

# Improving the Transition for High School and Transfer Students to the First Semester Engineering Course Experience

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**Abstract** – Freshmen and first semester transfer students are often misled by their personal expectations of the first semester of engineering courses. It is acknowledged that transfer students have the first semester college experience and are informed college students. In general, freshmen and transfer students experience similar challenges with the first semester engineering course load. The Roy G. Perry College of Engineering of Prairie View A&M University utilizes a one credit hour, Intro to Engineering, Computer Science and Technology course to help both freshmen and transfer students to transition to engineering course studies. The textbook for the course is “Studying Engineering: A Road Map to a Rewarding Career,” 4th Edition by Raymond B. Landis. After several years of observation and data collection, the textbook by Landis is an excellent text for the goals and objectives of the freshman course. The freshmen and transfer students come to engineering studies with the mindset that what worked in high school and community college will continue to deliver academic success in engineering studies. The textbook presents a very convincing approach with the topics of: (1) Keys to Success in Engineering Study, (2) Fixed versus Growth Mindset, (3) Mistakes Students Make, (4) Improving Your Learning Process, (5) Personal Growth and Development, and many more very important topics. It is often a proven fact that having the knowledge of what to do and wanting to do what should be done are not enough to motivate or inspire one to change one’s mindset, attitude and behavior. Freshmen and transfer students often approach engineering studies with attitudes and behaviors which have been practiced for years. The challenge becomes how to transition students from what they have practiced for years to attitudes and behaviors which will secure great academic success in engineering studies. Activities and concepts which have proven success in changing what students practice will be presented along with supporting data.