A New Perspective on Student Success

Central Michigan University Annual Conference
July 8, 2015
1. The New Challenge
2. The Murky Middle Project
3. Targeted Campaigns
4. Where Do We Go From Here?
The Student Success Collaborative

Bringing Universities Together Around a Shared Best Practice Solution

Best Practice Research

Analytics & Technology

Change Management Consulting

SSC

Diversity of Schools Working Together

- AAU Members
- Hispanic-Serving Institutions
- Historically Black Colleges & Universities
- Institutes of Technology
- Liberal Arts Colleges
- Private Research Universities
- Public Flagships
- Religious Affiliates
- State Systems
- Urban Universities

160+ Member Institutions

38 States Represented

5,900 Total End Users

6M+ Student Records

250M+ Course Records
Unpacking the SSC Technology

Platform Enables Better Decision Making, Smarter Advising

Key Components

1. Institution Reports
2. 360-Degree Student View
3. Major and Career Guidance
4. Advanced Filtering
5. Comprehensive Case Management
6. Usage and Effectiveness Tracking
# Three Paths to Value

## Multiple Approaches to Generating Results from the Collaborative

### Resources in the Student Success Collaborative

- **Historical Student Analytics**
- **Current Student Analytics**
- **Advising Platform**
- **Dedicated Consulting**
- **Student Success Research & Best Practices**

### Impacting Student Success in Three Ways

1. **Empowering Student Success Specialists**
   Equipping advisors and other change agents with the data, tools, and strategies to inflect success in each individual student interaction.

2. **Targeting Students for Strategic Intervention**
   Identifying student populations with the greatest need or the highest potential impact and intervening with those students to maximize results.

3. **Making Data-Driven Systemic Changes**
   Changing the environment in which students operate to eliminate barriers and facilitate success.
The New Challenge
Despite Efforts, Root Cause of Attrition Remains Frustratingly Elusive

So, Why Don’t Students Complete?

- Thousands of pages of task force recommendations
- Hundreds of new student success administrators
- Hours spent in campus meetings and town halls
- Countless presentations on improving completion

In my interviews with students, I have found that the biggest reasons for a delay in graduation are that students switch majors, fail out of courses, cannot get required courses, do not qualify for their intended majors; they have to work to pay for their living expenses, do not think there are any jobs for them after graduation, pursue double majors, do not receive adequate advising, have medical problems and personal issues.

Faculty Member, Large Public Research University
Feels Like the Stakes Have Never Been Higher

Intense Pressure to Improve Coming From All Sides

External Pressures
- Public Scrutiny Over Rising Student Debt
- Pushback from Parents on Value
- Increased Oversight from Governments

Internal Pressures
- Concern for the Achievement Gap
- Moral Imperative to Fulfill Our Promise
- National Rankings and Reputation

A Public Crisis of Confidence

$1 trillion
Total amount of student loan debt across the nation

44%
Underemployment rate for recent college graduates

32%
Americans who say that college is worth the investment
Facing a Tough Enrollment Environment

Slowing Growth and Emerging Alternatives Ratcheting Up Competition

Undergraduate Enrollment Annual Growth

- 1996-2010: 2.8%
- 2011-2021 (projected): 1.2%
- Shortfall of 3.8M students

Tuition as a Percentage of Educational Revenues for Public Universities

- 1987: 26.1%
- 1992: 29.3%
- 1997: 35.5%
- 2002: 46.8%
- 2007: 35.5%
- 2012: 46.8%

Historic 11-point increase in three years following recent recession

No Shortage of Alternatives Competing for Students’ Attention

- Community colleges
- Online programs
- For-profits
- MOOCs (?)
Three-Fifths of Institutions Missed 2014 Enrollment or Revenue Targets

The Enrollment Crisis Hits Hard

Percent of Institutions Meeting Goals

- American Association of State Colleges and Universities
- Council of Independent Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Public Institutions</th>
<th>Private Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both enrollment and revenue goals</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment goals but not revenue goals</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue goals but not enrollment goals</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither revenue nor enrollment goals</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Chronicle of Higher Education

“Goals for Enrollment and Tuition Revenue Elude Many Colleges”

October 13, 2014

57% of surveyed public institutions missed target

62% of surveyed private institutions missed target
Bolstering Enrollment Hurts Margins, Reduces Graduation Rates

The Enrollment Dilemma

How Do We Break the Enrollment “Iron Triangle”? 

Raise Selectivity 
Lower Enrollment, Lower Price

Raise Price
Lower Selectivity, Lower Enrollment

Raise Enrollment
Lower Price, Lower Selectivity

Raise Selectivity 
Lower Enrollment, Lower Price

Raise Price
Lower Selectivity, Lower Enrollment

Raise Enrollment
Lower Price, Lower Selectivity

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis
Finding High-Growth “Adjacencies”

Peripheral Markets More Promising Than Core

- Core Markets
  - Under-Represented Populations
    - Low-Income, High-Ability
  - Traditional Age Under-Graduates
  - Working Adults
  - Degree Completers
  - Transfers
  - International Students
  - English Language Learners
  - Professional Master’s
- Graduate Students
Adjacencies Offer Potential for Big Growth

Four Emerging Student Segments

- **Low-Income, High-Ability**
  - Current: 2.8K
  - Potential: 35K

- **English Language Learners**
  - Current: 35K
  - Potential: 500K

- **Degree Completers**
  - Current: 3M
  - Potential: 20M

- **Transfers**
  - Current: 3M
  - Potential: 5M

Net Revenue Potential

Market Size

Current → Potential
Retention Is a Also a Growth Strategy

Modeling Enrollment Changes

EAB’s Enrollment Revenue Calculator

- Transfers
- Retained
- Drop outs
- New Students
- Graduates

- Enrollments, flow rate, and revenue inputs

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis
Retention Improvements Promise Meaningful Revenue Gains

Revenue Gains from an Annual 1% Improvement in Institution-Wide Retention Over Three Years

Central Michigan University
21,700 undergraduates

Fall 2016: $1.6 M
Fall 2017: $3.7 M
Fall 2018: $6.2 M
Fall 2019: $7.4 M
Fall 2020: $7.9 M

183 additional students in Year One

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis
Where Are Schools Investing in Success?

Current Practices Focused Very Early and Very Late, Not in the Middle

Prevalence of Retention Practices Targeted to Specific Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of Private Universities with Retention Practice</th>
<th>Percent of Public Universities with Retention Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Just 9% of privates and 7% of publics report that their second-year retention practices are “Very Effective”
The Murky Middle Project
Missing Most of the Story

Student Success Practice Poorly Aligned to Real Patterns of Attrition

Timing of Dropout

SSC National Data Set

Over half of all attrition goes untracked until as much as five years later

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Study</th>
<th>Attrition Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Year</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Year</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Year</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Year</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Year</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Year</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Students</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Official Metric: First-to-Second Year Retention of FT/FT Students

The Dark Times: No widespread collection or reporting of interim attrition rates

Official Metric: Graduation Rate of FT/FT Students Within Six Years

22.7% First-year dropouts
24.9% 2nd – 6th year dropouts
4.0% >6 years, outcome unknown
48.4% Six-year graduates
A New Way Forward?

Murky Middle Might Be Relatively Easy to Assist Compared to Others

Predominant First-Year Attrition
- Academically Adrift
  Severe academic difficulties, may need remediation and time to mature before completing
- Too costly to remediate?

Poor Fit for Campus
- Not well-matched to campus culture and offerings, will likely transfer to another school
- Too difficult to engage?

Second-Year and Third-Year Attrition
- Unknown Causes
  Academically qualified and well-matched to campus, causes of attrition poorly understood
- Best chance for ROI?

Source: EAB Interviews and Analysis
Uncovering an Untapped Opportunity

Large Numbers of “Murky Middle” Students Leaving Later in College

Histogram of All Students by First-Year GPA
SSC National Data Set

84% return for a second year
48% graduate within six years

*Non-Transfer = do not have transfer indicator based on admit code, if available, or based on term level data

**Full time = attempting at least 12 credits in first semester

Central Michigan Historical Insights

Timing of Attrition by Year

Could a Bigger Focus on Years 2-6 Generate Gains?

Timing of Attrition

N= 10,383, FTIAC Students
First Term Fall 2006-Spring 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Attrition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Year</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Year</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Year</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Year</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Year</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Year</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;6 years</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Students: 52.1%

First-year dropouts: 22.1%

2nd - 6th year dropouts: 22.7%

>6 years enrollment, outcome unknown: 3.1%

Six-year graduates: 52.1%
Central Michigan Historical Insights

Right In-Line With the Nation

CMU Murky Middle Numbers Remarkable Similar to the Rest of the Country

Histogram of All Students by First-Year GPA
SSC National Data Set

- Graduates within 6 Years
- Continued Enrollees Past 6 Years
- 2nd to 6th Year Departures
- 1st Year Departures

The Murky Middle

85% return for a second year
48% graduate within six years


*Non-Transfer = do not have transfer indicator based on admit code, if available, or based on term level data
**Full time = attempting at least 12 credits in first semester
The Central Dilemma of the Murky Middle

Very Difficult to Differentiate Who Will and Won’t Graduate

A Tale of Two Students

Billy
- Biology Major
- 2.5 First-Year GPA
- 30 Earned Credits
- Eventual Graduate

Bobby
- Biology Major
- 2.5 First-Year GPA
- 30 Earned Credits
- Eventual Dropout

Source: EAB Interviews and Analysis
Looking for Reliable Indicators

GPA Trends Foreshadow Departure Several Terms in Advance

**Murky Middle Term GPA Trends Over Time**
Students With First-Year GPA 2.0 to 3.0

Surprise finding:
Academic probation policies won’t catch many dropouts until it’s too late.
Historical Insights from National Dataset

Drilling Into GPA Trends

Downward Trends Driven by Fs, not an Overall Decline in Grades

Grade Distribution for Murky Middle Students Over Time
SSC National Data Set

Central Michigan Historical Insights

Top 10 Highest DFW Rate Courses

Poor Course Completions Suggest Opportunities for Support, Redesign

Top 10 Highest DFW Rate Courses, Central Michigan University
Top 50 Most Enrolled Courses Fall 2007-Spring 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Count Ns</th>
<th>% of Ds or Fs</th>
<th>% of Ws</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSY330</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHL140</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG201</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY383</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STA282</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL334</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIO392</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY100</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHL318</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDF110</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td></td>
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Targeted Campaigns
Targeted Advising Outreach and Intervention

CMU’s Office of Student Success Among Earliest Pioneers of SSC Campaigns

**Campaign Process**

1. Identify a high ROI target population
2. Send proactive multi-channel outreach
3. Intervene with students, refer to specialists
4. Escalate systemic issues to leadership

**How SSC Helps**

**Filters**
- Easily make lists of students who meet specific criteria

**Risk analysis**
- Triage students based on severity of need

**Communications***
- Send batch email and texts, schedule appointments online

**Progress Tracking***
- Quickly see how many students have responded

**360° student view**
- Allows advisor to quickly review each student’s situation

**Case Tracking***
- Easy referrals to specialized support, closed-loop notes

**Consultant**
- Dedicated support to enable change management

**Research**
- Best practice ideas for resolving many common challenges

* New or enhanced with SSC Campus migration
Sample Campaigns

- Encourage Major Declaration
- Connect to Tutoring
- Create Degree Plans
- Re-Enroll Returning Students
- Apply for Graduation
- Send “Keep it Up!” Encouragement
- Murky Middle

61+
Different types of campaigns run by SSC members in 2014-15
Impressive Campaign Results from MTSU

MTSU Using SSC to Make an Immediate Impact on Enrollment Revenue

Fall to Spring Persistence
Up Across All Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spring 2014</th>
<th>Spring 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic &amp; Applied Sciences</td>
<td>88.2%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral &amp; Health Sciences</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
<td>90.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
<td>92.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td>88.1%</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Comm.</td>
<td>89.8%</td>
<td>92.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University College</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
<td>84.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall Results

Increase in Overall Fall to Spring UG Persistence: +1.5% Points
390 Additional UG Students Enrolled in Spring 2015
$1.5+ Million Estimated Spring Tuition and Fees Revenue

+2.2% FTFT Freshman
+4.5% New Transfers
+2.1% Sophomores
Where Do We Go From Here?
The “Coordinated Care Network”

New Technologies and Processes to Scale the Student Success Enterprise

- Analytics prioritize cases based on need
- Proactive Campaigns
- Advisors manage cases and triage care
- Support offices provide specialized interventions
- Case Referrals
- Advisors

- More targeted outreach
- Better advice

Feedback loops continuously improve system

- Academic Support
- Financial Aid
- Tutoring

Better advice

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Lack of Coordination Limiting Front-Line Impact

Efforts Hindered by Lack of a Shared Case Management System

Student Success Collaborative “Campus” System

Networking Together the Front Lines

- Advisors
- Academic Support
- Tutoring
- Financial Aid
- Instructors

Risk Analytics | Student Success CRM
Early Warning | Advising Notes
Communications | Appointments
## A New Perspective on Student Success

Supplement Typical Strategy with Focused Approach Beyond First Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical Approach to Student Success</th>
<th>Expanded Approach to Student Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus efforts and programs on first-year students</strong></td>
<td><strong>Address sophomore and upper division attrition</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Optimize strategy to first-year retention rate</strong></td>
<td><strong>Optimize to enrollment and institutional persistence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target resource intensive support services and staff to highest risk students</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recognize “murky” middle students as attrition risks with opportunity for improvement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deploy staff to cover broad populations of students</strong></td>
<td><strong>Focus proactive outreach efforts on strategic subgroups</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advisors make “blind” referrals to support services</strong></td>
<td><strong>Advisors coordinate care management for at-risk cases</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>