Exploring the Drivers of Student Success

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Access & Retention

Quality

Equity

Student Learning & Success

Completion

Career Ready
Student Success Defined

Increased numbers of diverse student groups participating in high-quality educational experiences, earning high-quality credentials.
Despite our best efforts, we have yet to identify the retention silver bullet, completion elixir, magic potion for learning, or the equity panacea... What to do?
What to Do to Increase Student Success?

• Theoretical guides
• Empirically-tested approaches
• Time-honored practitioner wisdom
What is Guiding TS³?

Student Success Theories/Models
Empirically-Tested Approaches
Practitioner Wisdom
We Know A lot About Student Success

Theoretical Roots

- Psychology
- Sociology
- Economics
- Organizational Development
Student Success

Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005

ECS, 1995

Astin 1984, 1993

Braxton, 2000

Tinto, 1975, 1993, 2005

Mayhew, Rockenbach, Bowman,
Seifert, Wolniak, 2016

Kuh, et al., 1991

Upcraft, Gardner & Barefoot, 2005

Kuh, et al., 2005/2010
More Theories/Models for Student Success

- Learning-centered
- Talent development
- Student engagement
- Sense of belonging
- Growth Mindset
- Inclusive excellence & equity
Just to Name a Few More Student Success Scholars:
Shaun Harper (2012)
Sylvia Hurtado (2012)
Samuel Museus (2013)
Laura Rendon (2011)
Terrell Strayhorn (2015)
Vasti Torres (2009)
Student Success Strategies
Conditions to Promote Student Success

1. “Living” Mission & “Lived” Educational Philosophy
2. Unshakeable Focus on Student Learning
3. Environments Adapted for Educational Enrichment
4. Clearly Marked Pathways to Student Success
5. Improvement-Oriented Ethos
6. Shared Responsibility for Educational Quality
High-Impact Practices

★ First-Year Seminars and Experiences
★ Common Intellectual Experiences
★ Learning Communities
★ Writing-Intensive Courses
★ Collaborative Assignments and Projects
★ Undergraduate Research
★ Diversity/Global Learning
★ Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
★ Internships
★ Capstone Courses/Projects
★ E-portfolios
Gateway Course Redesign:
“Nothing I’m doing here is in line with how learning works”
Kelly Hogan, Bio. professor UNC Chapel Hill

Revised instructional practice...
• Start each class with a question, then T-P-S
• E-poll for understanding
• Quizzes, challenge games
Pathways to Student Success

1. Clarify paths to student end goals
   – Simplify students’ choices with default program maps

2. Help students choose and enter a pathway
   – Bridge K12 to higher education by assuring early remediation; accelerated remediation

3. Help students stay on path
   – Support students through a strong advising process
   – Embed academic and non-academic supports

4. Ensure students are learning
   – Establish program-level learning outcomes
   – Integrate internships, & applied learning experiences
   – Ensure effective teaching practices
Predictive Analytics and Data

Ellucian Student Success and Retention Planning Services

Gather data and generate insights into learners’ activity

Predict college student persistence early and identify student retention risk factors through advanced analytics

The Student Retention Predictor combines your institution’s enrollment data and data from the Buffalo Noel Levitz College Student Inventory™ into a powerful statistical model that identifies which incoming first-year students are less likely to persist, and, of these, which students can be influenced to re-enroll.

U.S. Department of Education

Promising and Practical Strategies to Increase Postsecondary Success
Do I really belong here?

Do I have what it takes?
Students must build supportive connections with others to find a sense of belonging.

Cultural Navigators Can Help

“Individuals who strive to help students move successfully through education and life”

(Strayhorn, 2015)
Power of Growth Mindset: Entering students at UT Austin received growth mindset intervention

**Intervention**
Read message about working hard, using resources, from successful UT Austin students

- “I thought I was the only one who struggled.”
- “I was shocked at how hard I had to work.”

**Outcome**

- More likely to complete a full load of courses, and effect was stronger among at-risk students.
- Students reported use of services, feeling supported
We Know A Lot About What Increases Student Success
PAUSE for reflection: Do you agree we know a lot? What is getting in the way of making greater progress for student success?
“Know-What” Challenges

• Uneven application across institutions & among students
• Lack of integration across efforts
• Expansion of discrete, disconnected programs
• Leap to implement before developing a clear sense of the problem, or the unique aspect of the context...“solutionitis”
To Make Greater Strides to Improve Student Success

- Re-examine assumptions about improving student success
Assumptions: Student Success Stakeholder Views

- Engagement in High-Quality Experiences Matters
- EVERYONE must be committed to student success principles
- Success begins before students enter college
- No Grad Rate Gaps
- Address student success holistically
- Institutions help students succeed, but student failure is student’s fault
- More Support for Underserved Students
To Make Greater Strides to Improve Student Success

• Re-examine assumptions about improving student success

• Represent our theory about “how” to increase student success
Conceptual Representation for Increasing Student Success

Today’s agenda for student success needs a better representation -- a conceptual structure that offers a comprehensive representation of the key operational components for student success, emphasizing how student success will be achieved and the extent to which efforts are aligned and integrated.
Driver Diagram: a tool for building and testing theories for improvement

- Change
- Change
- Change

**Change**: Specific ideas to be attempted.

**Hint**: Tend to be processes, cultural norms, structures or roles
Conceptual Representation for Increasing Student Success

- Visual representation of a proposed solution path to address a particular problem or challenge
- Structured logic chart, broader framework

3 or more levels including:

- Description of a goal or desired outcome
- Specification of major causal explanations (drivers) to reach or realize the goal
- Specific activities or interventions (secondary drivers) that could create conditions to realize desired outcomes
Conceptual Representation for Increasing Student Success in Higher Education

Today's agenda for student success needs a better representation of the what and how of student success. The "Increased Student Success" driver diagram is a conceptual structure that offers a comprehensive representation of the key components for student success, emphasizing how student success will be achieved and the extent to which efforts are aligned and integrated. How aligned is TS? Map the connections between primary drivers and your activities associated with TS interventions: Guided Pathways Using Predictive Analytics, Redesigning the Math Pathway, and High Impact Practices for All Students. Are all your TS activities connected to a primary driver? Which drivers have the strongest connections? What would help increase connections between your TS activities and the primary drivers for Student Success?

**PRIMARY DRIVERS** — major causal explanations

- Development of a comprehensive, integrated approach to student success. An integrated approach requires the identification and elimination of scatter-shot, isolated, or boutique programs for student success and bringing together stakeholders and efforts to ensure collaboration, and where necessary, special programs for underserved students.

- Implementation of literature-informed, empirically-based approaches to student enrollment, transition, persistence, and student learning & success, and assessment of outcomes to ensure quality and effectiveness.

- Enactment of cultural system of student success between postsecondary institutions & P-16 partners and among all units and departments and stakeholders (trustees, governing board, state legislators) across the institution.

- Application of clear pathways for student learning & success that guide students to completion and is monitored with real-time data systems that identify when a student is off track.

- Enactment of a student success mindset that employs an asset-based narrative for students and institutional belief in talent development.

**SECONDARY DRIVERS** — specific activities/interventions to create conditions to realize desired outcome

- Greater consideration for evidence about quality of student experience, and programs & services positively contribute to student success
- Emphasis on assessment data informing the sustainability and improvement of student success efforts
- Greater integration of curriculum and co-curriculum

- Greater reliance on and reliable implementation of empirically-based approaches to student success
- Effective orientation and transition experiences

- Strategic relationships with P-12 systems, community partners, families that facilitate culture of expectation/acad prep
- More collaboration between 2year and 4year institutions
- Promotion of asset-based narrative about students

- Maps to guide student transition to college and through majors are explicit and available
- Require students to make "big choices" about whole programs of study while "small choices" are laid out and clear
- Greater specification of step-by-step roadmaps and use of intrusive guidance to support college completion

- Encouragement of the belief that all students can succeed
- Greater attention to growth mindset orientation to promote student success

**Reflections or Notes about how to change**

*Driver diagrams are a visual representation of a proposed solution path to address a particular problem or challenge. It is a type of structured logic chart with 3 or more levels including (a) description of a goal or desired outcome, (b) specification of the major causal explanations (drivers) to reach or realize the goal, and (c) specific activities or interventions (secondary drivers) that could create the conditions to realize the desired outcomes.*
BIG GOAL: Increased student success

1. Development of a comprehensive, integrated approach to student success.
2. Implementation of literature-informed, empirically-based approaches.
3. Enactment of cultural system of student success.
5. Enactment of a student success mindset.
Development of a comprehensive, integrated approach to student success.

An integrated approach requires the identification and elimination of scattershot, isolated, or boutique programs for student success and bringing together stakeholders and efforts to ensure collaboration, and where necessary, special programs for underserved students.

BIG GOAL: Increased student success
Implementation of literature-informed, empirically-based approaches to student enrollment, transition, persistence, and student learning & success, and assessment of outcomes to ensure quality and effectiveness.

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Enactment of cultural system of student success between postsecondary institutions & P-16 partners and among all units and departments and stakeholders (trustees, governing board, state legislatures) across the institution.
Application of clear pathways for student learning & success that guide students to completion and is monitored with real time data systems that identify when a student is off track.
Enactment of a student success mindset that employs an asset-based narrative for students and institutional belief in talent development.
Development of a comprehensive, integrated approach to student success.

Implementation of literature-informed, empirically-based approaches

Enactment of cultural system of student success

Application of clear pathways for student learning & success

Enactment of a student success mindset

SECONDARY DRIVERS

- Greater consideration for evidence about the quality of student engagement and student success
- Emphasis on assessment data informing the sustainability and improvement of student success
- Greater integration of curriculum and co-curriculum
- More interconnected policies and programs, less isolated initiatives
- Enhanced relationships between faculty, staff and student affairs

- Greater reliance on and reliable implementation of empirically-based interventions
- Systematic early college exposure and support networks with P-12 systems
- Effective orientation and transition experiences
- Reformed gateway courses and developmental education
- Greater use of engaging pedagogies

- Strategic relationships with P-12 systems, community partners, and preparation
- More collaboration between 2-year and 4-year institutions
- Greater attention to transitions between high school and college
- Promotion of asset-based narrative about students
- More communication with prospective students about enrollment

- Maps to guide student transition to college and through majors and programs
- Require students to make “big choices” about whole programs of study
- Greater specification of step-by-step roadmaps and use of intrusive e-portfolios
- Greater use of student information such as past performance and curricular involvements, and other beneficial experiential learning
- More comprehensive data and information systems accessible to students

- Encouragement of the belief that all students can succeed
- Greater attention to grit, growth mindset orientation to promote persistence
- Faculty and staff development to foster student success mindset
- Pervasive culture of student support across faculty, administrator, and staff
- Involvement of students in success planning and in institutional affairs
BIG GOAL: Increased student success

1. Development of a comprehensive, integrated approach to student success.
2. Implementation of literature-informed, empirically-based approaches
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4. Application of clear pathways for student learning & success
5. Enactment of a student success mindset
Examples of Institutional Practices that Exemplify Drivers to Increase Student Success

1. Cleveland State University: interconnected policies including multi-term registration; guaranteed placement of community college degree-holders into desired program; “last dollar” scholarships.

2. University of Maryland: redesign of 70 gateway courses to increase faculty capacity to employ active learning approaches

3. Creation of food pantries

4. Meta-majors with career planning, educational pathway enhancements
How Aligned is TS³? Map Connections Between Primary Drivers and Your Activities/Interventions

- Are all your TS³ activities connected to a primary driver?
- Which drivers have the strongest connections?
- What would help increase connections between primary drivers and TS³ activities?
Student Success Driver Mantra

We are doing these things because they exemplify the 5 drivers for student success.
Address Shortcomings to Mobilize Higher Education for Student Success

• a success narrative that too easily blames students,
• conceptions of student success that focus too narrowly on completion, without equal attention to educational quality,
• a deficiency of illustrations of equity-minded practices, and
• piling on solutions instead of implementing problem-focused, integrated, improvement-oriented strategies.
Thank You.

Know what student success research is salient, align activities to drivers, and monitor & learn from local research on what makes a difference

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