Change, Student Success & The Shifting Road Ahead

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A Bit About Me and Mine
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• VP of Advancement, at Western Wisconsin Technical College
Interact Communications

• For 20 years.... Working with two-year colleges ONLY
• All staff have 2-year college experience
• We mix academic research with pragmatic marketing
• And just like THIS IS YOUR LIFE...

It’s Ours, Too!
Why I Love Community Colleges…

California’s Community Colleges, specifically.
It’s a Strange Place…

In Which We Find Ourselves!

Change…. Some we don’t want…. Some Can’t Happen Soon Enough..

Like Stop it with the Hurricanes, Floods, and Fires.
Things That Are Going!

They used to be in every home... now, they're predictively in the homes of retired people and families with young children...

How Many of You Still Have Landlines?

You are part of the 49.2%* of the population still hanging on. Each year, 5 – 7% shift to cell phone only.

*Business Insider, 2017
Things That Are Gone!

How many people here ...

Had a camera that used film when you were a kid?

Had a disposable camera?

Well, the tech behemoths at Polaroid and Kodak are struggling...

And everyone with a phone has a camera...
Things That Are Gone!

What item did everyone have in their glovebox? Or in your backseat?

Paper maps are dead… And the companies that made them? Struggling to catch up to Google and Apple.
And So Much is Simply ...

Not a Part of our Lives Anymore.
We Don’t…

1. Call theaters to get accurate movie times.
2. Visit a travel agent’s office to research vacations.
3. Record your favorite programs things using VHS recorder.
4. Dial directory assistance to find out someone’s number.
5. Use public telephones.
We Don’t...

6. Book tickets for events over the phone.
7. Print photographs.
8. Put a classified ad in a store window.
9. Call the 24-hour operator to get the exact time.
10. Carry portable Cassette or CD players.
And by 2025…

These things will be gone, too:

- Car Mirrors
- Plastic Credit Cards
- Cords and Chargers
- Human Operators
And if the World is Shifting...

There is **NO WAY** Education is **NOT** in the Eye of the Storm.
Educational Environment

- 70 years after WWII... 2 million returning GIs went to college, and almost ALL of them Graduated
  - Today, at Community Colleges, that number is 15% for FT and 7% for PT (Hechinger Report, Complete data set 2014)
- 50 years after, most communities could not build Community Colleges fast enough....
  - Enrollment at MOST Community Colleges (nationally) is sliding
Educational Environment

• 40 years after higher education spawned and fueled -- the creation of Silicon Valley through its incredible base of STEM education…
  • We are now trying to rebuild the STEM base we (all) once had

• Completing college used to be about the student’s drive to finish… We were supposed to make them run the Gauntlet…
  • Now, we have significant responsibility to help them persist, as a million environmental factors have changed the equation.
Education as the Path to Social Mobility is Seen as "Fake News" by Many Republicans and Republican leaning now think colleges have a negative impact on the way things are going. Pew Research Center on American Views 2017
The Belief in Education as a Game-Changer?

• Poll of white, working class voters by Brodnitz/Normington for Democrats (July 2017)
  http://static.politico.com/f2/08/7cab64cb4a0a91a46b57a9a7784a/house-majority-pac-poll.27.pdf

• 57% say a college degree “would result in more debt and little likelihood of landing a good-paying job”

• 83% say a college degree was “no longer any guarantee of success in America”
At the Same Time…

Between 1991 and 2015 the share of good jobs going to workers without a BA or AA fell from 51% to 33%.

- High school dropout
- High school graduate
- Some college, no degree
- Associate’s degree
- Bachelor’s degree and higher

NEVER have we been so needed…

NEVER have we been less trusted…

NEVER have we had this much change in this short a time.

The Agricultural-to-Industrial Age shift was a freaking cake-walk!
So Here We Are…

In incredibly turbulent times…

With the need to (dare I say it?) *pivot*…😊

Responding to the Calls to Change…

(*IEPI, CTE, Guided Pathways and shifts at the college, community and class level…etc.*)
We Have Day Jobs…
And It’s Not like Change is easy.
So... What to Do?

A Reality Check...

5 Things We Must Do...

One More Thing...
A Reality Check…
### Why We All Care

#### Money Side

<table>
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<tr>
<td>FIRST Inquiry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application</td>
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<td>Transcripts etc.</td>
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PLUS THE LOSS OF

- Year 1 of FTEs
- Year 2 of FTEs

Lose them for one class in a Semester... +$1,000

Have them drop out +5,000

Plus half-empty classes means the salaries, facilities and support are not as effective...

Worse... Students couldn't get in to that class

PLUS THE LOSS OF

- Year 1 of FTEs
- Year 2 of FTEs
I HATE Talking About Money and Students....

But Nothing Runs... If We Don’t
Why We REALLY Care
Student’s Lives

• They are risking:
  • Their Money
  • Their Families
  • Their Jobs
  • Their Lives

• Because *they believe us* when we say “education will change your stars.”

• The more students that end up with the college debt, *without* the college degree…

The More Distrust Grows.
5 Things We **MUST DO**
Right Now
For Our Students…
Our Colleges…
Ourselves.

*So We Don’t Break Ourselves...*
#1:

We Must...

*Move it. Move it.*
We Tend to Take a While to Fix Broken Things.

A problem or need is identified...
   and our solution process is... um, er, uh...

   ... Assign it to someone else

   ... Wait for it to change

   And the dreaded...
Form a Committee

- See a Problem
- Form a Committee
- Meeting Time?
- Study
- SUMMER!
- Start Again

Research / Strategy / Creative

2-Year College Experts
Examples?

Study Signage for 2 Years
Three Years to a Retention Plan
Break up the problem and ask a team to solve ONE problem (in a VERY short time [2 weeks])

*Odessa and Marketing*

Learn from our students and embrace the fast fail.

*Seattle and Giveaways*
#2:
Embrace the New Stuff
We are in the Post-“Rinse and Repeat” World

Our students are not US. They need different things than we did.

Changes are shocking… but necessary.

*Cal State and the move away from Placement Testing*
*Embracing Guided Pathways*

Will these things solve our Retention/Graduation Rates?

*I don’t know… but what we are doing is not getting us the outcomes we want.*
Over and Over and Over

The Merry-Go-Round is now a Roller Coaster

Old Movie: Parenthood
Examples of Waiting Too Long

Anything that you are still doing that your predecessor did, and you have no idea why?

The more we hold on to old things that don’t work... the less bandwidth we have to try new things that MAY or MAY NOT work.

Evening Open House... Alone. Facebook... Reddit...
Find the mission-critical “thing” that you are studying to death (Theoretical Approach)

Try a controlled change…Make a small change and make it bigger if it works… Or, move on. (Experimental Approach)
Think of It This Way…

We see ourselves as the Senate.
Deeper Thinkers
Slow to Shift
More Deliberative

But We Market Ourselves as the House…
Quick to Adapt
Fast to Engage in Changes
More Responsive to the Workplace
(compared to 4-year colleges)
#3: RADICAL IDEA

Your Time is NOT Free. Measure the REAL Cost of Ideas.
Don’t Just Measure Outcomes… Measure the Work Involved.

If you don’t… You will NEVER have the bandwidth to do new things

Dump the DRAINING Ones

Do the Math: Hours Per Outcome

Time on Task

Objective Outcome
- Calls
- Hits
- Satisfaction
What Works?

Find what is eating up resources that you need...

That you know in your heart is not working...

Stop doing that, and give others the power to do the same thing.

Try something *different*...
#4.

There is Only a “Little” Home-Field Advantage...

...by being the “local” college
But the Message Cannot Be…

Affordable…

Accessible…

Close-to-Home.
Why? Heuristics.

Shortcuts to make fast and painless decisions...
Cognitive processing patterns we have developed.

Common Heuristics
Cost = Quality
Rare = Value
Competition = Best
Far Away = Exotic
More People Agree = Truth
So…

When we say “Affordable”…

*They hear “Cheap”.*

Cost = Quality… So Low Cost = No Quality

**Who Does It Well?**

*Private Schools*

*Schools that Invest in “Scholarships”*
When we say "Accessible"

*They hear “No Competition”.*

Who Does it Well?

*Schools that make students feel “special”*
When we say Close to Home…
They hear Not Rare, Not Far Away…

Exotic = Unique, Special  *Like Every one of you.*

Not Exotic… Same old Same old. Nothing Special.

**Who Does It Well?**

*Schools that tie themselves to fast-entry into the Big, Wide World of Work*
The Good News is…

The Community has absorbed those messages
In almost every survey… they POP.

The Bad News is…

They make us mundane.
They make us the “best-kept secret.”
Knock it off.

Your Brand MUST be Unique so students have a real choice...
#5

Silos & the Us/Them Mentality
Why Colleges Excel At Silos

It’s Simple, Really...

- The Nature of our Job is to Classify
  - Grades
  - Assistance level
  - Education Track
  - So we come with **HUNDREDS of gradients** to our perspective
We Are Not Alone in this..

• As is…
  a. Military
  b. Police
  c. Hospitals

• Silos are TENSE Places
  a. Hinge on elite “technical experts”
  b. There is a dynamic tension between the experts and leadership
  c. You are in our Silo… or you are not.
This Tension…

Between the people who DO the main work…
and
Those who lead or do not do the main work…
Feeds the “Us v. Them” dichotomy.

*My silo is great… yours is causing the problems.*
Colleges that Break their Silos Are…

Quicker to Make Shifts
More Flexible
More Resilient
More Happy
Colleges Can Change... *and Fast!*

But it’s like the old trope....

How Many Psychologists Does it Take to Change a Light bulb?

One... But the light bulb has to WANT to change.
So... Silos Are Natural

They Just Aren’t **GOOD** for Us.

The Truth is:
We are all in this together.

We Sink…We Swim…
Together.

And So Do Our Students
Student Don’t Remember the Silo…

They Remember the Experience…

Recruitment? Everyone’s Job. 
*Just like welcoming and embracing students…*

Retention? Everyone’s Job. 
*Just like supporting students…*

Example? Hawaii
SOMEDAY, WHEN YOU HAVE TIME...

I HAVE 50 WAYS TO LEAVE YOUR SILO...
One More Thing...

While there are Many Things we Need...

We Must...

Do Better...
Never Doubt The Work You Do...
We Hear A Lot About How “Bad” Our Graduation Rates Are…
Graduation: We (And Our Students) Struggle

National Rate: 23% in 150% of time
70% of All Undergraduates Who Have No (0) Risk Factors Go to Public & Private 4-Year Schools

We (And Our Students) Struggle

![Pie charts showing distribution of risk factors by sector: 2011-2012](#)

Figure 2. Distribution of Risk Factors by Sector: 2011-2012


AACC: When Less is More Prioritizing Open Access, Christopher M. Mullin, October 2017
Risk Factor = Stop Out Danger

- Graduated
- Persisted
- Stopped Out

% of College Students

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Number of Risk Factors</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>One to two</th>
<th>Three to four</th>
<th>Five to seven</th>
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<tr>
<td>Graduated</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persisted</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stopped Out</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our Students... With All Their Risk Factors...

Dare Great Things...

They are willing to try... Because They Believe Education Will Change Everything.
We Need to Meet Their Courage to Grow and Change…

With Our Own.
So… We Have Work To Do

5 Things To Do Now

1. We Must Move it… Move it.
2. Embrace New Stuff
3. Radical Idea… Count Your Time as Cost
4. Home Field Advantage is gone
5. Silos Don’t Help Us
Remember The Decision to Come To Community Colleges...

*Is Not a Logical One.*

It’s an Act of Hope and Aspiration.

We Need to Be Better...For Them.
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