Letting Go of Business As Usual

The Evolution of Higher Education

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Our Plan Today

1. Disruptions
2. Effect on Student Affairs
3. Strategic Responses
4. Innovation Leadership
DISRUPTIONS
Disruptions

1. Transformation of the student market
2. Pressure to increase affordability
3. Technology innovation
   - Shifting consumer habits
   - Evolution of the academic experience
   - Use of data analytics
   - Increasing operational efficiency
4. Shift in focus from inputs to outcomes
   - Pressure to increase persistence & graduation
   - Pressure to prepare students for workforce
5. Rise of third-party partnerships
TRANSFORMATION OF THE STUDENT MARKET
Transformation of the Student Market

• Diversification of student body over last 50 years, majority students “post-traditional”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>~45%</td>
<td>UGs enrolled FT in four-year institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~25%</td>
<td>UGs enrolled FT residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~40%</td>
<td>UGs enrolled two-year institutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>~33%</td>
<td>UGs enrolled part-time</td>
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<tr>
<td>~29%</td>
<td>UGs today who would fit our historic definition of traditional: FT students 21 or younger enrolled in four-year public or nonprofit schools</td>
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• Yet most institutions still structure operations and services around traditional students
Transformation of the Student Market

- Low-income students
- Diversity in ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation
- Adult students
- International students
- Students with disabilities
- Transfer students
- Students working full-time
Changing student expectations

- Understanding of concrete outcomes
- Active engagement in learning
- Practical experiences
- Alternate and clear pathways to completion
- Efficient student services
- Ability to access academic experience and student services from anywhere
Impact on Student Affairs

- Increase clarity about value and outcomes
- Defined pathways to degree completion
- More school-organized practical experiences
- More services available online and mobile-enabled
- Seamless transfer admission & credit process
- Alternate service hours for some functions
- Orientations tailored to adults
- Connections in industry
Impact on Student Affairs

- Partnering with faculty on engagement for non-traditional students
- Including non-traditional voices in decision-making
- Accommodating students’ multiple priorities
- Other effects we’ll discuss today
PRESSURE TO INCREASE AFFORDABILITY
Affordability

• Cost: most important selection criterion
• Tuition increases outpacing inflation.
• Significant decline in state funding, shifting costs to students
• 70% of students report stress due to finances.
• Parents/students challenging value/ROI.
Affordability

• More students considering starting at community colleges.
• Increase in merit aid to students without need
• Increase in federal unsubsidized loans over federal grant can have negative impact on completion for low-income students.
Affordability

“When a miscommunication about paperwork or a parent’s slight rise in income leads to a reduction in financial aid, however small, that can be enough for a student to consider withdrawing. If you don’t have $700, it might as well be a million.”

-Vicki Madden
New York City Department of Education
Impact on Student Affairs

• Budget constraints require us to cut costs, find efficiencies, use data analytics.

• Students have very little wiggle room for error in course schedule due to limits of financial aid. Need clear path and support to get there.

• More transfer students, more community college partnerships
Impact on Student Affairs

- Increase state and institutional grants for low-income students.
- Strategic pricing and financial aid packaging
- More flexibility with small balances
- Availability of emergency funds
- Tell a convincing story about benefits of CMU degree from admission to graduation.
Technology Innovation

- Shifting consumer habits
- Evolution of the academic experience
- Use of data analytics
- Increasing operational efficiency
Tech Innovation: Consumer Habits

- Average adult spends 2.8 hours per day on mobile devices.
- 87% of young people always have their phones with them.
- Increased demand for mobile-enabled services.
- Finding: Students much more comfortable with using mobile devices than faculty.
Impact on Student Affairs

• Offering mobile apps that help students navigate institution and conduct business.
• Ensuring website is informative and mobile-enabled
• Alternate communication channels: texting, social media
• Faculty & staff training on mobile apps
• Kennesaw State University, mobile & social media
Tech Innovation: Evolution of Academic Experience

- Evolving Modality & Design
  - Online
  - Hybrid
  - Competency-based
  - Flipped classrooms
  - Decline of the lecture
  - Active learning: gaming, simulations
  - Adaptive learning
  - Advanced content
Tech Innovation: Evolution of Academic Experience

• Unbundling the degree
  – MOOCs
  – Certificates
  – Credentials
  – Boot camps

• Changing role of faculty
  – New roles of mentors, coaches, tutors, facilitators, advisors, adjuncts, SMEs
Impact on Student Affairs

• The academic experience is critical to student persistence and satisfaction.
• Try to serve on committees with faculty, advocate for increased quality of academic experience and student engagement in coursework.
• How can student affairs help students with the new challenges these modalities present?
• What new student services challenges do these advancement present?
Impact on Student Affairs

- How is student affairs affected by the changing role of the faculty?
- How do we guide students to the modalities that are a best fit?
• Will not solve all problems but can provide valuable insight
• Predictive analytics about students who may succeed or struggle
• Course analytics about engagement, performance and course experience
• Analytics to help us predict course demand
Tech Innovation: Data Analytics

• Georgia State University
  – Major Matcher tool: uses predictive analytics to help students pick majors based on their prior grades and grades from students in that major in the past 10 years.
Tech Innovation: Data Analytics

• Arizona State University eAdvisor tool
  – ASU credits eAdvisor for rise in graduation rates.
  – Combines data from registrar and advisors to help student pick majors and plan correct courses
  – Tracks student degree progress, sends alerts and predicts course demand
  – Empowers student to play larger role in staying on track
1. degree search
Explore majors and careers. Outline classes you'll need to take and when you need to take them.

2. get your classes
ASU monitors major maps and trends to ensure there are enough seats in classes when you need them. (includes critical and required courses)

3. enroll with your advisor
Your advisor will help you enroll your first semester and review your major map with you.

4. monitor your progress
View your personalized major map that details classes taken, grades earned, and term taken.

if you become off-track
Identify the classes you should take each semester.

you get an email
an off-track message shows on My ASU

your advisor gets an email
You are required to meet before registering or adding more classes.

You will review your degree and career goals to ensure it's still a good fit, go over degree requirements, and identify academic support resources to get you back on track.
Impact on Student Affairs

• Providing more accurate outreach
• Decreasing number of homegrown or decentralized systems that make it difficult to share data and support students
• Ability to track student performance and behaviors in LMS for early identification
• Combining historical data with individual student data to help student decision-making
• Forces more collaboration, in a good way!
Tech Innovation: Operational Efficiency

• Students expect administrative processes to be streamlined using technology.
  – Online event and course registration, payments, fin aid
  – Online degree tracking tool and advising meetings

• Low tolerance for technology that does not work

• Expect timely communication via multiple channels (text, social media)
Impact on Student Affairs

• Identify & streamline cumbersome processes.
• Expand number of administrative items students can handle online, via apps.
• Adopt communication systems (CRMs) to automate communication.
• Use social media to connect with students where appropriate.
• What administrative obstacles exist that unintentionally frustrate students or serve as bottleneck?
Technology: Proceed with caution

• Technology should increase opportunities for real student engagement by decreasing time spent on administrative tasks and increasing time meaningfully connecting with faculty, staff, peers and course material.

• Technology can unintentionally increase student isolation.
The importance of engagement

- People crave meaningful human interactions and connections.
- We seek these even when technology might be more efficient.
- Technology should not replace these meaningful interactions with advisors, staff, faculty, and mentors.
- Engagement increases commitment to our coursework, activities and each other.
The importance of engagement

• Transformative engaging experiences for all students
  – Build into the curriculum
  – Require/incent for all students
  – Conversations about purpose, vocation
  – Best Practice: Rice University
    • Doerr Institute for New Leaders
    • Center for Written, Oral and Visual Communication
TIME FOR A BREAK?

Drop your name or business card up front for a chance to win Ryan Craig’s book “College Disrupted” after the break.
SHIFT IN FOCUS FROM INPUTS TO OUTCOMES
Shift in focus from inputs to outcomes

- Pressure to increase persistence & graduation
- Pressure to prepare students for workforce
Why the shift?

• Perception that the drive to increase access has succeeded (debatable)
• High cost requiring people to demand more return on their investment
• Changing perceptions about the purpose of higher education
  – Perception that workforce prep more beneficial than broad liberal arts education
  – Is higher education a private or public benefit?
Tipping point: 1960s-1970s

• Referring to need for colleges to focus on more job preparation and less liberal arts education, Ronald Reagan noted that taxpayers should not be “subsidizing intellectual curiosity.”

• Culture shift: “In the early 1970s, nearly three-quarters of freshmen said it was essential to them to develop a meaningful philosophy of life. About a third felt the same about being very well off financially. Now those fractions have flipped.”
Pressure to increase persistence & graduation

• Significant concerns

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>~63%</td>
<td>First-time UG students completing a degree within 6 years at 4-year public institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~74%</td>
<td>First-time UG students completing a degree within 6 years at 4-year nonprofit institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~38%</td>
<td>First-time UG students completing a degree within 6 years at 4-year for-profit institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~20%</td>
<td>First-time full-time community college students finishing a degree in three years</td>
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Influencers: UG traditional departure

- Academic preparation
- Low engagement
- Feeling isolated, marginalized
- Financial resources
- Social & cultural capital
- Lack of support networks
- Low commitment to the institution
- Work/family/life responsibilities
- Lack of clear path to completion
- Many others...
UG traditional persistence

- Widening gaps in college completion by family income, ethnicity
- Low-income students don’t benefit as much from some strategies that help high-income students persist.
- Students who stop out for at least a year unlikely to graduate.
UG and grad online student persistence

• Concerns that young, first-time and lower-achieving students may not perform as well
• Often quick departure
• Satisfaction with instructors, work/family balance, time studying, first-term GPA and employment status can serve as predictors.
Influencers: UG & grad online student departure

- Low quality of academic experience
- Lack of clear course objectives and expectations
- Lack of academic preparation
- Difficulty handling quick pace
- Difficulty using technology
Influencers: UG & grad online student departure

- Feelings of isolation from peers/faculty
- Poor time management
- Financial concerns
- Family obligations
- Dissatisfaction with student services
Persistence strategies: Traditional UG

- Assign high-level person with authority to coordinate persistence efforts.
- Engagement opportunities embedded in academic experience
- Clear degree paths updated for students each term
- Data analytics to identify struggling students
- Use CRM system to conduct student communication.
- Create paradigm of exceptional customer service and advising.
Persistence strategies: Traditional UG

• Go after the “Murky Middle.”
• Involve students in the solution.
• What messages do students get from the top that they matter, that completing is important?
• How are we taking time to set goals with them, increase their academic aspirations?
Persistence strategies: Adult students

- Strengthen academic experience through course rigor and design.
- Build engagement into courses.
- More structure, less choice, expedited pathways to degree.
- Accessible, efficient student services.
- Use LMS performance data to spot at-risk students.
Impact on Student Affairs

• Need to show how our work increases persistence, graduation.
• Pressure to measure and report outcomes
• Much of our work has long-term benefits. Be ready with research.
• Know your population: Traditional UGs taking online students may need more support. UGs may need more engaging course content.
Pressure to prepare students for workforce

• Differing understanding of career preparation

| ~96%   | Provosts who think their graduates are prepared for workforce |
| ~14%   | Recent graduates who felt prepared for workforce  |
| ~11%   | Business leaders who “strongly agreed” college graduates had the needed skillset |

• Career advancement is top priority for adults students yet many unprepared to compete.

• “This is not just a skills gap. It is an understanding gap.”
  - Brandon Busteed, executive director
    Gallup’s education division
NACE: What employers seek

1. Ability to work in a team structure
2. Ability to make decisions and solve problems (tie)
3. Ability to communicate verbally with people inside and outside an organization
4. Ability to plan, organize and prioritize work
5. Ability to obtain and process information
6. Ability to analyze quantitative data
7. Technical knowledge related to the job
8. Proficiency with computer software programs
9. Ability to create and/or edit written reports
10. Ability to sell and influence others
Creating “engaged” employees

• Gallup study: What are the things that happen at a college that, more than anything else, produce “engaged” employees on a fulfilling career track?

• Two activities:
  – Students had one or more teachers who were mentors and took a real interest in their aspirations and
  – they had an internship related to what they were learning in school.
Impact on Student Affairs

• With most students using higher education to prepare for a career, we must help them build the competencies to succeed.

• Need to build competencies employers want directly into the curriculum and our student programs.

• Offer career mentoring.
Impact on Student Affairs

• Build expectations early that students will complete meaningful work experience.

• Create close partnerships with regional employers, industry groups.

• Work with academic units to build internship opportunities and teach students how to find their own.
Impact on Student Affairs

• Develop mandatory career development course to help all students with job search success.
• Appropriately fund career services.
• Find additional ways to build career development into student experience.
  – U. of South Carolina work-study leadership and org behavior training
RISE OF THIRD-PARTY PARTNERSHIP
Third-Party Partnerships

• Increase in number of companies/orgs that provide specialized services
• Emerging as institutions considering which functions are part of core mission
• If structured well, could help with cost savings and revenue generation
• Provide staff, resources and funding to launch innovations, programs, services
Impact on Student Affairs

- Could help student affairs innovate, expand services and support student persistence
- Student affairs may need to manage partnership.
- Need to serve as constant advocates for student concerns in partnership.
Disruptions

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INNOVATION LEADERSHIP
Innovation Leadership

• A culture of innovation starts at the top and leaders work to change culture.
• Leaders work to ensure innovation is aligned with mission and values.
• End the “not invented here” syndrome.
• Overcome the inertia of “it has always been.”
• Recognize those who offer ideas, innovate and question why we do what we do.
• Keep momentum of innovation going by holding people accountable.
Innovation Leadership

• Encourage a culture of constant learning and financially support it.
• Incent cross-functional teams to increase collaboration.
• Work to decrease barriers between functions.
• Help the institution let go of what does not work well and will not be improved.
• Involve students.
Leadership decided to focus heavy effort on increasing persistence 15 years ago

- Mobilized faculty and staff
- Changed culture so that persistence was seen as everyone’s job
- 100+ completion-related projects
  - Degree mapping, advising, career services, student support
- 75% increase in % of students who earned degrees or certificates, transferred or were still enrolled in good standing and making progress toward a credential.
AND IN CLOSING...
Parting thoughts

- Each institution makes a choice to be innovative.
- Many ideas offered sound so logical, but why aren’t we implementing them?
- Be strategic and do your research on new fads and technologies.
- Innovations should align with mission and goals.
THANK YOU!