Episode 127: Jennifer Keup

# KL: Katie Linder

# JK: Jennifer Keup

# KL: You’re listening to “Research in Action”: episode one hundred and twenty-seven.

# [intro music]

# Segment 1:

# KL: Welcome to “Research in Action,” a weekly podcast about topics and issues related to research in higher education featuring experts across a range of disciplines. I’m your host, Dr. Katie Linder, research director at Oregon State University Ecampus, a national leader in online education. Today’s episode is part of our four part back to school miniseries to help celebrate the release of our new edited collection – high impacts in online education. In this miniseries, I have the privilege of interviewing some of the contributors to our book, who our experts on high impact practices and effective classroom practices. Our edited collection is a first of its kind look at how to apply high impact practices to the online classroom environment. You can learn more about our book at ecampus.oregonstate.edu/hip. Thanks for helping us celebrate our book launch! Along with every episode, we post show notes with links to resources mentioned in the episode, a full transcript, and an instructor guide for incorporating the episode into your courses. Visit our website at ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast to find all of these resources.

On today’s episode, I am joined by Dr. Jennifer Keup, the Director of the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition where she provides leadership for all operational, strategic, and scholarly activities of the Center in pursuit of its mission "to support and advance efforts to improve student learning and transitions into and through higher education." Jennifer also serves as an affiliated faculty member in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policies in the College of Education at the University of South Carolina. Jennifer’s research interests focus on two complementary areas of scholarship: 1) the first-year experience and students in transition and 2) high-impact practices and institutional interventions. Under the umbrella of this agenda, she has engaged in scholarly work, teaching, and service on many topics such as college student characteristics; the impact of college on students; student access, development, learning, and success; curriculum and student services; peer leadership; community college and transfer issues; student performance, adjustment, and attainment; peer leadership; and institutional effectiveness and assessment. Her professional experience has yielded several conference presentations, keynote addresses, scholarly publications, terms on numerous journal editorial boards, and leadership and service positions for national and international higher education organizations. Jennifer is a proud graduate of UCLA where she earned her B.A. in Psychology and her M.A. and Ph.D. in Higher Education and Organizational Change.

Welcome to the podcast, Jennifer.

**JK:** Thanks for having me, Katie. I’m excited to be here!

**KL:** So I’m really interested to learn a little bit more about your work directing a resource center, so I’m wondering if we could start with you just sharing a little bit about this work and he resource center itself. What is it?

**JK:** Sure! It is a center, it’s not a membership organization, but in many ways it operates like a membership organization in terms of its activities. So we’re mission and values driven, and our mission is to support advance efforts to improve student learning and transitions into and through higher education. And what that typically means is that we’re working with educators at all levels and all spaces within the university to assist students with their transition, development, educational experiences toward success in a number of different metrics. What that generally means is that we are typically working with educators, even though our primary beneficiary are the students. So we are working through the system, through the educators as the vehicle, as the voices to assist our students, and we deal with that through a number of different mediums – primarily through conferences and continuing education. So a number of different professional development events, our premiere one being the annual conference on the first year experience, but we also have the national conference on students in transition, and a number of other institutes and workshops in online courses. We also have a full line of publications. We operate a little bit like a small university press – that includes scholly practice books, a scholly journal, guides, research reports, monographs, a working paper series, and then we also have an original research agenda, a number of different national surveys, as well as means and energy to support other researchers doing this work. So those are our three primary activity areas, and that’s our mission. And we’re a very values driven organization, so we operate around a set of core commitments that are really driving our work forward. Those include the beliefs in student transition points being pivotal to their success, inclusion, collaboration, a commitment to life-long learning, and a commitment to the connection between research and practice. So those are the pillars that really drive our work from values perspective. the center believes and does work to focus on student success, but that’s a huge undertaking, and we find historically that those transition points, those forks in the road, are the ones – are the places where students will be stumbling, or they have the opportunity for real growth. So while certainly every step of the undergraduate and graduate experience is important, we tend to focus our efforts – given our name, on those transitions moments, on those critical junctures in the educational pipeline. Where if we could help students get over that and over those moments, not only are they on the pathway to success, but they have also gained some skills to really help them in a life-long perspective with transitions, with change management, and with resilience.

**KL:** So Jennifer, that sounds like a huge amount of work that your resource center is doing, and I would love to hear a little bit more about a day in the life of your role. What does it look like to really keep this ship running with all of this work and all of the kind of ( ) that you have going on?

**JK:** Well I really think there is no typical day, uh a day in the life, right? And that’s one of the things I love about this work – not only directing a center, but also in the work of the first year experience and student transitions, because those moments really integrate and cut across different boundaries that have been historic barriers on our campus, right? So when you think about all of the people that are engaged in this work, it really cuts across many different places – academic affairs, student affairs, student services, the faculty, in the classroom, in the residence halls for the ( ) institutions, um partnerships with the community, partnerships between institutions with a transfer function. So in many ways I think that I am drawn to this work because it is inclusive of so many perspectives, and because of that and the work that the center does, there is no typical day. I have a wonderful team of assistant directors who all oversee each of the areas, so there’s an assistant director that oversees publications, one that oversees conferences, and I value their partnership individually and as a collective incredibly. So there’s a lot of meeting with those folks to partner with them and make sure that the work is getting done, that we have the right vision, that we’re remaining close to our values, and that we’re really also leading. And leadership is a combination between responsiveness to a constituency but also starting a new path, and I think that our center does a lot of work to do both - to continue to be responsive to constituency, offer the things that we’re being asked of – the things that people need, but also, sort of standing on our tiptoes and looking five to ten years down the road and being able to say, “This is where we need to head.” And whether that means we need to start charting a path, or start leading folks down that direction, or start connecting that to the areas where people are telling us right now what they want and need to be able to have that organically lead that direction – uh that’s a lot of the work as well. So that’s the luxury of working at a center that has that kind of history that this center does, I mean, we’re talking about it’s been around for decades, and the first year experience movement has been around quite a long time, and many of the component parts of that have been around for hundreds of years. So we have a luxury with that kind of historical memory and momentum to be able to look not just at right now, but also where we’re headed. So that’s a good bit of the work that I do is also strategic visioning and trying to identify where we are and where we need to go, and I’m very grateful that I have the kind of staff to do that. So there’s a lot of meeting with our staff, you know, the kinds of work that I do ranges from – I have writing days where I’m contributing mainly to writing projects and research, I have budgeting days, I have days that are full of meetings – I finally learned to do some calendar management in a way that my meetings don’t run my life, which is task and a skill that I have gained over many years, and also working with external constituencies a lot. A lot of partnerships with other associations, other organizations, pieces of our network that I’m engaging with in order to get our work done. So it’s a little bit of everything that ranges from just trying to get ahead of emails, to writing a book chapter, to meeting with our assistant directors in executive meetings, to also working with a graduate student whose thesis or dissertation I’m sitting on as a part of their committee, um on occasion I will teach - in my affiliation with the college of education here and leadership program. So it’s a little bit of everything, which is part of what I love about the work that I do.

**KL:** Okay so that sounds super fascinating, and also so much fun to be able to do all of those kinds of projects. I mean, the work that you do sounds very mission and vision driven, and I’m curious Jennifer, how did you come to even be in this role? I know you’ve been in it for quite some time, and you’ve been kind of developing and shaping it over the years, but I love origin stories – so how did you start the position?

**JK:** Well I have a long history of being in higher education, so I grew up on college campuses. My dad is a college administrator, my mother is an educator as well, so this space has always been my native space. Fast forward, but I think the only time I did any sort of rebellion is that I went into the corporate world for a very small period of time and realized that was not my space and came back to education and higher education. But I – interestingly I got my degree at UCLA and at the time was really trying to find what I loved. There were so many things I loved. I was that very distractible graduate student, right? And so I had a very patient advisor who lead me to these different places, and at the time John Gardner, who was the original founder director of this center and then went on to start the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, at the time, he had a grant from the Pew Charitable Trust to develop some assessment, national assessment tools, on the first year experience, and came to the Higher Education Research Institute and the Cooperative Institutional Research Program or the CIRP, there where I was serving as a graduate student. And from the minute I saw this work it was like the heavens opened and angels sang – it really just resonated so much with everything that I was interested in, and it eventually lead to my dissertation and all of that work, and I continued at HERI on that particular project that grew into a staple of the surveys that serve offers, so I was very fortunate to continue that work. Um and interesting story is that upon the day of my graduation, I was wearing my hood, my robes, my hat – everything from the regalia, and someone said, “Okay you have the degree. What are you going to do now?” and I said “Well my dream job would be to be the Director of the National Resource Center.” And I’m telling you Katie, at the time I could have said I wanted to be the queen of England with as much conviction that it would actually happen. So I am in an incredibly fortunate position that I’m now – for the past ten years, have been in the very position that upon receiving my Ph.D. I said was my dream job. So I’m really fortunate that this happened, and through the number of circuitous routes that got me here – I don’t know that anybody would have been able to chart that path, but I’m very fortunate that it has lead me here and I’ve had a lot of wonderful experiences, and a lot of encouragement from mentors. So I was engaged with this network well before I came here - I was publishing in a journal, I came to the conferences, I had a subscription to the newsletter. I was pretty engaged in the network before I had the good fortune of applying for the position a getting the job. But the idea of student success overall is really meaningful to me, and I love the notion of that fork in the road – that image of that there are a lot of options, and by choosing perhaps the best one, there’s never a right one, but the best one that we are leading students to the next great adventure, the next great learning experience, I just love that space. There’s so much potential in it, and I just feel like it’s very inspiring.

**KL:** Okay so, amongst all of this work, I’m really curious how you’re balancing this director role with your publishing - and you mentioned carving out writing days, which sounds like an amazing strategy. How else are you kind of thinking about that in terms of prioritizing the work that you do and keeping your kind of writing muscles warm as you work on these different projects?

**JK:** Well I came at this position from a researcher background. So I was working again at the higher education research institute, and I was a project director for a couple of their surveys and a good portion of that was about doing research. So my training for working at a center or an institute was always embedded in a model that had research as a core function of that. I think that’s what in a way made me attractive as a candidate for this particular position is that I brought that with me. Not just from a perspective of doing my own writing and research, but also advancing the research agenda of the center, which of the multiple areas was the most nascent of the activities. Conferences is where we began as a center many years ago, publications came shortly thereafter, and then after a good break our original research agenda was integrated into it. And so the idea I think also was that I might bring to bare my skills to bring that into greater balance with others who had a longer history. So in some ways it’s almost like asking a fish talking about, you know, where’s the water? In some senses the idea of doing this from a research lenses, is very much embedded in how I do the work. And so seeing the tie in and being able to see the opportunities for greater empirical inquiry to be able to develop an idea, not just practically but also from a scholly perspective, that happens pretty naturally for me. And so in some ways my only heart break is that I don’t get to pursue those as much as I would like to given the other range of responsibilities. But it’s there, and it happens fairly organically for me in terms of the idea phase. In terms of the execution phase, that’s more challenging. As much as I schedule writing days, I’m also known to have to break them for other – break those days with myself for other responsibilities. But the work that we do here, we generate a lot of good deal of original research, and we have a lot of data, and we use that research agenda as a vehicle to speak with different audiences and to collaborate, and to work with other campuses, organizations, associations, networks. It becomes in some ways research is a common language between folks, and so it helps to be embedded in that, and there’s a lot of motivation and a lot of vehicles for me to use that. So I’m generally publishing not always scholly articles, but newsletter articles, book chapters, I recently just wrote a few encyclopedia entrees for SAGE Publishing, and also some scholarly journal articles and some of our own work here – research reports and book chapters from our own publication units. So there were opportunities for me to do it, and there’s momentum for me to get engaged with that. So it becomes a more natural balance: A.) because there are opportunities and B.) because that’s just sort of how I faced the world and this work.

**KL:** Well thank you for giving us a little bit of a glimpse inside what it is like to direct a resource center, Jennifer. We’re going to take a brief break, when we come back we’ll hear a little bit more about Jennifer’s work with first year experience and student’s in transition. Back in a moment.

In the Oregon State University Ecampus Research Unit, we push the boundaries of what is possible. We just released a first of its kind edited collection that offers comprehensive guide to how high impact practices are being implemented in online environments, and how these practices can be adjusted to meet the needs of online learners. Learn more about this ground breaking edited collection at [ecampus.oregonstate.edu/hip.](http://www.ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast)

# Segment 2:

**KL**: Jennifer, one of the ways that you and I have worked together in the very recent past, is you were one of the contributors to our high impact practices in online education, and it has been so fun to work with you, and we have had a chance to kind of meet in person which was always really fun. So I wanted to chat with you a little bit more about your research on first year seminars online in particular and what we know about that. Um first though, I think it’s important to explain the difference between first year experiences and something like a first year seminar, because I know that one is quite a bit broader in terms of context. So can you give us a little bit of just a foundation there of how those terms are different?

**JK:** Absolutely. Thanks for asking, because I think this is one of the areas that is most misunderstood. Um I often hear people talking about how they have a great first year experience because they have an award winning orientation, or they offer a first year seminar, or – and the or here is intentional rather than an and – they do academic advising that’s really unique and special for first year students. And each of those things are wonderful, but a first year or any of those other are one practice, are one program. So first year seminars are courses intended to enhance the academic and social integration of first year students. Most often through the introduction of content, that depends based upon the structure of the seminar and the type of seminar, also an introduction to essential college skills, and the building of community among peers and also with the students with the faculty member in that classroom as well. That’s one fantastic tool, and it’s often used in higher education as a tool to assist students in their learning, and development, and success. But a first year experience is bigger, and it encompasses first year seminars, and a host of other activities as well. So a first year experience is comprehensive, it’s integrated, it’s an intentional set of curricular and co-curricular initiatives that are organized into an approach of first year student support, development, transition and success. And it’s one that’s very flexible in the sense that it can be adjusted to campus mission, culture, composition of student body, learning outcomes, student needs. But the analogy I always use is that a first year seminar is a star, it can be a star program, but a first year experience is a constellation of star programs that are organized in a way that really gives you a picture, and that everybody who is involved – students, faculty, staff, academic affairs, student affairs, leadership can look up at that constellation, if we’re going to go with this analogy, and we know that we’re all looking at the big dipper, or the seven sisters, or Orion’s belt. It is a picture that we all understand in terms of its intentional connection with these star programs. And so I think it’s an important distinction, because any one program can be fantastic, but even of itself it’s not a first year experience. First year experience is that connection, and collection of various programs that are targeted to first year students in a very intentional way.

**KL:** Okay so, I’m curious what we know about high impact practices in the first year for college students more generally given this kind of larger constellation that you’re describing.

**JK:** Sure. One of the things that’s really interesting, I mean first of all we have to acknowledge that first year experience and first year seminars are themselves one of the high impact practices. And while there’s no hierarchy to the ten high - or now eleven high impact practices that the Association of American Colleges and Universities put out there, um I tend to like the idea that really the only one by definition that would have to happen early in their career is the first year experience, and the first year seminar. However, what we are finding is that there are a lot of high impact practices that are embedded in the first year, and they typically are actually embedded in the first year seminar or are connected in the first year seminar. The first year seminar and the first year experience is really a hub for high impact practices and high impact activity for new college students. So you often see a learning community that has a first year seminar as a component course, you see a service warning that’s embedded in a first year seminar, you see common reading programs which are one of the common intellectual experiences that become part of the first year experience – that constellation of programs. So a number of them are not actually not only introduced in the first year, but become part of that first year, under the umbrella of that. And even the ones that are introduced later, like internships and Capstone experiences, if the first year is done in a very intentional manor, they become – it becomes a bookend. A front end bookend to capstone experiences, and internships, and other things that happen later in the career, and it becomes a bit of a logical flow. So they are widely used, they often cluster in the first year as a hub which can enhance their success. One of the things that is very attractive about high impact practices particularly early on is the fact that they have incredible equity potential. The greater the number of historic risk factors for our students, the more impactful these high impact practices are. Um so the evidence has borne out that everybody benefits, but those students who are most in an at risk category benefit even more. And we don’t get that kind of equity lift that often in higher education, too often we’re having to make difficult choices between students with our resource. And these high impact practices actually, you know, all boats are rising, but some boats are rising even higher, and therefore we’re actually getting some equity gains, which is fantastic. The one thing I will say though that concerns me slightly, and I know that everybody is really positive about high impact practices, but I sometimes feel like individuals, particularly in the first year, are cramming everything in, number one – so, “We’re going to do all ten of them in one year” or “We’re going to do eight of them in one year.” Sometimes that’s not a very thoughtful approach, you know, that can turn into an assault of good practice rather than a thoughtful application. And the other piece that really concerns me is sometimes I feel like our adherence to these eleven, these holy eleven practices really can in some ways stop the conversation from thinking about how we make other practices that are common experiences high impact. So academic advising isn’t on that list of eleven, it is a – it is the most common practice used for first year students. Why can’t we think about turning that into a high impact practice, or why can’t we think of it as a high impact practice? Or student employment which is becoming more common for students? Or even have them engage with a business and transaction services of the campus. Every first year student has to sign up for classes, more and more students are taking out financial aid, and more and more students are paying for their classes. So things like the bursar’s office, the registrar, the financial aid office—I’d love to see those kinds of interactions move from transactional into really high impact educational activities. So there’s a great deal of potential, but I don’t think we leverage that potential for quality as much as we could.

**KL:** I love how you’re reframing and broadening that. I think it gives everyone kind of a stake in how we’re engaging with our students for their success. So I know that one other way we’re starting to broaden the high impact practice field and the literature is definitely looking at it online, as we do in this volume. What do we know about the effectiveness of online first year seminars? I know this is something that you’re kind of focusing on in your particular chapter.

**JK:** Yes. One of the things I definitely want to say is that more research is needed on this, because I think that my biggest challenge in contributing to this volume was that there wasn’t a lot out there that examined this kind of broad scale. We fortunately have a survey on first year seminars, and we had a few questions there about the use of either modules that we’re online or online only sections, and both of those have increased, but the online only sections have increased three times as much as the increase of the modules being used. So there’s great – there’s still minority, but there’s great increase in the number of institutions that are offering it. What we find though is on a campus that’s not very widespread, is that it becomes much more of a boutique offering that can sometimes be marginalized rather than be fully integrated into the first year seminar or the first year experience, and that concerns me a little bit in terms of impact and effectiveness. If something is living on the margins of an effort, it often can fall off in terms of quality and consistency as well as just support. So I think one of the concerns is seeing this integrated more fully into the first year experience, and into the first year seminar programs, rather than being an ancillary, or a boutique, or a special offering. There are a lot of things that show that students interface with online seminars, you know, where does it examine in a way that’s comparative that there really isn’t a practical or statistically significant difference between the two in terms of their satisfaction, and some of that is getting students into the right modality, right? Some students have that choice, sometimes they don’t. Sometimes the modality is chosen for them because of limitations, or their identity areas, or location, or life circumstance. But finding the right set up, and using the modality as a way of meeting students where they are in terms of their learning is a big part of it, so the degree to which we have the luxury of matching modality with audience is really an important step. Beyond that, I think that what we’re seeing is that effectiveness is limited by how technology is being used, so still we’re seeing a lot of transactional use. A lot of you can submit your assignment here – um this kind of transactional experience rather than a truly integrated educational experience. And in the places where there’s a truly integrated educational experience that is structured appropriately for the modality, there is great success from the little research we found, mostly in institutional profiles. That students are satisfied that they’re learning, and that even community is being built. It’s being built differently, but I think that people in some senses felt like that completely community based important element of the success of first year seminars would be lost in this modality – and it’s not lost. It eat lives, and breathes a little differently if the truly integrated approach is happening to the pedagogy in the classroom, that community can be forged, and can be created, and can be very successful in terms of effecting the outcomes of the first year seminar. But we’re seeing the application somewhat challenged, and we’re seeing the scaffolding being built perhaps not as strongly as we would like. So some of the more effective ways that engaging pedagogies are used in hybrid and first year seminars are creating interactive modules to introduce and orient students to the seminar itself, teach them about the online learning space – if they’re not familiar with it, identify and address expectations for the course, creating this online learning community through this virtual collaboration exercises that go beyond submitting one entry to a static, an asynchronous chat or something like that. But really creating some synchronous engagement, some group projects, some things that are really creating a sense of community. Peer review or writing is a big space when that happens – really engaging students with reviewing one another’s writing, creating meaningful feedback loops. Um the idea of course presentations, discussion boards, communication of content, and creating content communities is another one. It’s not just communication of content, but going from communication to – the transactional nature of communication to a much more engaged notion of community around the content. And the problem based learning and active experimentation and experiential learning, game based exercises, that are actually enhanced by the online space, and so there’s a great deal where some of the greatest, newest pedagogies that speak to some groups of students are really much better operationally in an online space. Um the other piece that I think we can also see translated effectively is this idea of reflection exercises – blogs, online journals, reflective observations, self-assessments, and creating those in a way that students and do that sort of self-reflection on their own, but then also create some sense of accountability to the classroom, to the instructor that meets the criteria of a high impact practice – that they’re being sort of public display of effectiveness, a public display of knowledge. Um and so the reflection activities can happen on their own, and then be translated in that community of content, that community of practice with the sharing out and with the processing of those. So those are some of the ways we see it being done well, but those are some challenging pedagogy approaches in a classroom where we may not be used to it. And the instructor is key. The instructor having the support, the training, the knowledge of that modality is really critical. A lot of instructors are still, and myself included the first time I ran an online course, I tried to run it the same way I run an in-person course, but in an online space. We are now understanding obviously that that doesn’t map very well. That there are benefits to that space, and there are certain limitations that we have to acknowledge and certainly address in that space.

**KL:** Okay so Jennifer, you mentioned one definite future direction for research is certainly efficacy – seeing what works in terms of these online seminars. But are there other directions that if you could wave a magic wand and get some projects started, what are some future directions for this area that you would like to see?

**JK:** I think I would like to see its connection to some of the high impact practices as well. Um as I mentioned both in the beginning in terms of the finding for first-year experiences, as well as the notion of, you know, community practices, and peer connections, and all of that, I think we need to see how this fits in a larger hole so that it doesn’t become marginalized. We can see models and examples of how first year seminars are becoming a star part of the conversation. So I would like to see its connection with other practices, I would like to see its connection to integrated first year experience, I think that’s really important. I’m also fascinated to see more research done on the peer to peer connections in these online spaces, because that seems to be pivotal to the creation of community, which is important to a first years’ seminar’s effectiveness. So the idea of peer leadership, the idea of peer connection, group work, the effectiveness of what’s happening in the spaces, and in some senses how it might be working better for certain students or certain populations. I think they’re also, in terms of distance learning, you see sort of non-traditional students in that space, and understanding the sub-populations of students, not just looking at all of the students enrolling at large as online students, but instead being able to disaggregate and being able to understand the experience of students who might be older, who might be geographically limited, who might be serving in the military, who might be a significant contingent of this group and understanding what they’re experiences are like as opposed to, or in contrast to, other populations in this space who might be doing so electively on a campus that’s overcrowded and the classroom space in impacted, and what does it look like when you’re doing this as a member of a campus community or somebody that is geographically separate? So I think that there are interesting ways of disaggregating the student experience in these classes, as well as connecting the first year seminar to a larger whole, in terms of understanding how first year experiences are and how high impact practices operate.

**KL:** Well Jennifer, I feel like you’ve really helped to contextualize the many issues that are going into the first year experience and also with students in transition. I want to thank you so much for taking the time to come on the show and share more about your experience and your research with me today.

**JK:** I really appreciate being here. Thanks so much for having me!

**KL:** Thanks also to our listeners for joining us for this week’s episode of research in action. I’m Katie Linder, and we’ll be back next week with a new episode.

# Show notes with links to resources mentioned in the episode, a full transcript, and an instructor guide for incorporating the episode into your courses, can be found at the show’s website at [ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast](http://www.ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast).

# There are several ways to connect with the “Research in Action” podcast. Visit the website to post a comment about a specific episode, suggest a future guest, or ask a question that could be featured in a future episode. Email us at riapodcast@oregonstate.edu. You can also offer feedback about “Research in Action,” episodes or share research-related resources, by contacting the Research in Action podcast via Twitter @RIA\_podcast. Finally, you can call the Research in Action voicemail line at 541-737-1111 to ask a question or leave a comment. If you listen to the podcast via iTunes, please consider leaving us a review.

# The “Research in Action” podcast is a resource funded by Oregon State University Ecampus, ranked one of the nation’s best providers of online education with more than fifty degree programs and over one thousand classes online. Learn more about Ecampus by visiting ecampus.oregonstate.edu. This podcast is produced by the phenomenal Ecampus Multimedia team.

# “Research in Action” transcripts are sometimes created on a rush deadline and accuracy may vary. Please be aware that the authoritative record of the “Research in Action” podcast is the audio.

# Bonus Clip 1:

**KL:** In this first bonus clip for episode 127 of the Research in Action Podcast, Dr. Jennifer Keup discusses the different kinds of research output from her resource center. Take a listen.

Jennifer, I’m wondering if you could share a little more about the kinds of research outputs that you have in your resource center.

**JK:** Sure. I think the most prominent research output we have is through our scholly journal. The journal of the first year experience and students in transition. And that’s in its 30th volume, so it has been around for a while, and we’re very pleased by the types of work that are showcased in that scholarship. But we also have research support series that features findings from the center’s original agenda of survey research, as well as collections of institutional profiles of assessed institutional practices. It also serves as a platform for external researchers who want to publish their work. We also have our scholly practice series, book series, and e-source for college transition newsletters are really, even though they’re focused on practice, are embedded in research to inform practice. So there’s very little that we put out that doesn’t have some sort of foundation of research, and in fact that speaks to one of our core commitments, which is the connection between research and practice. That this field really lends itself to that, and we are proudly in that liminal space and are trying to advance scholly practice and research.

**KL:** Okay so, when you’re doing that, and especially thinking about the applied research piece, what are you hoping that the audience of your research will do based on your findings?

**JK:** Well there are a number of different ways that I think people consume and apply the research that comes out of the center. Certainly it informs what they do for students and how we craft, deliver, and refine programming in educational experiences to the greatest benefit of our students. So there’s a great deal of emphasis on, what are other people ding, what does the literature say we should be thinking about? And then being able to adapt that to the campus needs, the student composition, all of that. I think there’s also a larger research agenda beyond the center, and certainly we are happy to lead that, but there’s a lot of great work being done on student transition, learning, development, persistence, success. And the work that we’re doing I’m hoping is advancing that - is driving new questions, is driving the research new directions. And I think one of the pieces of that that we’re seeing more frequently is this idea that our work is not just helping practitioners work, and not helping practitioners keep tabs on the literature and think, what is the research telling us and how can we learn from it? But then practitioners are also contributing to this scholarship of practice, right? People see themselves under that umbrella. We also see a lot of our scholars in this work advancing theory in new ways. So I would say that’s probably one of the newer spaces where we see people, you know, our audiences engaging with the work. You know, we see some theory advancement and generation around thriving in positive psychology – how to use that growth mindset, and grit, and resilience and how that’s becoming a theoretical foundation. Cultural historic activity theory, or chat theory, had renewed interest particularly in its application of first year programs. And then also things like legitimate peripheral participation. One of my colleagues here is looking at that in partnership with some other scholars and how that becomes a foundational theory for how we look at the first year. So I think there’s an informing practice, they’re certainly advancing the research, but then there’s also an exciting trend toward theory examination.

**KL:** Well thanks for sharing a little bit more about the kinds of research outputs that you have at you resource center.

**JK:** Thank you!

**KL:** You’ve just heard a bonus clip from episode 127 of the Research in Action Podcast with Dr. Jennifer Keup Discussing the different kinds of research outputs from her resource center. Thanks for listening.

# Bonus Clip 2:

**KL:** In this second bonus clip for episode 127 of the Research in Action Podcast, Dr. Jennifer Keup discusses a convergence of her professional and personal interest. Take a listen.

Jennifer, I know that you have a son that is going into college soon and I can imagine this is creating all sorts of personal and professional collisions for you in terms of thinking about his experience in the first year. Can you talk a little bit about that? What does it look like when your personal and professional interest start to collide?

**JK:** Absolutely. It’s been a really interesting experience. So I have two sons. My oldest son is a rising senior in high school, and we have begun the process of examining colleges he would like to go to, thinking about majors, and really doing that process from the other side. So it has been very interesting. I have gone on college tours with him, and hearing people talk about all of the things that our center has studied and is promoting is really exciting. It’s also interesting to be a consumer on the other side. So the first time I went on a college tour, they were talking about all of these different high impact practices, they had first year seminars, they had residential learning communities, they had supplemental instruction, they were introducing the idea of academic advising, and each time they mentioned one of these things my son would look at me from kind of, you know, a side angle with a quizzical expression and I would just kind of nod quietly, because he’s been hearing me talk about these things for so long. And in the way that teenagers do – at the end of the day he said, “People actually care about what you do!” It made me giggle. Yeah actually they do. But it’s interesting to see him consume all of this information and to be a part of that process. I think that I am not quite a helicopter parent. I think in some ways my knowledge of college choice and college transitions has been a benefit to him and to me, certainly. I’m blessed and cursed with knowledge in this area, but I’m also understanding that there are thousands of institutions in higher education within the United States, and one of them is going to be a perfect fit for him, and being able to encourage him in a way knowing that’s the case, and knowing what are those elements that fit? It’s been great, but it’s also been a little bit of having one foot planted in two worlds, right? And uh it’s been somewhat challenging, but also really eye opening. And it increases my empathy in some ways for another constituency that are center serves – and that’s parents, and guardians, and families, and support structures of our students. Now I am one of those, and certainly can understand and be reminded in a whole new way what it is like to be going through that with your students, and have all those hopes and dreams and be fearful of the perils of those transition points. And I’m just very excited about this work, and it is renewed my passion for the work as well as informed who I am as a parent of a student – a future student.

**KL:** I love to hear how it goes both ways. Thanks for sharing your experience, Jennifer.

**JK:** You’ve just heard bonus clip from episode 127 of the Research in Action Podcast with Dr. Jennifer Keup discussing a convergence of her professional and personal interest. Thanks for listening!