

# Supporting Undergraduate Academic & Social Integration in Higher Education: developing pedagogic learning communities.



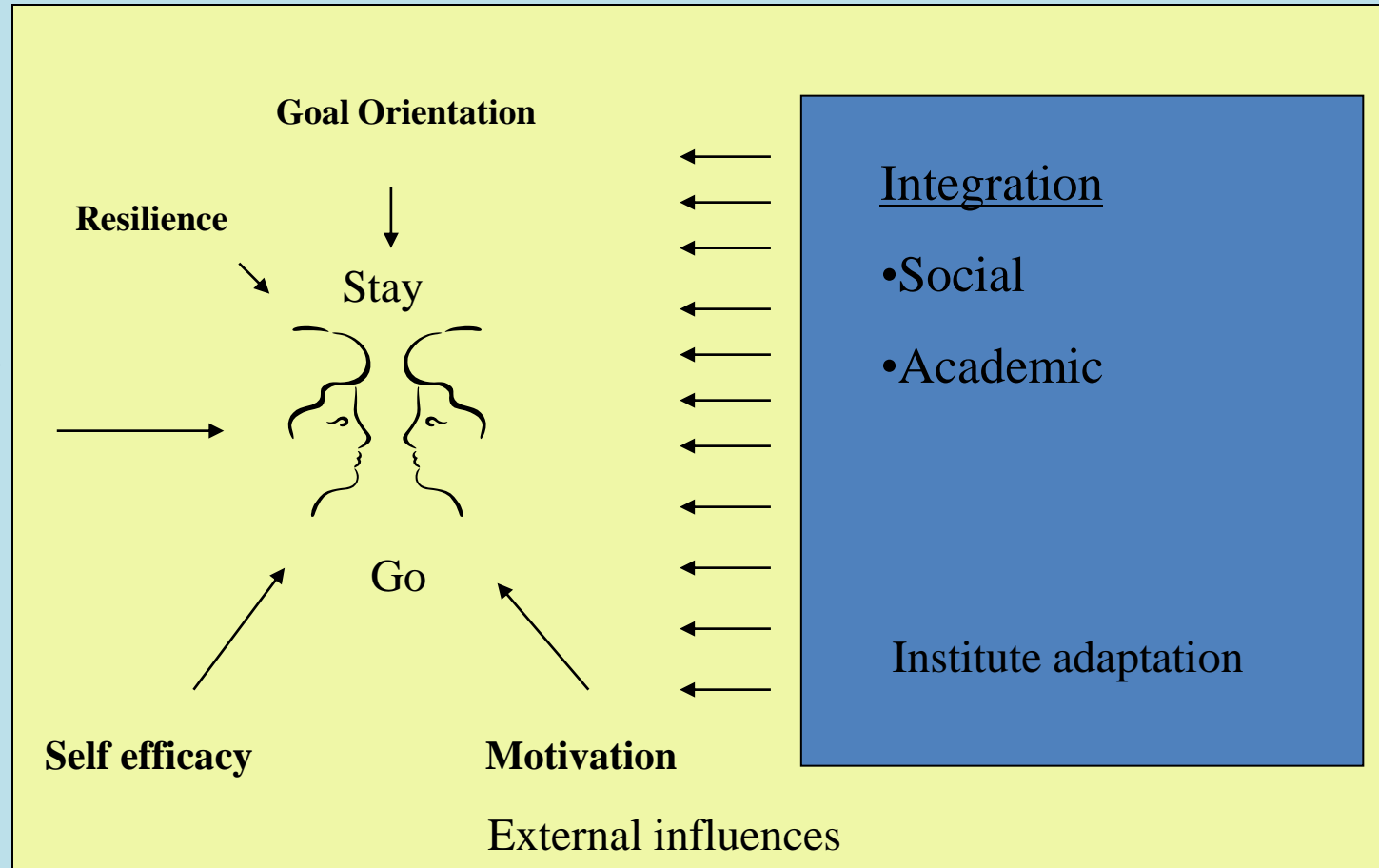
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# Session outcomes

- Share our personal learning of setting up pedagogic learning communities
- Explore the features of learning communities which support student integration into HE.
- Explore cost, benefits and effectiveness



# Should I stay or should I go?



Tinto is probably the most commonly cited but is not universally accepted; this is my interpretation of Tinto (1987) with modification – Following Yorke (2004), Pascarella et al (2004) & Tienny (2000)

# Background

- Current support systems tend to be heavily on new students to higher education being autonomous, independent and confident early in the experience of HE

Academic and social adjustment are key to engagement and retention of undergraduates (Rickinson and Rutherford, 1996).

# Project Aims

- To support the transition to independent, confident learners by fostering academic and social integration.
- The development of meaningful relationships between staff and students that advance student learning.

# Project

- Weekly 1-2 hour informal sessions for first year students.
- Informal lunch-time meetings led by subject team, senior students, and student support staff.
- Promotion of social engagement and academic support through planned activities, assignment club, coffee/ lunch with teaching staff and fellow students.

# Institute activities

## September- November 2009

### Psychology:

- Away day
- Weekly 2 hour lunch time sessions for 5 weeks & one prior to assignment submissions

### Biological Sciences:

- Weekly 1 hour lunch time sessions for 4 weeks and 2 sessions prior to assignments.
- Student mentors

**Free lunches**



# Psychology activities

1. Student-led introductions
2. Film clips and group activities
3. Using research in psychology - on-line activities
4. Employability presentation
5. Study skills
6. Assignment preparation

# Biological Sciences

Contains 6 courses.

Already had:

- an Institute lunch
- voluntary lunch time study skills sessions
- PDP scheme which includes employability sessions.

# Biological Sciences activities

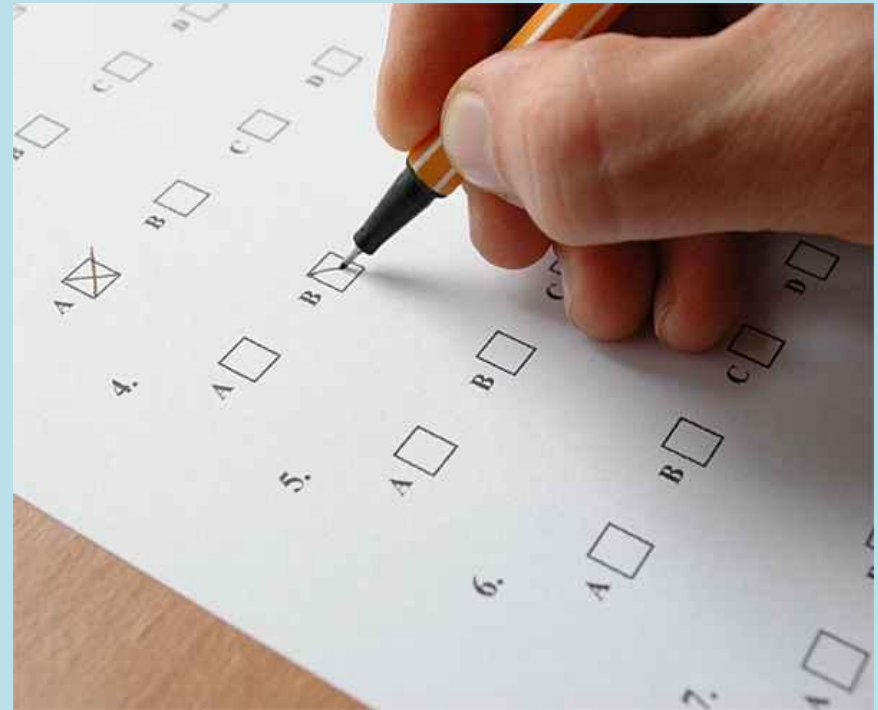
- Video clip and discussion. Biological theme - the importance of evidence .
- Video clip and discussion. Biological theme -the importance of avoiding bias.
- Presentation on animal breeding plus discussion. Student concerns.
- Study skills - note taking (students' request)
- Assignment preparation (students' request)
- Finding information (students' request)

# Immediate outcomes

- Several students asked for more sessions
- One student changed course (within the Biological Sciences).

# Data collection and analysis

## Jan- March 2010



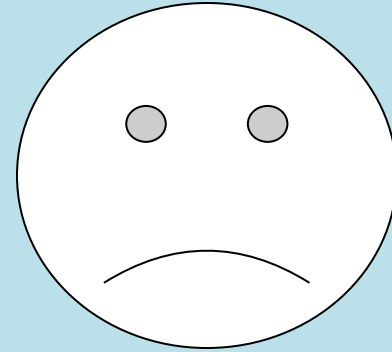
# Results - retention



Psychology	2010/09	2009/08	2008/7
	5	4	5
	123	107	84

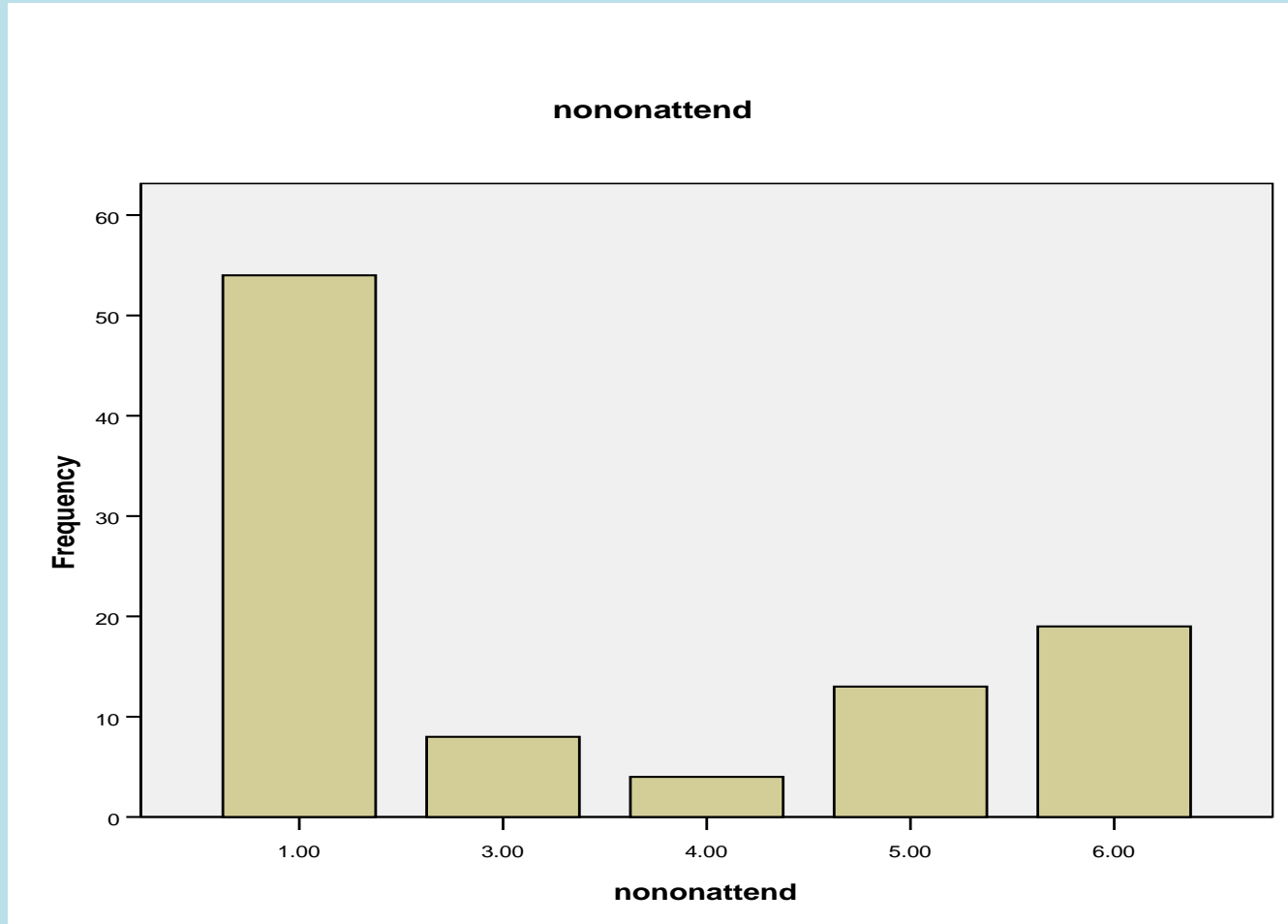
Biology	2010/09	2009/08	2008/7
	2	1	1
	102	87	70

# Results - attenders



**Scores were 'high' but no difference apart from 'Recognised' and 47% said agreed that it helped them engage socially**

# Results -but





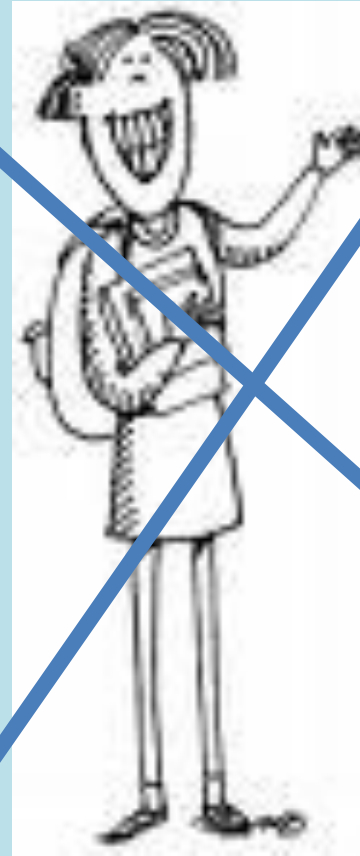
# Dosh

Biology = £580

Staff = 15 X £60 = £900

Room = 6 X £60 = £360

£18,000



# So What?

Raised students' value ?

More 'known' colleagues

Intervention had little measurable impact ?

Few students at significant risk ?

Questionnaire was insensitive ?