CONNECTIONS FOR SUCCESS:
Improving Learning through First-Year Student Engagement
Life on the Borderlands: Who is the Transborder Student?

Are they:

- Mexican nationals that live in Agua Prieta?
- US Citizens that live in Agua Prieta?
- Undocumented citizens?
- Students that live on both sides?
- Students that live on one side or the other but cross a certain amount of times per week?
- A majority of our students?
Living the Transborder Life

- Language
- Culture
- Politics
- Education / Pedagogy
It’s all about identity

Who is in your support system?
- Parents
- Friends
- Other family
- Co-workers
- Church family
- Classmates
- Professors

“Graduating has been my dream since I was little. My family always encouraged me to pursue my dreams and now they feel proud of me, of the things I am doing in a different country.”

- Nelida AmaroRuiz
  Fine Arts Major / Hometown: Hidalgo, Nuevo Leon
Dev Ed at Cochise College

- The compounding barriers of the “underprepared” student. Who are Dev Ed students?
- Are dev ed students underprepared?
- How can we provide support for these challenges?
For many years, the course was offered once per year as part of a concurrent enrollment program. (22 students in one section)

In Fall 2015 and Spring 2016, pilot sections were offered (55 students in four sections)

In Fall 2016, course became a corequisite for students taking developmental math courses. (519 students in 35 sections with one full-time instructor).

In 2017, made a corequisite for all developmental level courses.
Why change it now?

- Pandemic
- Need for Engagement
- Relationship Building
- Making students collaborators in the classroom.
- Three themes:
  - Connect
  - Plan
  - Develop
The First Year Seminar: Connections For Success

- This course is an introduction to higher education, with an emphasis on CONNECTING wellness and growth mindset to academic success, PLANNING for a meaningful career, and DEVELOPING relevant learning strategies, all within the context of ENGAGING classroom, campus, and community opportunities. It covers campus resources, communication skills, time management, and many other useful topics that ensure student success.
We connected with our campus partners to provide various workshops and events.

We strengthened our relationship with departments and connected our students to new resources.

Students were given the opportunity to tailor their own CPD experience around their needs.
We linked to local community partners as well: Nat. Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI), Earn to learn, County Fair, Mexican Consulate, Douglas-Williams House Museum, City of Douglas, Bisbee Stair Climb, The Haven Nursing Home, Washington Federal Bank, The Red Cross, Arizona at Work, Douglas Animal Shelter, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), and Borderlands Education Center.
HOW DID IT WORK?

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- Students were asked to attend 16 events over the course of the semester
  - Four events during the first third of the term
  - Eight events over the middle third of the term
  - Four events during the final third of the class
- Approximately six classes were designated for students to utilize resources and attend events
- Submitted Engagement Form for each event.
NEW CURRICULUM ASSIGNMENTS

- POETRY / ARTWORK EXHIBIT
- PHOTO VOICE EXHIBIT
Thank you.