

<u>Question</u>	<u>Answer</u>
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Title of Paper	Engineering 1,000: Implementing an Activity-Based Orientation Program for Over 1,000 students

Abstract

Changing the climate and culture of a College to one that welcomes diversity and is inclusive requires modifications of the student experience from the first day on campus. In 2009 the College of Engineering at Oregon State University expanded the pre-fall term orientation program developed for first year women to include all 1000+ incoming engineering students. Rather than train female students to adapt to the current culture, we decided to work with all students to change the College climate from one of competition to one of collaboration, emphasizing important engineering skills that are often talked about in first year classes, but seldom practiced: communication, respect, and team work. As with most traditional orientation programs, one goal was to introduce students to college resources. Additional objectives of the OSU program were to highlight and practice the skills of collaborative problem solving, communication, and working effectively in diverse groups. The Women and Minorities in Engineering Program and the COE Office of Undergraduate Programs partnered with the OSU Office of Experiential Learning to develop and facilitate two low threat/high challenge outdoor engineering activities based on Kolb's experiential learning cycle (1984). The 1000+ students were led to the campus quad where they were separated into prearranged groups of thirty. Activities, facilitated by trained upper division engineering students, required the active participation of each team member. Experiential Learning is effective in developing relationships quickly, in illustrating the strength of diverse teams, and in promoting confidence (Adya and Kaiser 2005). Outcomes over the last two years have been assessed by surveys, focus groups, and by monitoring first year student participation in College of Engineering clubs/organizations: a measure of the extent students are involved in College programs. We will share insights, logistics, and lessons learned implementing an activity based collaborative orientation program for over a thousand students.