



Advancing Global Higher Education

Impacting Student Success through Recruitment Practices

ACT Enrollment Summit

July 17, 2019

Grapevine, TX

Overview of today's session

1. The linkage between recruitment and retention
2. Starting with the basics
3. Getting more complex
4. Adding more to the picture for entering students
5. Questions and discussion

Relationships between recruitment and retention – disconnected model

Recruitment/admissions

1. Focused on meeting number and quality goals as set forth by upper administration
2. Sees the institutional role as ensuring that enough new students are brought in to meet targets
3. Limited information on how well students perform

Retention/student success

1. Inconsistent support programs for students as characteristics and quality may vary from year to year
2. No exchange of information with admissions on performance of students
3. High amount of complaining about quality of new students

Integrated or “SEM” model

Recruitment/admissions

1. Seeks a high degree of institutional “fit” for entering students

2. Counsels students on financial support to ensure that the student/family can afford completion of the degree

3. Frequent analysis of factors that impact student success

Retention/student success

1. Appropriate student support services and align to entering student needs

2. Partnership with admissions on financial aid analysis and design of supports to increase new and continued student enrollment

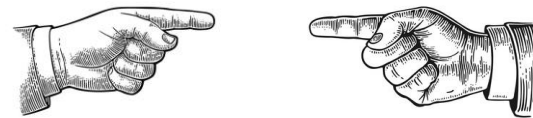
3. Regular, planned interaction with admission on student performance



Some barriers between disconnected and integrated models

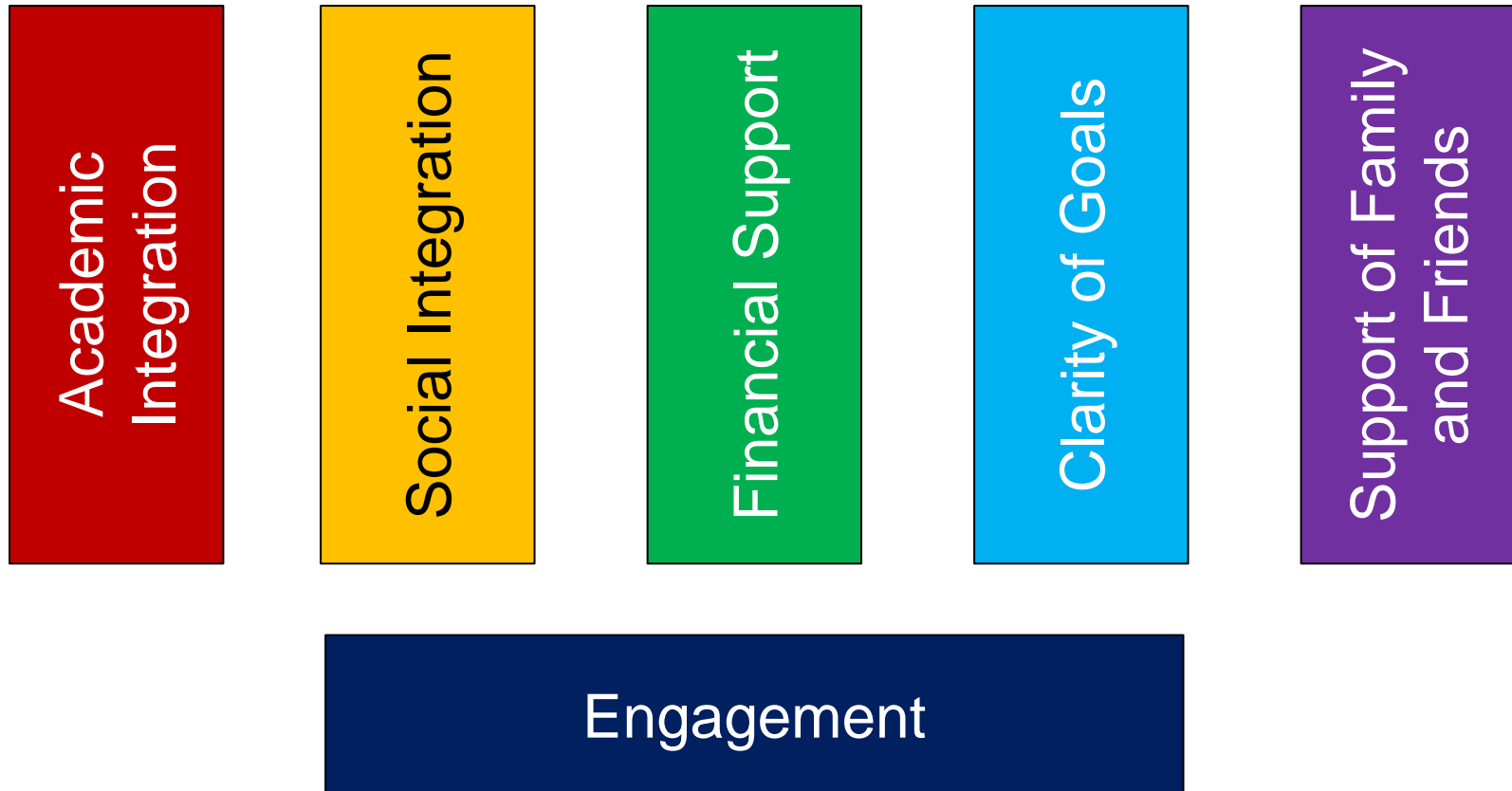
1. Better incoming students are the answer to retention issues
2. Better retention and completion and a more satisfied student body makes recruiting easier

3. Both statements contain truths



4. Improvements are marginal as each “side” looks to the other for greater improvements
5. Intense pressure on recruitment to close budgetary gaps for the institution

Five pillars of retention + one more



Adapted from the work of Vincent Tinto and George Kuh

Five pillars of retention + one more

1. Academic integration

- Incoming student academic preparation
- Transition from prior learning expectations and teaching styles to your institution's expectations and styles
- Support programs for students
- Performance in college courses

2. Social integration

- Ability to make friends and connections
- Participation in social programs

Five pillars of retention + one more

3. Financial support

- The ability to pay the costs
- Ongoing resources through the entire degree

4. Clarity of goals

- Often proxied by a chosen major which is imperfect
- Informed by the student's level of exposure to programs of interest

5. Support of family and friends

- Particularly challenging for some first-generation students

6. Engagement

- With diversity, technology, faculty, peers, challenging work

What do we know that matters?

Academic Integration Factors

1. The performance in secondary school:
 - Courses that are taken
 - Performance in courses
2. Standardized test scores
3. High school or community college context
 - How successful were prior students who attended your college or university
 - What opportunities were available to students for a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum?

What do we know that matters?

Social Integration Factors

1. What did involvement look like for the student in the last school attended (usually high school for these data)?
 - Application for admission
 - ACT score report information
 - Other ways of knowing this?
2. What interests have they expressed?
 - Is this data collected as part of the inquiry and/or application process?

What do we know that matters?

Financial Support Factors

1. This is almost always a function of getting a student to file the FAFSA, so you can proxy a student's financial resource position
2. The gap between costs and resources is often an initial factor in enrollment
3. Students and their families make bad financial decisions and may not be making a good financial decision to attend your institution
4. Paying for one year of school does not mean a student/family can pay for an entire degree program

What do we know that matters?

Clarity of Goals Factors

1. Has the student expressed an interest in a program you offer?
2. How strong is the student's choice?
 - ACT score report information
3. Students often make choices based upon limited information about careers and the skills/abilities required to be successful in them

What do we know that matters?

Support of Family and Friends Factors

1. This is often more challenging for first-generation students:
 - There may be forces pulling them away from education and towards work
2. It is also more challenging for students who have younger siblings or children of their own at home for whom they provide care
3. Returning adults may have to juggle new issues in their relationships with spouses/partners about the time and priorities required to be successful
4. We often don't know a lot about the status of this issue



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Question:

Knowing these factors, how might you change your recruitment practices to improve student success?

Three practices that improve student success

1. Analysis of student performance using factors known in recruitment
2. Partnership in financial aid award structures
3. Holistic admissions

Analyses of student performance

1. Disaggregate retention data to understand how various student groups perform
2. Some common slices:
 - Separate freshman and transfer retention rates
 - By school from which they entered
 - Be careful of small “n” sizes
 - By academic program
 - By high school or college transfer GPA
 - By test score groups
 - By first-generation status

Meet regularly with academic personnel

1. Advising offices, first-year program offices
2. Orientation programs
 - Are you a member of the orientation committee or work group?
3. Academic programs:
 - Obtain information about what makes their programs special, unique or high-quality
 - Use these points to talk about academic programs to prospective students through recruiting campaigns and in-person contacts
 - Who does well in their programs and who may struggle/why?

Analyses of financial support information

3. Perform financial aid analysis to understand how gaps relate to student persistence/retention
4. Look at the student's ability to pay using the EFC from the FAFSA
5. Disaggregate groups:
 - Pell eligible
 - Possible sub-group of \$0 EFC
 - EFC is greater than cost of attendance
 - EFC is not Pell eligible but not the cost of attendance
 - Consider direct costs as a breaking point for groups, also

Financial aid leveraging conceptual map

		Willingness to Pay				
		Highest ability	High ability	Medium ability	Low ability	No data
Ability to Pay	No need	Dark Green	Light Green	Orange	Purple	Grey
	Low need	Light Green	Light Green	Orange	Purple	Grey
	Medium need	Orange	Orange	Orange	Purple	Grey
	High need	Purple	Purple	Purple	Purple	Grey
	No FAFSA data	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey

Merit and need aid

1. Identify the areas where yield is not as high as is needs to be or lower than other areas:
 - Follow a logical sequence of what would be expected
2. Identify whether it is a gap between costs and resources (need) or competition (merit) that may be leading to this performance gap
3. Perform the same analysis using one-year retention as the independent variable
4. Where are there overlaps?
 - These indicate areas where increased or re-directed aid can improve both incoming yield and continuing retention

Holistic admissions practices

1. What do we mean by “holistic”?
 - What does this mean to you when you hear it?
2. What is the purpose of admissions standards?
3. Adding to the narrative
4. Gathering additional information
5. Looking at factors that may not be apparent from a transcript and test score, alone
 - What are some of these?

Some holistic practices of note

1. Interviews

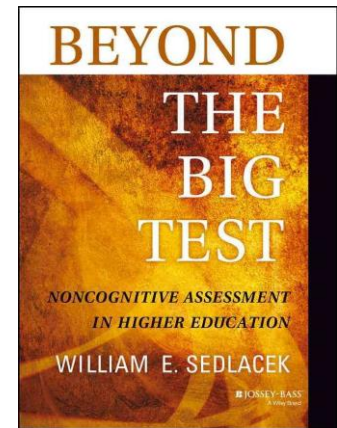
- Long-standing practice by selective universities, especially private ones
- Can be used with
 - Students who are under serious consideration for admission (wide use)
 - Those who are on the cusp of admission (narrow use)
- Rubric is used to score the interview

2. Dual file reading

- Two readers review the file and look for “fit” or other characteristics
- File is scored according to a rubric
- If the scores differ by more than xx points, a third reading is made.

Non-cognitive variables

1. Developed from the research of Dr. William Sedlacek
2. Looks for characteristics of the applicant associated with the student's degree of positive self-concept, realistic self-appraisal, ability to navigate racism, tendency toward long-range goals, availability of a strong support person, prior successful leadership experience, being a part of a community and the acquisition of non-traditional knowledge
3. Used at the undergraduate, graduate, professional school levels, military institutions and the Gates Millennium Scholarship program, among others



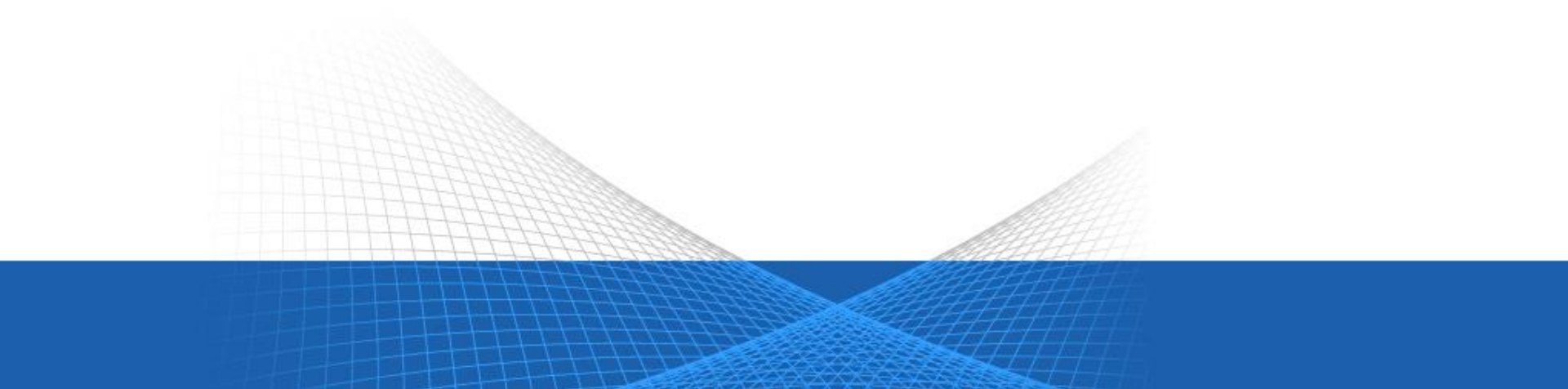
Summing up

1. Admissions cannot be “firewalled” from student retention, persistence and success
2. Good practices require that admissions partners with academic, student life and financial aid colleagues to analyze and discuss what “fit” and “success” look like
3. Most good practices involve getting to know students beyond GPA and test score metrics:
 - This takes time and resources
 - These also require rubrics and frameworks to understand what is being sought, measured consistently and evaluated regularly



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Questions and Discussion





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Thank you and please complete your
evaluations!

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