While in the multiple administrative structure the units cooperate and communicate to ensure students are served, separate units are chiefly characterized by “the lack of a formalized structure for communication and cooperation among the discrete structures.”⁵¹ According to a 2010 survey, 55 percent of respondents reported utilizing a comprehensive single unit model to coordinate their first-year student experience, while 33 percent and 12 percent reported using single unit models or multiple or discrete administrative units, respectively.⁵²

Of these, 45% reported that their first-year unit was named University College, though it should be noted that the name “University College” does not automatically denote a comprehensive single unit and vice versa.⁵³ The second most commonly used name was “Undergraduate Studies/Division/Program,” followed by “First-Year Programs/Office.”⁵⁴ One reporting institution traced the origins of its first-year administrative unit to 1935 “when it was founded as an entry point for all students except those seeking an associate’s degree,” while another traced its origins back to 1945 “when services were developed to meet the academic needs of returning World War II veterans.”⁵⁵ The survey authors noted that “a common evolutionary path for units that have been in existence since the

⁵⁰ Evenbeck et al., *Organizing for Student Success*.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

early 1980s seems to be a change in how they are identified, moving from general college to university college."⁵⁶ At the opposite end of the spectrum, many survey respondents reported that their units had been developed within the past five years. The most commonly reported reason for developing such units were academic success indicators, such as poor retention and graduation rates.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Evenbeck et al., *Organizing for Student Success*, 5.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This historical case study describes the development of the first-year student experience at Kennesaw State University (KSU), focusing specifically on the first-year seminar and the creation of the University College in 2004.

THE INSTITUTION

KSU was first founded as a two-year junior college in 1963 and exploded in growth soon after students began attending classes there in the fall of 1966. The Board of Regents approved its conversion to four-year status in 1977, after which it became Kennesaw College (KC) and began offering upper-division courses for juniors and seniors. The first sections of a first-year seminar, KC 101, were taught by a staff of volunteer faculty in 1983. A name change to Kennesaw State College (KSC) was approved in 1988, and it was finally granted university status on June 12, 1996, becoming Kennesaw State University. Today, KSU is a comprehensive public university with campuses located in Kennesaw and Marietta, Georgia. KSU offers more than 150 undergraduate and graduate degrees, including a growing doctoral program. It is currently the academic home to more than 35,000 undergraduate and graduate students and is currently the third-largest university in the state of Georgia.

DATA SOURCES

ARCHIVES AND PUBLICATIONS

Historical research drawing on primary sources, secondary sources, and interviews was used to collect data regarding the first-year experience at KSU with the primary goal of determining and understanding the development of aspects of the first-year experience relevant to this study. Sources referenced within this study include both primary and secondary sources available both publicly and by appointment at the KSU Archives. The majority of historical research took place within the KSU Archives,

located on the third floor of the Sturgis Library on the Kennesaw campus. The KSU Archives is a small suite located alongside the library stacks with several bookshelves of primary documents relating to various departments at KSU, as well as historical documents related to the institution itself, and is accessible only through a controlled access point. In the center of the suite is a large table at which researchers can review documents, take notes, and conduct research. Any documents reviewed by the researcher in the KSU Archives suite were reviewed under the supervision of a KSU Archives employee. At no time was the researcher allowed to remove materials from bookshelves or archival boxes; instead, all materials were requested by the researcher before arriving. Archivists selected research materials for the research based on key words and themes provided by the researcher.

Primary sources include internal documents such as meeting minutes, meeting agendas, memos, mission statements, historical and current syllabi relating to the KSU first-year seminar, archival newspapers (including local newspapers such as the *Marietta Daily Journal* and *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, and the KSU student newspaper, *The Sentinel*), communications (both official and unofficial) between various persons and departments within Kennesaw State University, and interviews conducted with KSU faculty and staff. Secondary sources include research articles and presentations by KSU faculty and staff, published histories of Kennesaw State University, and similar publications.

INTERVIEWS

Potential study participants were identified initially through the historical research conducted for this study and were contacted regarding their availability for an interview. Following identification, participants were selected by the researcher using purposeful sampling, in which interview participants are selected based on key factors. Factors for inclusion were the individual's experience at Kennesaw State University related either to the first-year seminar or the administrative organization for services targeting incoming first-year students and the ability of the individual to contribute to the researcher's

understanding of the first-year experience at Kennesaw State University, as it has been defined for the purposes of this study. Those selected were subsequently asked to participate in the study. Interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the participant (given that many participants were selected specifically because of their employment and/or job duties) and took place in a conference room located on the Kennesaw State University Kennesaw campus. Interviews lasted between thirty and forty-five minutes and were conducted by the researcher. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed for accuracy. The interviewees were each asked the same series of questions; these questions appear in Appendix B.

All participants either had worked at Kennesaw State University or are currently employed there, and they have varying degrees of experience in regards to the first-year seminar, orientation, and the administrative organization of services targeting incoming first-year students. The table below lists information on the interview participants:

Name	Length of Time at KSU	Positions Held
Nancy King	1972 – 1978 1978 – 2012/2013	Part-time English Instructor Full-time English Instructor Co-Coordinator of the New Student Experience/Freshman Experience Director of the Counseling, Advising, and Placement Services (CAPS) Center Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Services

Kathy Matthews	1992 – Current	Developmental Studies Writing Instructor Assistant Professor of English Director of First-Year Programs Coordinator of the First-Year Student Success Advocate Program
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Dr. Nancy King first began working at Kennesaw Junior College in 1972 as a part-time instructor of English while she worked to complete her graduate degree. She worked part-time at KJC for about five years before leaving briefly and returning as a full-time instructor of English. Shortly after Dr. Betty Siegel, the second president of KSU (then Kennesaw College), joined the institution in the fall of 1981, she tapped Dr. King to attend one of John Gardner’s workshops on The First-Year Experience and subsequently worked closely with her to bring a version of his workshop to KC. After attending her first workshop led by Gardner, Dr. King became a strong advocate of the first-year seminar and was one of the original ten instructors who taught the first sections of the first-year seminar course, KC 101, in the fall of 1983. As a result of Dr. King’s commitment to the first-year seminar at KC, Dr. Betty Siegel asked her to take on a part-time position within the Counseling, Advising, and Placement Services (CAPS) Center. She reluctantly took on the position and, in spite of her reluctance, flourished there, becoming its director in 1985. In 1996, she was appointed as the first permanent Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Services at KSU.

Professor Kathy Matthews first began working at Kennesaw State College in 1992 in the Department of Developmental Studies as a writing instructor. She had, however, been working with first-year students for more than a decade by the time she began working at KSC as the Director of the Intensive Learning Experience, which provided support for at-risk first-year students at San Jose State in

California. In 1994, she began working with first-year students and on the first-year seminar. She was asked to teach a section of the first-year seminar, KSC 101, the following spring. In 2006, she was asked to assist in facilitating the transition of the newly hired (?) first-year student experience director, though she declined the initial request, and in the following year she was encouraged to apply for and was appointed as the full-time director. She was one of the founding members of the Department of First-Year and Transition Studies in 2006. Her responsibilities have included conducting assessments of the first-year seminar course, creating the first-year seminar textbook, leading faculty training, and recruiting additional faculty members to teach sections of KSU 1101.

The interview data was then organized to address the three themes relating to the overall research questions (KSU's history, the first-year seminar, and the administrative structure). Similarly, data collected through historical research and from scholarly sources was organized by questions and emerging themes to specifically examine KSU's history as an institution, the first-year seminar, and University College. Individual interview questions were matched to one of these three areas and to specific research questions. Quotations were selected from the interviews that elucidated the research questions and themes. Data collected through interviews were compared with other archival data sources to determine if they were in corroboration.

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

A JUNIOR COLLEGE FOR ALL GEORGIANS

In the 1960s, no college or university within Georgia ranked in the top twenty U.S. colleges and universities, and some have argued that “none of the schools even deserved status as a full-fledged university.”⁵⁸ The increasing affluence following World War II had prompted a desire for additional higher education opportunities across the nation and launched a statewide effort to upgrade Georgia’s colleges and universities. Between 1958 and 1976, the university system added thirteen brand new junior colleges (of which Kennesaw Junior College [KJC] was one) and incorporated another three established institutions. Aiding these efforts was an influx of federal grant dollars, which allowed institutions such as the University of Georgia to become “true research universities.”⁵⁹ In 1957, as communities across the nation began preparing for an influx of new college students, the Georgia General Assembly created the Junior College Study Committee, which was charged with “studying whether or not the state should support two-year colleges” in various Georgia communities.⁶⁰ A year later, in 1958, the Georgia legislature adopted the Junior College Act, which provided state aid to an expanded network of junior colleges; recipients of the aid were required to comply with all university system policies and standards, thus laying the foundation for a cohesive university system and paving the way for new institutions.

Nowhere in the state of Georgia was the need for a new junior college more keenly felt than in Cobb County. Cobb County was emblematic of the changes in population and affluence that altered the face of the South and of Georgia in the postwar era. In 1940, the “middle-sized, rural county” had a

⁵⁸ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 4.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.

population of 38,272 people; by 1960, the population had exploded to 114,174.⁶¹ It was the largest county in Georgia without a junior or senior (four-year) college, and it was home only to an off-campus center established by the University of Georgia called the Marietta Center. Local leaders desired more than a branch campus—they wanted their own institution with its own identity— and thus entered into a fierce contest with nearby Bartow and Floyd counties to become home to the next new junior college. The need for a new junior college in the Cobb-Bartow-Floyd county areas had played a large role in the 1962 gubernatorial race, with the eventual winner, Carl Sanders, campaigning on a promise to place a public college “within commuting distance of all but the most isolated Georgians.”⁶² Nor did Sanders renege on his promise: the following year, he assembled the Commission to Improve Education, which conducted the “first-ever comprehensive study of education in Georgia.”⁶³ Although Sanders had promised the site of the new junior college to the citizens of Bartow County, the Commission, recognizing Cobb County’s rapid population growth, recommended building the new junior college there. Governor Sanders concurred, and on October 9, 1963, the Board of Regents voted to establish a new junior college in Cobb County.

A few weeks after the Board’s decision, a commission selected the old Frey farm as the future site of Kennesaw Junior College. In addition to being affordable, the land was located “almost half-way between Marietta and Cartersville,” allowing Governor Sanders to assure the citizens of Bartow County that “he at least built a junior college within commuting distance.”⁶⁴ At the November 18, 1964 groundbreaking ceremony that took place more than a year later, Governor Sanders paid tribute to the efforts of Cobb County’s leadership in their campaign for a new junior college. When he remarked that “the example set by the local citizens here in laying the groundwork for this college should and, I am

⁶¹ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 11.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 1.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

sure, will be followed by those in other areas of Georgia,” he could not have known he was predicting exactly what would happen in the distant future of the yet-to-be built college. Over the course of the next decade, both college and community leaders would work together in the campaign for KJC to attain four-year status. In fact, even as he was speaking to the assembled crowd of local and state leadership, “local power brokers had begun to dream not just of a two-year school, but an eventual senior college.”⁶⁵ Kennesaw Junior College’s first president, Dr. Howard Sturgis, was surprised to discover that the “local public was way ahead of him” when it came to Kennesaw Junior College becoming a senior college. At a meeting with community leaders in the Cobb County School System boardroom, the first question Dr. Sturgis received was “When are we going to be a four-year college?” As he conducted interviews with potential faculty, he informed candidates that “Kennesaw would probably become a senior college” and tried to hire those who “could make the transition to four year status.”⁶⁶

There were significant obstacles to becoming a four-year institution, chief of which was political opposition from nearby senior colleges. Campus and community leaders would constantly lobby the chancellor and the Board of Regents that a four-year conversion was “needed and justified” and would not take away students or funding from other nearby institutions. Between 1971 and 1975, the Board of Regents turned down three proposals to convert Kennesaw Junior College to a four-year school, the last of which received “only a polite ‘thank you.’”⁶⁷ At the dedication of the new Carmichael Student Center on October 2, 1975, students demonstrated their support for conversion to a four-year institution when they unfurled a huge banner that read “Four Years Now” during the ceremony. Finally, on April 14, 1976, the Board of Regents passed a motion approving Kennesaw’s change in status, to be effective in 1978. In 1977, they approved changing the name of the new four-year institution to Kennesaw College. Junior-

⁶⁵ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 20.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 86.

level courses were first offered in 1978, with senior courses offered in the year following; the first students to graduate with Bachelor's degrees did so in June 1980. Sensing a natural close to his time as Kennesaw College's first president, Dr. Horace Sturgis chose this time to announce his retirement, effective on December 31, 1980. When announcing his retirement, he concluded "we set out to build a quality institution, and I think we have done that."⁶⁸ Scott observed that "Sturgis clearly was the right person to lead the institution through its junior college years and the conversion to a four-year school" but that "faculty and students yearned to move in different directions."⁶⁹ Dr. Betty Siegel, who would become the second president of KC the following year, would make a similar observation in 1992. Of Sturgis, Dr. Siegel said, he was "right for his time . . . he hired the right faculty . . . always had it in his head that he was wanting it [KJC] to be a superior college."⁷⁰ In 1981, KSU would have a president more than willing to explore those new directions.

A NEW PRESIDENT AND A NEW VISION FOR THE FUTURE

By 1980, Kennesaw College was a radically different place than it had been a decade before, not least because of the significant increase in student enrollment. Dr. Horace Sturgis' retirement gave the campus community "an opportunity to reflect on its progress from junior to senior college and its hopes for the future" and students and faculty alike were anxious to share their opinions on the qualities needed in a new president.⁷¹ A 19-person committee was convened to conduct a national search; its members included faculty from various disciplines, administrators, students, staff, alumni, and community representatives. By means of a "remarkably open and democratic" process, the committee narrowed the original 147 applicants to about a dozen semifinalists, of whom nine visited the campus for two-day interviews that took place in May and June 1981. According to the April 1982 issue of *The*

⁶⁸ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 96.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁷⁰ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 23.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 99.

Sentinel, the KSU student newspaper, interviewees “had a non-stop schedule while on campus” that included interviews with the faculty, students, staff, and community leaders. Among these finalists was Dr. Betty Siegel, who responded to the hectic interview schedule and lively discussions with an enthusiasm of her own.

When she looked around the campus of Kennesaw College in 1981, Dr. Siegel saw a college brimming with potential—“at first, it seemed so new, so young.”⁷² “To me,” she said in an interview with Dr. Tom Scott, “it was very exciting to think about Kennesaw’s potential.”⁷³ She had been one of the finalists for the presidency at Valdosta State College and had been nominated for the presidency at Georgia College [now Georgia College and State University], although she hadn’t applied for either of those positions. Nor had she applied for the presidency at Kennesaw College, though she had again been nominated for the position; it was only after a friend had visited and complimented the campus that she again looked at the letter that she had been sent informing her of her nomination. When she went back and looked “at that long, dynamic advertisement, the intent that I read between the lines was, this is a college just waiting for greatness.”⁷⁴ It was this potential that brought her to a town and a school that she had never heard of before. In fact, before her interview on campus, she had never been to a junior college or any college like it, but she recalled later that the interview was “the most stimulating experience in my whole life” and “one of the highlights of my life.”⁷⁵ The questions she had been asked and the people who had asked them helped her focus on how her vision might fit with the college; by the end of the interview, she acknowledged that she was “so smitten that I really wanted the job.”⁷⁶

⁷² *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 19.

⁷³ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 19.

⁷⁴ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 19.

⁷⁵ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 20.

⁷⁶ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 20.

When the chancellor called on July 29 and told her, “Betty, we want you to take the job,” she said yes without hesitation. “I didn’t ask what it paid,” she recalled, “I took the job, just like that.”⁷⁷

She brought this enthusiasm with her onto campus as she quickly began working to unite students, faculty, and staff behind her vision for the future of the college. Having experienced various types of college cultures and settings (by her own count, ten or more), she had a clear vision of what needed to be done for Kennesaw College to reach its full potential, but she still spent much of her first year meeting with various groups and engaging them in lively discussions about the future of KC in the same way she had energetically answered questions during her interview such a short time before. She thought, “If we’re going to grow in this college together, it shouldn’t come from the top down.” To this end, less than two months after she began working at KC, she asked Dr. Helen S. Ridley to chair a major ad-hoc committee she called “A View for the Future,” which would involve faculty and staff in a yearlong institutional study.⁷⁸ The View for the Future Committee (VFC) would focus on answering four questions: “1. What should be our vision of the future? 2. What should be the best learning/teaching environment possible? 3. What are the publics we should serve? 4. How can we be more flexible in our curriculum and administration?” Dr. Siegel recalled that these questions came directly from her interview and from her initial discussions as president with faculty, students, and staff, and were, in some part, questions that she had formed in response. She sensed that the general campus community was “comfortable” but “ready for another level.”⁷⁹ It would be the VFC that would explore the answers to these questions, and later Dr. Siegel would give all involved in the process “a great deal of credit because it was they who explored tough questions. And look how visionary they were!”⁸⁰

⁷⁷ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 21.

⁷⁸ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 113.

⁷⁹ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 21.

⁸⁰ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 33.

As a result of the VFC's report, which was presented in May 1982, faculty and staff across campus began to look at how to move from a "failure model" to becoming "success-driven," as Dr. Siegel put it.⁸¹ She recalled: "We [the faculty and staff] looked at what kind of success experiences we could put into place, so that we were beginning to think about the freshman experience."⁸² Dr. King remembered very vividly the active part that Dr. Siegel played in bringing the first-year seminar at KC into reality. She recalled, "Dr. Siegel said, "We need to educate this faculty, and the way we're going to do it, we're going to bring in John Gardner, he's the father of the first-year movement."⁸³ At the time, Dr. King "didn't know who John Gardner was" because she was "happily teaching English," but she soon would. In a similar vein, Dr. Bowman O. Davis, Jr., another of the first instructors of KC 101, would remember the first-year seminar as Dr. Siegel's "baby" and Dr. Siegel herself as a "strong advocate" who "supported it very heavily."⁸⁴ Dr. Siegel decided to begin holding annual weekend-long workshops on the First-Year Experience, hosted by Dr. Gardner, and she required the attendance of faculty and staff. Later, she stated that she had not "made any apologies for insisting people come" and felt that it had been her job as president to enact change.⁸⁵

THE CAPS CENTER AND KC 101

Among the various projects Dr. Siegel was juggling in her first-year as president of KC was a massive reorganization of the academic units. She would do away with the divisions of the previous administration in favor of academic departments. Though the Board of Regents did eventually approve the reorganization she requested, it did not allow for any new positions; she instead had "to appoint all

⁸¹ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 23.

⁸² *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 23.

⁸³ Nancy King (retired Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Services) in discussion with the author, 2018.

⁸⁴ Bowman O. Davis, interview by Thomas Scott, *Interview with Bowman O. Davis, Jr.*, 2004, 10.

⁸⁵ Betty Siegel, interview by Thomas Scott, Ann Pullen, and Dede Yow, *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, October 27, 1993, 73.

the deans and the department heads from within.”⁸⁶ Included in the newly created departments was the Counseling, Advising, and Placement Services (CAPS) Center, of which Dr. Ruth Hepler had been appointed by Dr. Siegel as its first director. CAPS was the first administrative home of the first-year seminar at KC, as is demonstrated by the new course application for KC 101 submitted on May 5, 1983, by Dr. Cary Turner, who listed her discipline as “English/CAPS Center.”⁸⁷ Drs. Hepler and Turner had already been deeply involved in the creation of KC 101 by this time, having been among the first KC faculty, at Dr. Siegel’s behest, to attend a Gardner-led workshop at the University of South Carolina. Dr. King remembered later that “Cary and Ruth were on the very front wave when Betty came here and said she knew John [Gardner] . . . they went to one of John’s workshops and came back all excited.”⁸⁸ “They established it,” she said, “and then recruited me and people like me—they brought John to campus.”⁸⁹ Her remembrances are borne out by invitations sent by Turner and Hepler to Dr. Siegel and others to attend the first Gardner-led workshop in August 1983.⁹⁰

The first Gardner-led workshop on KC 101 took place on August 5 and 6, 1983, and was attended by Dr. Siegel herself, Dr. King, and others. Between 1983 and 1985, about 125 people participated in at least one of the Gardner-led workshops, and even those who never taught KC 101 claimed to benefit from the experience.⁹¹ It was through these workshops led by Gardner that Dr. Davis and Dr. King first became interested in teaching the first-year seminar. “I learned a tremendous amount,” she recalled, “and I learned first and foremost that if you don’t do a good job with your freshman, your first-years, then you are not going to have sophomores or juniors, and you are not going

⁸⁶ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 24.

⁸⁷ Cary Turner, email to department, May 5, 1983.

⁸⁸ Nancy King, interview by Thomas Scott and Dede Yow, *Interview with Nancy S. King*, February 16, 2006, 8.

⁸⁹ *Interview with Nancy S. King*, February 16, 2006, 11.

⁹⁰ Cary Turner, email invitation to faculty, July 1, 1983.

⁹¹ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 157.

to have people graduating.”⁹² Her conclusion was one that Dr. Siegel had drawn in her early observations of KC. Looking around the campus in 1981, she acknowledged, “We are a school that had had a lot of [student] failures. Not bad failures, but students were dropping out, because it was a revolving door.”⁹³ Dr. Tom Scott conceded, “I think in junior college days we were so intent on making sure the students were well-prepared to succeed anywhere else that oftentimes we lost a lot that never went on elsewhere.”⁹⁴

Dr. Scott’s comments accurately summarized the prevailing academic atmosphere of the junior college years. From the beginning, administrators and faculty at the nascent Kennesaw Junior College had been conscious of the fact that senior colleges “often looked on junior colleges as little more than another two years of high school” and were determined to overcome such prejudices.⁹⁵ The “push for prestige” among junior and senior colleges in the wake of the Carnegie Classifications was common at the time of Kennesaw’s founding, as was its deleterious impact on student success and retention. Across campus there was a common belief that by maintaining high academic standards KJC could “earn its way up the academic ladder,” regardless of the drop-out rate.⁹⁶ The overemphasis on academic rigor led to some courses, such as Composition, becoming “notorious for the number of Fs that students received,” and to indifference on the part of instructors teaching such courses. Faculty members hired at the time of KJC’s founding recalled being told “not to worry about the body count” if they found it necessary to fail a large number of students.⁹⁷ In 1972, the first institutional self-study indicated that KJC lost “an average of 32 percent of its students from fall to winter quarter and from winter to spring quarter.”⁹⁸ It

⁹² Nancy King (retired Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Services) in discussion with the author, 2018.

⁹³ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 21.

⁹⁴ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 23.

⁹⁵ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 48.

⁹⁶ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 65.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 49.

was perhaps these statistics to which Dr. Siegel was referring when she observed: “We also had students . . . with few successful experiences.”⁹⁹ It certainly was with these students in mind that Dr. Siegel charged the VFC with answering the question, “What should be the best learning/teaching environment possible?” or, as she phrased it later, “How can we make the learning process more inviting?”¹⁰⁰

A first-year seminar and more emphasis on student success were two approaches to answering that question. By requiring faculty to attend the Gardner workshops, Dr. Siegel gradually introduced the idea of a first-year seminar to the KC campus community and generated excitement about creating one. In a letter to Gardner after the first workshop, Dr. Siegel wrote: “All of us who participated were on a natural high following the workshop—and our enthusiasm has not diminished. In fact, much like the aftermath of a rock thrown into a stream, our enthusiasm has rippled outward, and the entire college community is aglow with a positive spirit of expectancy.”¹⁰¹ The Gardner-led weekend-long workshops would continue to be held twice a year, in the fall and in the spring.

In the fall of 1983, the first sections of KC 101 were taught by ten volunteer faculty members, including Dr. King and Dr. Davis, to about one hundred students.¹⁰² Dr. Davis remembered that “you were supposed to teach study skills, but it wasn’t so much a teaching course as it was for building student-faculty relationships. In other words, you wanted to build a peer group among students, which helped ensure their success. You also wanted those students, very early in their careers, to establish connections with faculty members that they would feel comfortable going to should problems arise.”¹⁰³ Though Dr. Davis conceded he “wasn’t successful at promoting [the first-year seminar],” he “at least incorporated it[’s practices] into his own teaching.”¹⁰⁴ Writing to Dr. Turner a year after the first sections

⁹⁹ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 21.

¹⁰⁰ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 21.

¹⁰¹ Betty Siegel, personal letter to John Gardner, August 16, 1983.

¹⁰² Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 157.

¹⁰³ *Interview with Bowman O. Davis, Jr.*, 2004, 9.

¹⁰⁴ *Interview with Bowman O. Davis, Jr.*, 2004, 10.

of KC 101 were offered, Dr. Siegel remarked that she was “struck by the tremendous impact this program has already had on the lives of faculty at Kennesaw College” and that they could “point with some pride to the feeling of consensus, rapport, and collegiality that KC has brought to our faculty.”¹⁰⁵ The impact on the students, she thought, “will probably be seen in the near future.”¹⁰⁶ In fact, Dr. Davis, one of the first KC 101 instructors, would publish in 1992 focusing on the retention of those students who had taken KC 101 between 1984 and 1986 and found higher retention rates and cumulative GPAs in those students who had taken the seminar.

In 1985, Dr. Hepler resigned her directorship of CAPS to focus on her role as chair of the Psychology Department. A few months later in February 1986, Dr. King began working part-time in CAPS (again, at Dr. Siegel’s behest) on an advisement program for undeclared students and quickly found herself playing a larger role than she had originally anticipated.¹⁰⁷ When Dr. Hepler’s successor served for only a year and a half, creating a need for a temporary replacement, Dr. King took over as acting Director of CAPS, though she had every intention of returning to the English Department after a full-time director had been found.¹⁰⁸ It was again Dr. Siegel who proved decisive in the search: When the CAPS staff asked her, “Why don’t you just let Nancy [King] stay?” she called in Dr. King and said, “You’ve started some really good initiatives over there, and I just want you to stay and carry this out.”¹⁰⁹ Dr. King would stay with CAPS until 1990, when she returned to the English faculty full-time. She would not stay there for long, however. As the first decade of Dr. Siegel’s presidency came to an end, it would be time for a new “View of the Future” and Dr. King would, once again, be drawn into Dr. Siegel’s vision for the future.

¹⁰⁵ Betty Siegel, personal letter to Cary Turner, May 4, 1984.

¹⁰⁶ Betty Siegel, personal letter to Cary Turner, May 4, 1984.

¹⁰⁷ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 158.

¹⁰⁸ *Interview with Nancy S. King*, February 16, 2006, 6.

¹⁰⁹ *Interview with Nancy S. King*, February 16, 2006, 7.

A(NOTHER) NEW VISION OF THE FUTURE

As the first decade of Dr. Siegel's presidency drew to a close, KC's progress had "caught the eye of the rest of the nation."¹¹⁰ Speaking with Dr. Thomas Scott in 1993, she remarked: "As I look back on those ten years, I don't think that anyone who came in the last two years understands how exciting those years were and how far we've come. For us to move away from a college of 3,500-something students to 12,500 in less than twelve years—a decade—and to get the buildings we've got, to get the programs in place, to triple the faculty, to have not much money. We did it with energy; we did it with creativity; we did it with innovation; we did it with tenacity."¹¹¹ With perhaps a touch of irony, she added: "We didn't have time to reflect too much."¹¹² In 1988, the KC campus community celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary with a new name: Kennesaw State College (KSC). The new name more appropriately reflected KSC's status as a senior college and marked a step away from the days as a junior college. When Dr. Siegel presided over a student-led "Don't call us junior anymore!" bonfire, in which anything with the word "junior" was burned, the intention was to "eradicate all references to 'junior.'"¹¹³ The bonfire was a bold assertion that KSC would no longer be called "junior," even if it was a newer institution. This preoccupation with being recognized as a senior college matured into a concern with receiving local and national recognition.

The first acknowledgement of the progress that KC had made in so short a time came in 1985, when the publication *Searching for Academic Excellence* included Kennesaw College as one of twenty colleges "on the move."¹¹⁴ Dr. Siegel remembered particularly that the publication described "the perspective of the president and the perspective of the institution" as being in sync, a sentiment with

¹¹⁰ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 174.

¹¹¹ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, October 27, 1993, 32.

¹¹² *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, October 27, 1993, 32.

¹¹³ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 177.

¹¹⁴ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 24.

which she totally agreed.¹¹⁵ A 1986 SACS self-study indicated that KC's students were increasingly successful after graduating, noting in particular that KC had "the best record of any college in Georgia, public or private, in the percentage of students passing the teacher certification test in 1984."¹¹⁶ In 1989, *U.S. News & World Report* recognized the newly named KSC as one of only five institutions in the south included in the category of "Up-and-Coming-Regional Colleges and Universities," and in 1990, the same year that KSC's enrollment topped 10,000, singled out KSC as among the "best up-and-coming colleges" in the South. The magazine recognized KSC again in 1991, when KSC was identified as a "rising star."¹¹⁷ Dr. Siegel remembered the multiple recognitions as "a very big compliment."¹¹⁸

A new name called for a new vision of the future; it was time to "revisit the old View of the Future and update it for a new generation."¹¹⁹ Dr. King called the initiative "Son of View of the Future."¹²⁰ To that end, three authors, each serving as a Presidential Fellow, were asked to compile a report based on the findings of numerous focus groups conducted with students, faculty, and staff. The focus groups were conducted between February and March 1995, and the report, the New View of the Future, was completed in May 1995. Recommendations were grouped into four major categories: planning and institutional research, delivery of college services, services for diverse and nontraditional student populations, and means of improving the delivery of services. A major strategic emphasis was on student success; specific recommendations included the creation of more inviting spaces on campus, mentoring programs for students and faculty, and increasing the number of personnel in centers like CAPS.¹²¹

¹¹⁵ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, February 5, 1992, 24.

¹¹⁶ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 158.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 175.

¹¹⁸ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, October 27, 1993, 62.

¹¹⁹ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 240.

¹²⁰ *Interview with Nancy S. King*, February 16, 2006, 16.

¹²¹ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 240.

In an October 1993 interview, Dr. Siegel explained to her interviewer that “what we [KSC faculty and staff] try to do is build a culture of student success,” a sentiment Dr. King echoed when she stated, “Why we exist is to help our students be successful, not only in the classroom, but to prepare them to be out and be successful in the real world, successful citizens, all of that.”¹²² It was perhaps for this attitude that Dr. Siegel tapped Dr. King to become KSC’s first interim Vice President of Student Success and Enrollment Services. Prior to her appointment, KSC had operated in a traditional manner with a Division of Student Affairs, but when the Dean of Student Affairs resigned suddenly at the start of the 1995-1996 academic year, Dr. Siegel took the opportunity to reorganize the area as the Division of Student Success. Under this reorganization, admissions, financial aid, and the registrar would report directly to Dr. King. Dr. King remembered the entire experience as “history repeating itself,” with Dr. Siegel turning to her as an interim Vice President and deciding to confirm her in the position after a search.¹²³ One of the first changes to be made after the New View for the Future and the creation of the Division of Student Success was the reorganization of the Learning Support Department, at that time headed by Joanne Fowler. The new department took on an expanded first-year seminar (now called KSC 101), the senior-year experience, the Honors Program, and the English as a Second Language (ESL) Center at a time when the campus was “completing the process of phasing out traditional developmental studies courses.”¹²⁴ In July 1995, Professor Kathy Matthews was appointed director of KSC 101; two years later, Joanne Fowler would become Dean of Academic Services and facilitate KSU’s transition from the quarter to the semester system in 1998. In 2001, the Learning Support Department would be renamed as the Department of University Studies.

¹²² Ibid., 241.

¹²³ *Interview with Nancy S. King*, February 16, 2006, 18.

¹²⁴ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 241.

The last decade of Dr. Siegel’s presidency and the one in which KSC would finally attain university status would be called by Dr. Scott “the most productive and consequential of her career.”¹²⁵ For many years, a number of state colleges, KSC among them, had jockeyed for the coveted university status, which was granted only to four units in the system; in 1990, however, the floodgates cracked when Georgia Southern became a regional university, followed by Valdosta State in 1993. Throughout those years, representatives of KSC argued repeatedly that its enrollment, programs, and service area “compared favorably” to these new universities.¹²⁶ When a committee appointed by University System of Georgia Chancellor Stephen R. Portch found that “most of the four-year state colleges [in Georgia] would be called universities in other states,” the Chancellor was sufficiently moved to create an advisory committee of five consultants to review mission statements and academic programs to determine which state colleges deserved university status. Of those institutions reviewed, the first to be granted university status were those that offered graduate degrees and that had names that could be easily changed by substituting “university” for “college.” KSC met these criteria and on June 12, 1996, was one of seven state colleges granted university designation, becoming Kennesaw State University.

CREATING A UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AND A DEPARTMENT OF FIRST-YEAR PROGRAMS

Dr. Siegel remembered that the creation of the University College in 2004 “started with a ‘what if’ question”: “What if we were to just have a general college right now: University College?” And then before we got up from the table, we had the framework.”¹²⁷ The decision was prompted by KSU’s serving as a “benchmark” for the Foundations of Excellence in the First Year Program study, sponsored by the National Resource Center for the First-Year and Students in Transition. After KSU began to benchmark itself against 11 other national partners to work on improving aspects of their first-year

¹²⁵ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 249.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 254.

¹²⁷ Betty Siegel, interview by Thomas Scott, Ann Pullen, and Dede Yow, *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, July 19, 2005, 108.

initiatives, Dr. Siegel decided that creating a University College would help the campus community improve student retention and academic achievement. Dr. Lendley C. Blank, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, described University College as “the result of a new charge and a new approach to our current Undergraduate and University Studies.”¹²⁸ Dr. Mary Lou Frank, who had been serving as Dean of Undergraduate and University Studies, took on the new position as Dean of University College. In FAQs shared with the KSU campus community, the administration argued that University College would “help us take our undergraduate initiatives to a new level while building interdisciplinary programs to benefit all of our students in innovative ways” and “ensure a more seamless and centralized experience for all of our undergraduate students by building on the collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Success.”¹²⁹

The new University College would now house the Department of University Studies, headed by Dr. Rebecca Casey, and would be involved in “the coordination and leadership for General Education, Communities for Learning Success (CLASS), Learning Support and Supplemental Instruction, ESL, the Honors Program, as well as integrated programs for the First Year, Sophomore Year, and Senior Year experience.”¹³⁰ To facilitate the details of implementing University College, a University College Advisory Committee (UCAC) was composed of faculty members and charged with developing the substance of University College and with providing Dr. Frank with advice. The UCAC would “investigate national models” but would assist Dr. Frank “in developing a University College that works for the unique needs” of KSU.¹³¹

When the first meeting of the UCAC took place on September 17, 2004, Dr. Keisha Hoerrner, who had joined the Department of University Studies shortly before its integration into University

¹²⁸ Lendley Black, email communication, September 4, 2004.

¹²⁹ Lendley Black, email communication, September 4, 2004.

¹³⁰ Lendley Black, email communication, September 4, 2004.

¹³¹ Lendley Black, email communication, September 4, 2004.

College, was elected Chair of UCAC and led the committee in meetings held every 14 days throughout the fall semester.¹³² Among those items that the UCAC would discuss frequently was the first-year seminar: KSU 1101. By the time of UCAC's first meeting, 45 sections of KSU 1101 were offered in the course catalog for the 2004-2005 year, and at a subsequent meeting on October 5, 2004, Professor Kathy Matthews reported that "KSU 1101 has been a model for other institutions setting up first-year seminars."¹³³ Dr. Rebecca Casey suggested that UCAC be the venue through which a first-year requirement could be proposed and the implications of implementing one could be discussed. A year after UCAC's first meeting, all entering first-year students with fewer than 15 credit hours were expected to meet KSU's new first-year curriculum requirement (i.e., enroll in a first-year seminar or a learning community), which was an institutional requirement. Dr. Frank did not stay in her position as Dean of University College for much longer than a year. In the year Dr. Siegel retired and Dr. Daniel Papp began working as KSU's third president, Dr. Ralph Rascati was named the second Dean of University College. Working with Dr. Casey, Dr. Rascati proposed splitting the Department of University Studies into two departments, calling the newly created department First-Year Programs.¹³⁴ Dr. Rascati asked Dr. Hoerrner to take on the role of interim chair, a position which she accepted. Dr. Hoerrner later applied for the position as part of a national search and was appointed permanent chair in February or March 2008. By this time, 110 sections of KSU 1101 were included in the course catalog, with sections covering various topics. The creation of University College and subsequent creation of the Department of First-Year Programs made KSU one of only two institutions (the other being Utah Valley University) that has a department housing faculty dedicated to teaching the first-year seminar.¹³⁵

¹³² Lendley Black, email communication, September 4, 2004.

¹³³ UCAC Minutes, October 5, 2004

¹³⁴ Keisha Hoerrner, interview by Thomas Scott, *Interview with Keisha L. Hoerrner*, August 26, 2009.

¹³⁵ Dr. Ruth Goldfine (Chair of the Department of First-Year and Transition Studies), in email correspondence with the researcher, July 14, 2018.

The events recounted in this chapter provide a historical narrative of the creation of the first-year seminar and University College at KSU, placing both in the context of the national movement. This narrative is depicted in a timeline provided in Appendix A.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

The lines and colors of the early history of Kennesaw State University's first-year seminar fit in with the broader brush strokes of the historical period in which the institution and the first-year movement was born. Kennesaw Junior College, founded in 1963, was one of thirteen junior colleges founded by the University System of Georgia between 1958 and 1976; at the same time, the nation at large, was striving to accommodate a swelling population of entering college students by founding junior and community colleges. When KJC first opened its doors in 1965, it did so in the midst of the baby boom and, since then, has enjoyed unprecedented growth. Like other junior colleges founded during that period, KJC was overly concerned with its reputation for academic rigor and with attaining four-year status, sometimes to the detriment of student success and retention. Though it continually improved its reputation for academic excellence, becoming known as "the Harvard of the Pines," KJC regularly lost large numbers of the student population as they transferred to other institutions (where they perhaps tended to succeed because of the increased academic rigor at KJC) or dropped out of college.

In 1975, when drastic decreases in enrollment across the nation prompted institutions of higher education and their administrators to reexamine their approach to student services and student success, KJC was one of the few that seemed unaffected and continued to enjoy increasing student enrollment. It was for perhaps this reason that the first-year movement, which began to take root across college campuses at this time, did not do so at KJC. In fact, it was not until the Board of Regents finally voted to convert KJC into a four-year school, Kennesaw College (KC), and a new president, Dr. Betty Siegel, was brought in that the first-year movement began to flourish at KC. Though KC had established higher

standards of academic rigor, the overemphasis on academic rigor had caused students to transfer to another institution or to drop out entirely. Until the first-year seminar was established at KC, the high attrition rates were considered academic business as usual; instructors were told not to worry about failing large numbers of students in introductory courses and to continue enforcing high academic standards.

Dr. Nancy King argued that “most things that happen in life—and higher education is no different—it really often stems from individuals. It’s the people that make it happen.”¹³⁶ Such was the case in 1981 when Dr. Betty Siegel became the second president of Kennesaw College and galvanized the campus community to change and grow to better meet student needs. Her fresh perspective of KC and its needs forced the campus community to engage with John Gardner’s first-year movement. Dr. Siegel’s impact on the creation and growth of the first-year seminar program at KC demonstrates the importance of top-down support, combined with grassroots involvement from the campus community, in growing a successful first-year seminar program. The first-year seminar at KSU is distinctive because of its longevity, which is one way in which the institutionalization of a seminar is measured. According to a survey conducted by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition in 2000, 31% of reported first-year seminars had been in existence “for more than ten years,” while only 15% had been in existence “for no more than two years.”¹³⁷

Another notable aspect of the first-year seminar at KSU is its textbook. While many institutions preferred to use the *Master Student*, one of John Gardner’s texts, as a textbook or a customized text, KSU was the first to create a campus-specific text, *Making Connections: Achieving Success, Understanding Others*, in 1998. *Making Connections* differed from customized texts in that its content

¹³⁶ Nancy King (retired Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Services) in discussion with the author, 2018.

¹³⁷ National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, *The 2000 National Survey*.

was tailored to meet the needs of KSU students and included chapters written by KSU faculty who taught the first-year seminar. Customized texts, in contrast, took the basic information on an institution, and input that information into a template text. Though different publishers published the text, KSU 1101 instructors continued to teach from *Making Connections* until 2006, when they began teaching from *Foundations of Academic Inquiry*, which is also wholly written by KSU faculty and administrators.

Barefoot and Fidler¹³⁸ defined a successful first-year seminar as one that had been sustained over a period of time and received campus support. This support can manifest in many ways, including compensation for instructors, instructor training and development, and the involvement of students, faculty, and student affairs professionals in the seminar design and instruction. The history of the first-year seminar at KSU has demonstrated a continued commitment to instructor training for the first-year seminar, beginning well before the first section of KC 101 was taught on campus and continuing for more than thirty years after. Several instructors of the original KC 101 course indicated that it was unclear that the course “was built into the promotion, tenure reward structure” and remembered it being “very difficult at that time to get faculty onboard for it.”

These problems were present in the early history of the KC 101, when it was housed in the CAPS Center and taught by faculty on a voluntary basis. Moving the academic home of the first-year seminar from the CAPS Center to the Department of University Studies did not address these problems, but they were, however, addressed by the creation of the University College in 2004 and by designating a specific academic department in 2007, the Department of First-Year Programs—now the Department of First-Year and Transition Studies—which houses tenured and tenure-track faculty wholly dedicated to teaching first-year students. According to Evenbeck et al., a common evolutionary path for units that

¹³⁸ Betsy Barefoot and Paul Fidler, *The 1994 National Survey of Freshman Seminar Programs: Continuing Innovations in the Collegiate Curriculum* (Columbia, SC: National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, 1996).

have been in existence since the early 1980s (like KSU's) is a change in how they are identified. It is intriguing to consider that the creation of University College came only a few years after KSU was granted university status. Similarly, a common reason for creating a University College is "the need to provide centralized student support services," a need which is explicitly stated in the communications sent out by UCAC in 2004.

According to research conducted by Dr. Ruth Goldfine and Dr. Keisha Hoerrner several years ago, KSU is one of only two institutions (the other being Utah Valley University) that has a department and faculty dedicated to teaching the first-year seminar. John Gardner made an observation in the early history of KSU's first-year seminar programming that noted the rarity of devoting an entire academic unit to the support of first-year students. Shortly after Dr. King became the Vice President of Student Success and Enrollment Services in 1996, John Gardner told Dr. King in a phone call, "You [KSC] are the first people in the country to have a real division centered on student success. I've checked, and I'm just amazed and I'm really kind of put out that I didn't think of it first." It was after that phone call, Dr. King recalled, that the phones at KC started ringing: "We had people from all over not just the country but the world, wanting to know, 'So, how do you get this student success?'" When the researcher responded "by making it a priority," Dr. King replied "Exactly!"¹³⁹ The creation of University College in 2004 and the Department of First-Year Programs in 2007 is evidence of that commitment to student success.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The period covered within this study, approximately 1983 to 2007, is one of tremendous change for the first-year student experience at KSU and for the institution itself. That is not to say, however,

¹³⁹ Nancy King (retired Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Services) in discussion with the author, 2018.

that those are the only years in which drastic change has occurred. Dr. Siegel reflected later in her life that she felt as if she had been “president of three different kinds of colleges” and that she had been president “of a college still evolving.”¹⁴⁰ For example, in 2015, the Board of Regents approved plans to consolidate KSU and Southern Polytechnic State University (SPSU) and in the process declared that the newly consolidated institution would retain the name KSU. SPSU has its own rich history of the first-year student experience and first-year seminar, and researchers working in the future should examine this history as well as the impact of the consolidation on first-year programming. Dr. Thomas Scott’s *Kennesaw State University: The First Fifty Years*, the only publication on KSU’s history, does not include more recent developments in the history of the first-year experience, such as changing the name of the Department of First-Year Programs to the Department of First-Year and Transition Studies or the development of KSU’s Master of Science in First-Year Studies, the first such program of its type in the country. Researchers working in the future should look to these later periods, when KSU expanded its position as a leader in the field of first-year studies, to contribute to the documentation and discussion.

Similarly, for the purposes of this study, the researcher limited the analysis of the first-year student experience at KSU to its first-year seminar and the creation of University College in 2004. While these areas are an integral part of the first-year student’s experience at KSU, they by no means represent the entirety of a student’s first-year experience. For example, important aspects of the first-year experience, such as orientation, housing, financial aid, academic advising, supports for at-risk students, and other such areas are not included within this study despite being important areas of the first-year experience.

In a similar vein, while the Kennesaw State University Archives has many documents relating to the first-year experience, the limited access afforded the researcher naturally restricted the time that

¹⁴⁰ *Interviews with President Betty Lentz Siegel*, October 27, 1992, 25.

could be devoted to research and, hence, the scope of the study. Time was also a factor in conducting interviews with study participants. While there are many current and former Kennesaw State University faculty and staff with a wealth of information about the first-year experience, time constraints forced the researcher to select a limited number of interviewees from among the potential participants, based on their knowledge of the research areas covered in this study and their length of service at Kennesaw State University.

Over the course of this study, one theme has become disturbingly prevalent: the frequent loss or, in some cases, destruction of historical documents. Jo Allen Bradham, recipient of the 1992 Distinguished Teaching Award, remarked “One thing I like about Kennesaw is that it has no past and all future.”¹⁴¹ One particularly important example is the “Don’t call us junior anymore!” bonfire, in which anything with the word “junior” was burned. Dr. Nancy King remembered the bonfire and regretted that it had been allowed to go forward: “All of the things [documentation] that we would have [had] got burned up!”¹⁴² Though certainly evidence of a growing sense of community across the Kennesaw State College campus, the ramifications of such joyous destruction are evident in the glaring gaps within the Kennesaw State University Archives. As researchers in the future review the material in the Kennesaw State University Archives, other gaps in historical documentation will become evident.

There are, however, those individuals who have maintained archives of their own and on whose donations the Kennesaw State University Archives depends. One such individual is Professor Kathy Matthews, whose office walls are lined with bookshelves overflowing with historical documents such as old editions of the first-year seminar textbook, handouts from Dr. John Gardner’s workshops at Kennesaw College, and internal publications. It is her intention to bequeath her documents to the

¹⁴¹ Scott, *KSU: The First Fifty Years*, 136.

¹⁴² Nancy King (retired Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Services) in discussion with the author, 2018.

Kennesaw State University Archives when she retires, and her contribution at that time will be invaluable to future researchers of the history of Kennesaw State University and its first-year experience. Instead, however, of relying upon the ability of individuals and departments to maintain their own archives and to donate them when they leave or retire, there should be an archiving policy in place which requires the donation, rather than destruction, of older documents.

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APPENDIX A

October 9, 1963	Board of Regents approves new junior college in Cobb County
November 19, 1964	Groundbreaking ceremony
July 1, 1965	Dr. Horace Sturgis is appointed first president of Kennesaw Junior College (KJC)
January 9, 1967	Classes start on the new campus located on the site of the Old Frey Farm
January 13, 1971	First presentation to Board of Regents on conversion of KJC to four-year school—unsuccessful
1972	Dr. Nancy King begins working at KJC as a part-time instructor of English and works for approximately 5 years First institutional self-study – KJC lost approximately 32% of its students between the fall and spring quarters
October 10, 1973	Second presentation to Board of Regents on conversion of Kennesaw Junior College to four-year school—unsuccessful
January 1974	Resolutions calling for elevation of Kennesaw Junior College to four-year status pushed through both houses of the Georgia General Assembly—unsuccessful
December 1974	Newly-elected Georgia governor George Busbee tells the <i>Marietta Daily Journal (MDJ)</i> that Kennesaw Junior College would be “the next junior college in the state to be elevated”
April 14, 1976	Board of Regents agrees to designate Kennesaw Junior College a four-year school in 11-2 vote
September 1, 1977	Kennesaw Junior College becomes Kennesaw College (KC)
1978	Dr. King returns as a full-time instructor of English
September 18, 1978	First upper-level courses offered at KC
December 31, 1980	Dr. Horace Sturgis retires as first president of KC
February/March 1981	Finalists for second presidency are interviewed on campus
July 29, 1981	Dr. Betty Siegel is offered and accepted the position of president of

	KC, becoming its second president
August 18, 1981	The <i>MDJ</i> breaks story of Dr. Siegel's appointment before official announcement by Board of Regents
August 19, 1981	Dr. Siegel's appointment becomes official at a meeting of the Board of Regents
October 15, 1981	Dr. Siegel asks Dr. Helen Ridley to chair View of the Future Committee (VFC)
1981-1982	VFC investigates KC
May 1982	VFC presents its report
1983	Reorganization of KC into departments and colleges, CAPS Center created with Dr. Ruth Hepler as first director
May 5, 1983	Dr. Cary Turner submits new course application for KC 101
July 1, 1983	Dr. Siegel invited to first KC 101 workshop
August 5-6, 1983	First KC 101 workshop led by Dr. John Gardner
September 19, 1983	First sections of KC 101 are taught by ten volunteer faculty members to about 100 students
1983-1985	Approximately 125 individuals attend weekend-long seminars led by Dr. John Gardner—Dr. King is a frequent attendee
1985	KC is listed in <i>Searching for Academic Excellence</i> as a "college on the move"
February 1986	Dr. King is asked by Dr. Siegel to move to CAPS part time to create an advisement program for undeclared students, becomes acting and then permanent Director of CAPS
April 6, 1988	Recommendation for name to be changed to Kennesaw State College (KSC)
June 8, 1988	Name change approved by the Board of Regents
July 1, 1988	KC becomes KSC, KC 101 becomes KSC 101

September 18, 1990	Enrollment at KSU tops 10,000
1989-1991	<i>U.S. New & World Report</i> recognizes KSC several times
1992	Kathy Matthews begins working at KSC
July 1995	Kathy Matthew appointed Director of KSC 101
February 14, 1996	Dr. King is appointed first permanent Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Services
June 12, 1996	KSC becomes Kennesaw State University
1998	Campus-specific (different from customized texts) <i>Making Connections</i> published
Fall 1998	Conversion from quarter to semester system completed
July 1, 2001	Learning Support renamed Department of University Studies, which reports to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies
February 1, 2002	Dr. John Gardner weekend-long seminar held
2003	Policy Center for the First Year of College chooses KSU as one of the benchmarking institutions for the “Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year” project
July 1, 2004	Dr. Siegel launches University College with one department, University Studies; Dr. Mary Lou Frank, the former Dean of Undergraduate Studies, is its first dean.
August 2004	First meeting of the University College advisory council, 45 sections of KSU 1101 offered
October 5, 2004	University College advisory council discusses need for first-year requirement
August 2005	All entering first-year students with less than 15 credit hours required to complete first-year curriculum requirement
February 16, 2006	Dr. Daniel Papp is appointed third president of KSU
July 1, 2006	Dr. Ralph Riscotti becomes second dean of University College, Dr.

	Papp officially takes office as president
7/1/2007	Dr. Riscotti receives permission to split off new Department of First-Year Programs (FYP) from University Studies
2008	Dr. King retires
August 25, 2009	110 sections of first-year seminar offered
July 1, 2013	Department of First-Year Programs is renamed Department of First-Year and Transition Studies

APPENDIX B

The following questions will be asked of all interviewees, regardless of work experience:

When did you first begin working at KSU, and in what capacity?

Did any of your duties involving working with first-year students or on first-year programming?

How long have you worked with first-year students and/or programming?

If not, when did you begin to work with first-year students and/or programming?

When you first began working at KSU, was it your intention to work with first-year students and/or programming, or was this an organic development of your duties here?

What were/are your duties in regard to the first-year experience at KSU?

The following questions will be asked of interviewees, dependent upon their work experience:

Relation to First-Year Experience/Seminar

Do you have any familiarity with the discipline of first-year studies?

Have you ever conducted research in the field of first-year studies or read any scholarly articles regarding first-year studies?

Are you or have you been a member of the Department of First-Year and Transition Studies?

If not a member of FYTS, to what department do you belong and how does it relate to first-year studies/students/programming?

Has this relationship evolved?

Does your department work with other departments in the planning/implementation of first-year policies or programs?

With which departments do you partner? For how long has this partnership been in effect?

Have you ever attended a training session or workshop which focused on supporting first-year students?

Was this training/workshop hosted by KSU?

If yes, then by what department? If not, then by what organization?

Have you ever taught a section of the KSU first-year seminar at any time while working at KSU?

What texts did you use?

What type of assignments did you utilize? How was it evaluated?

General KSU

What are KSU policies regarding the first-year experience/first-year programming?

How has this programming, to your knowledge, impacted the first-year experience? For example, how did requiring students with less than 15 credit hours impact the first-year experience/programming/students?

Was anyone against this policy? For what reasons were they against it?