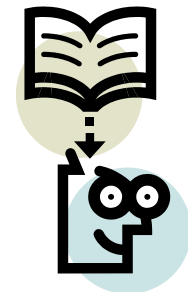


*Primoris humanus vita scientia:*  
**Engaging Human Life Science Students in  
the First Year Experience**

Tracy Douglas,  
Merran Rogers and Christa Moch



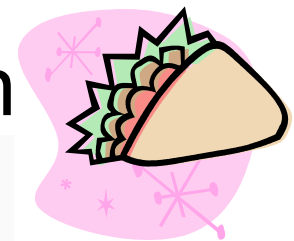
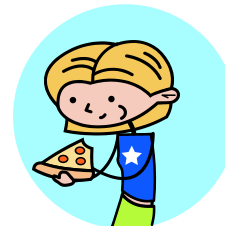
## First Year HLS students

- Six different degree programs
- 70-120 students
- Mixture of ages, academic backgrounds, life experiences, etc



## 2008 – Year of the first Challenge

- Developed in response to student feedback
- Concept of forming teams of first year students which could “compete” in a series of challenges throughout the year
- Begin at orientation
- Incorporate events that contained useful information for first year students
- Each event incorporated a free lunch
- *2008 (pilot year);*
  - *109 students (12 teams)*



# Challenge Teams

- Formed on orientation day
- Teams included students usually enrolled in the same degree
- Some 2008 team names:
  - The First Year Misfits
  - #1 tree f'tang
  - Phalanges
  - KK Jam
  - The Body!!!!
  - Salmonella Samurais
  - Team Ten Strangers BBSC





# Challenge Events

- Orientation
- Semester 1:
  - Census Date; information on census date and other relevant matters
  - Exam information
- Semester 2:
  - Assignment feedback
  - Health Science forum
  - What happens after first year?
- Most events included a quiz for each team to complete and teams completed a crossword at the end of the year



## Examples of Questions in quizzes

**How many serves of chocolate are in the Lindt Gold Bunny (100g)?**

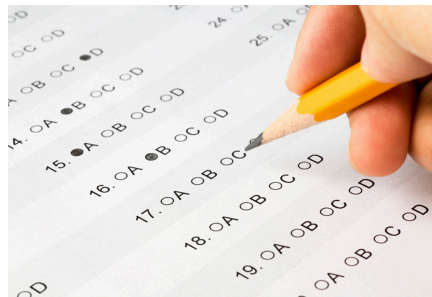
- a) 1
- b) 2
- c) 2.5
- d) 4



## Examples of Questions in quizzes

Who is The School of Human Life Sciences First Year Coordinator?

What should you do if you forget to bring your ID card to the exam?



# Student Feedback

- Questionnaires were distributed for students to complete anonymously
- Feedback on:
  - Enjoyment of challenge
  - Challenge activities
  - Events attended
  - Socialisation
  - Likes/dislikes
  - First year experience



## Student Feedback Comments

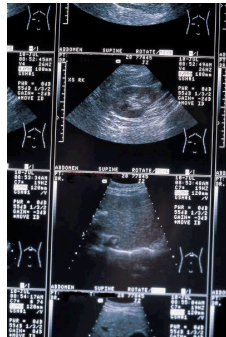
- *It was fun and well organised, students should make more effort to come*
- *Gave me good information and preparation for exams, etc*
- *Love the free feed – thanks 😊*
- *I feel like I belong to School of Human Life Sciences*
- *Liked information given, and being part of a team - Thanks*
- First year experience was *much better than I ever expected*



## 2008 Challenge winner!

- In 2008..... the winner was:

- **#1 tree f'tang**





# Discussion

- ***How does your school/faculty/university provide fun and engaging opportunities for students to experience university culture throughout their first year of study?***
- **Do you think that social events held throughout the first year, improve student retention and engagement?**
- ***Does your school/faculty/university inform first year students about relevant student matters in a social context? If so, how?***
- **What competitive strategies (if any) are used by your school/faculty/university to engage first year students?**

