Innovatus

The Magazine of the League for Innovation in the Community College

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION:
FROM ACCESS TO CAPABILITIES

COMPETENCE VS. COMPLETION:
Does Passing Equate to Learning?

Change Minds, Behaviors, and Outcomes Through EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

WALMART BRIGHTER FUTURES 3.0:
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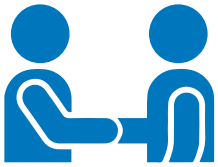

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome back to *Innovatus*, the magazine of the League for Innovation in the Community College.

Those of us who work in the community college field know just how important it is to share our successes and lessons learned with others to inform policy and enhance practice. Our willingness to respect the strong foundations upon which our institutions are built while leading the charge toward a better tomorrow for our students is what makes community colleges strong.

In this issue of *Innovatus*, the League highlights innovative ideas and efforts that bring back-to-basics approaches into the future. In these pages, readers will

- Consider the capabilities approach as a way of enabling students to achieve their potential;
- Reflect on the importance of clearly defining, promoting, and providing the resources to meet an organization's vision;
- Learn about an innovative intervention to address food insecurity as a barrier to student success;
- Explore the implementation of competency-based education in STEM courses to improve learning;
- And more ...

On behalf of the League for Innovation, I encourage you to use the articles featured in *Innovatus* to generate new ideas and the discussion of possibilities at your institution. There is so much we can learn from each other; let's take this opportunity to do so for the benefit of the students we all serve.

SYLVIA JENKINS

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President, Moraine Valley Community College

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COMMUNITY CO
From Access

Historical and Contemporary Fixation Upon Access

The traditional mission of the community college flows out of several principles and characteristics of the institution, its local communities, and its students. These principles have included the community nature or orientation of the institution—derived in part from the Truman (or President's) Commission's 1947 report, *Higher Education for Democracy*—which tied the community college to national democratic aspirations, found in terms such as "democracy's college" and "democracy's open door." Other non-elitist characteristics, such as the comprehensive curriculum, student focus, and community orientation, have served, for decades, to provide a foundation for the mission of the institution. From these democratic aspirations, the open-access nature of the community college was and remains the prime identifiable characteristic of community colleges. Indeed, the access principle—open access to further education and training for adults (and those adolescents who aspire to postsecondary education)—is central to all community colleges, and no doubt is implicit in the community college mission and in community college mission statements.

LLEGE MISSION: *to Capabilities*

BY JOHN S. LEVIN

For decades, access has served as a proxy for the mission of the community college, used to suggest a number of conditions: entry to a career or to further education; an opportunity for all classes and categories of people (notwithstanding the segregated condition of these institutions before the 1970s); and lack of barriers, including geographical and financial. Yet, while entry was conceived of and implied as equal for all, exit was not: Large numbers of students did not leave community colleges with the same outcomes as others, whether that was academic achievement or movement on to employment or to further education. By the 2000s, practitioners and policymakers began to understand that the open door of community colleges was a revolving door for many, and that student outcomes had to be more equal. This awareness and subsequent actions modified the mission of the community college to the extent that access was a term that was subordinated, and the primary term became "success."

Yet, access did not disappear as a significant component of the community college's principles. Access became more

difficult for some in that those with potential for success took precedence in college behaviors. Success covered a large field of meaning, from the completion of a program (however long) and a certificate to the attainment of an associate's or baccalaureate degree, as well as transfer to another higher education institution. Success did not cover those students who interacted with a community college for an English language course to be able to function in their community or to talk to their children's school teachers; it did not cover those students who began a course of study but landed a full-time job and left college; and it did not refer to those students who learned a skill, such as arithmetic or writing, but were lifelong special needs students who would not move on to another level. Certainly, success did not refer to the psychosocial development of students who might be undergoing personal trauma or stress and who achieved some sort of peace amongst the faculty and students of a community college. Success was and continues to be a method of accounting: the measurement of student outcomes based upon a predetermined list of acceptable ends, such as credentials and advancement. Success does not even pertain to grades or learning, but rather to a form of material capital, which promises economic returns to individuals and political gains for legislators. In this sense, the community college can be viewed as a pathway for the acquisition of private goods: a credential that can be used for a job or a doorway to a university for a degree which leads to economic prosperity over a lifetime (e.g., the anticipated $1 million-$1.5 million). In this vein, success violates the democratic principles of the community college, and emphasizes winners and losers—those who have succeeded and those who have not.

Capabilities Approach: The Development of Talent

Yet, there are other ways to understand equality of outcomes. One of these is the Capabilities Approach, developed initially by Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen and furthered in thought by philosopher Martha Nussbaum, among others. In brief, the Capabilities Approach, when applied to institutions such as community colleges, points to the outcomes for students

> *The development of talent is the prime responsibility of a higher education institution.*

based upon their opportunities and their achievements made possible through opportunities, which include their capacities. Thus, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds with financial stress are not the same as students from more privileged backgrounds: The two have differing capacities, at least when they enter college. The role of the institution, in this case the community college, is to enable individuals to achieve that which they are capable of achieving, or their potential. This view is not dissimilar to one proposed by Alexander Astin in the 1980s: The development of talent is the prime responsibility of a higher education institution.

The Capabilities Approach can be used as a normative framework for the assessment of institutions of higher education—assessments focused upon elements social institutions and policies should aim to equalize. The Capabilities Approach argues that equality and social arrangements should be evaluated based upon essential, or real, opportunities people have to achieve the valued activities and ends that are integral to their well-being. The judgement, then, is on what people are actually able to do in a given context and, hence, the sets of capabilities, or opportunities, available to them, rather than the activities they can enjoy at any given time. In other words, the fundamental question is whether or not individuals have access to the same opportunities, not whether or not they participate at the same levels and with the same essential freedom. This orientation either obliterates the traditional community college concept of access or redefines access. Within the context of higher education, the Capabilities Approach moves the conversation from one focused on participation to one focused on access and opportunity, particularly political and structural access as opportunities.

The New and Improved Mission of the Community College

Such an approach—the development of talent—has been in practice at community colleges for decades, and continues into the present. As I have noted in my books on community colleges, college leaders at various levels—chancellors, presidents, deans—and rank-and-file faculty and staff have viewed the development of individual students as their major responsibility and, indeed, calling. Although individual development is both laudable and necessary, the development of talent, or the focus on opportunity through the development of talent, for groups or classes of students is also necessary. Indeed, the development of talent for groups of students is imperative not only to equalize opportunities in a society, but also to fulfill the promise of democracy. Whether the group or class is based upon gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, language of communication, religious beliefs, immigration status, ability/disability, age, or other identity groupings, the community college can focus its attention on opportunities that groups or classes of people have to achieve the valued activities and ends that are integral to their well-being.

Thus, community college mission can on the one hand articulate what is already practiced—the development of talent of individuals—and on the other hand take up the concept of mission as an ideal or calling for societal groups, particularly the most disadvantaged. Such a mission is an antidote to what Douglas Massey, in *Categorically Unequal: The American Stratification System* (2007), expresses as the categorical inequality prevalent in U.S. society.

John S. Levin is Professor of Higher Education, Graduate School of Education, University of California, Riverside.

COMPETENCE VS. COMPLETION:
Does Passing Equate to Learning?

BY CHERYL HOKE, MAGGIE RICHARDS, ANN RIEDL, AND TINA BURKE

Science education is in crisis. Students in STEM programs across higher education fail, drop out, or change their majors at alarming rates. Two years ago, we challenged ourselves to do better for our science students.

We implemented competency-based education (CBE) as a means to increase student learning and success in our courses. CBE is built on the premise that students should become competent in every outcome in a course. It gives students the opportunity to master foundational material before moving on to more complex topics. Science courses are excellent choices for CBE since foundational concepts build both within a course and in subsequent courses.

We implemented CBE in three general biology and chemistry transfer courses at Front Range Community College (FRCC). Our CBE model includes active learning, an emphasis on study skills, robust student support, multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery, and higher grading standards.

Students must demonstrate mastery (A or B) on every unit and of all outcomes in order to pass the course. Since we are challenging students with high expectations, we give them multiple attempts to show competence. To earn the opportunity to take a different version of an exam, students must complete defined extra practice and meet with the instructor to discuss research-based study strategies. These remediation requirements are essential for most students to improve their understanding. Active learning and embedded peer instruction are also critical components of all of our CBE courses. These strategies combine to help students engage with and master the content.

Other strategies were also implemented in individual classes:

- Skill competencies focused on scientific inquiry and application of biological principles
- Team teaching multiple sections, allowing students to proceed at different paces
- Personalized learning paths through homework to identify and remediate gaps in prerequisite knowledge
- Final course grades based on competence in every category (e.g., exams, labs) rather than percentages

We discovered that a major impediment to student success was ineffective study habits. Individual student-faculty meetings and peer instructor-led study groups helped students alter their study strategies. As one student expressed, "It challenged me to think differently about how I learn." The opportunity to repeat exams allowed students to implement these new strategies to improve their performance on essential foundational material. According to one student, "Letting us take exams again is the best thing that has happened to me in college."

Previous data show that, for our students, earning an A or B is a much better predictor of success in future science courses than pass rates alone. In all of our CBE courses, multiple exam attempts allowed a higher percentage of students to reach mastery in each unit (Figure 1). A greater proportion of students earned an A or B in these courses.

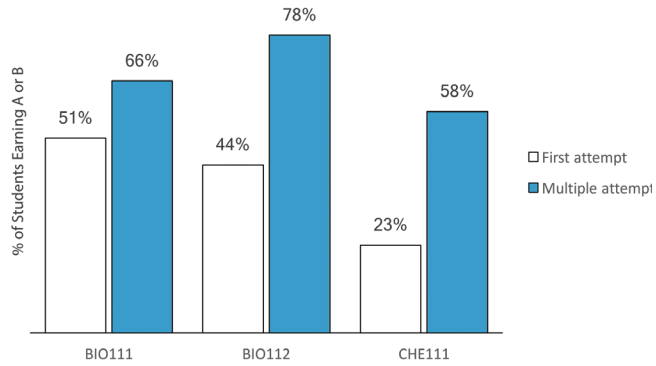


Figure 1. *Multiple exam attempts resulted in more students with an A or B exam average. BIO111 = General College Biology I; BIO112 = General College Biology II; CHE111 = General College Chemistry I.*

A majority of students reported on end-of-semester surveys that the opportunity to retake each exam reduced their anxiety about succeeding in the class. Students' perceptions of how much they learned also increased. Ninety percent of students agree or strongly agree that retaking exams helped them learn the material better (Figure 2). A typical survey response was, "I'm learning, not just passing."

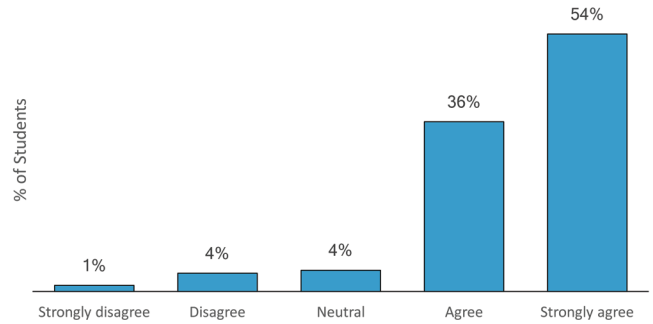


Figure 2. *Students felt that repeated exams helped them learn the material better. Survey results are from 175 students on the last day of class.*

We are continuing to expand and improve the CBE program to include more faculty, more sections, and more courses. Our students are leaving our courses confident in their understanding of course content and equipped with effective study skills for future courses. We have every expectation that this will translate into increased retention in our STEM courses and long-term gains in overall completion rates.

Cheryl Hoke is Faculty, Chemistry; Maggie Richards is Faculty, Science; Ann Riedl is Faculty, Biology; and Tina Burke is Director, Pharmacy Technician Program, Front Range Community College.

INSIGHTS INTO HIGHER EDUCATION INNOVATION:

How Institutions Organize and Prioritize to Spur and Increase Innovation

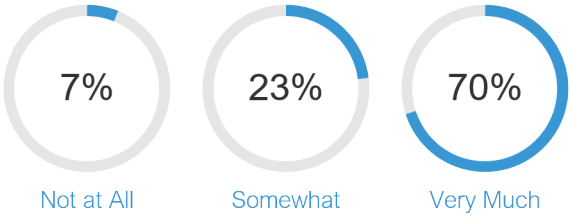
BY MINDY FELDBAUM AND MARCY DRUMMOND

Today's financial, political, and higher education environment poses unprecedented challenges. Public financial support and trust in quality, productivity, and value is eroding. Changing student demographics necessitate different models and solutions that new, burgeoning investments in learning technologies and alternative providers are delivering. Moreover, the 4th Industrial Revolution—an era of digitalization and the connected enterprise—is fundamentally changing what and how we learn and work.

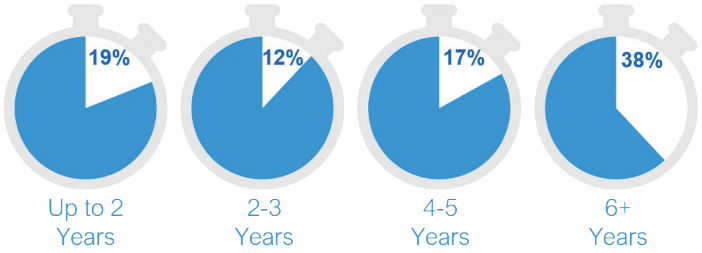
This predicament leaves higher education leaders and practitioners having to figure out how to manage their own destinies, achieve future goals through new funding strategies, and change the way they do business by providing enhanced services and innovative solutions while increasing student success and eliminating achievement gaps. And, given the rapid pace of changing technologies, regional and state economies, market and workplace conditions, and learner characteristics and preferences, colleges and universities will need to remain agile and adept at continually evolving their programs, services, and business models. In essence, institutions and practitioners need to develop the capacity to be innovative—spurring change that creates a new dimension of performance; adds significant and meaningful value at scale; and holistically, measurably, and equitably impacts institutional and student success.

The League for Innovation and partner, The Collaboratory, are interested in knowing how community colleges are being organized to spur and increase innovation and begin to learn from those who are becoming more innovation-focused. Toward that aim, a short survey was distributed to individuals at League member colleges in fall 2018. Presidents (49%); vice presidents, senior executives, or equivalent (35%); directors or equivalent (8%); deans, managers, or equivalent (6%); and staff members (2%) from sixty-five institutions participated in the survey. A few key findings are featured on page 13. Access the full report at www.league.org/node/19052.

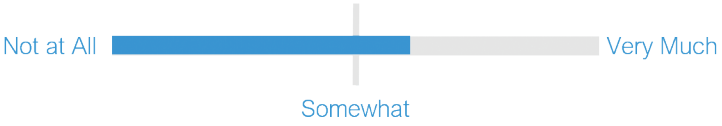
How Much Innovation Is a Priority



How Long Institutions Have Prioritized Innovation



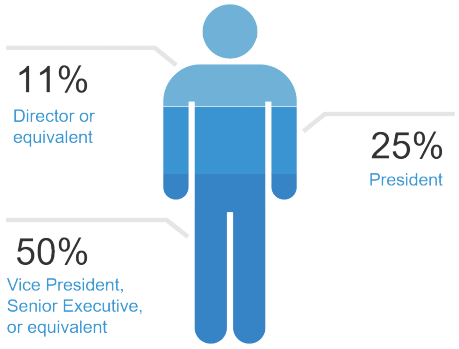
How Innovative Institutions Are*



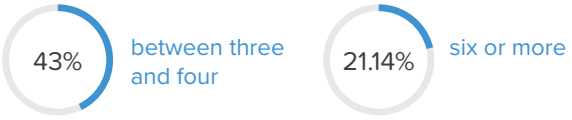
*median response 63.5

Mindy Feldbaum is CEO and Marcy Drummond is Senior Fellow, The Collaboratory, LLC.

Position With Primary Responsibility to Execute/Manage Innovation



Number of Innovation-Related Initiatives or Major Activities



Most Pressing Drivers of Innovation

Improving student academic success

Recognizing the need to do things differently to achieve goals, greater success

Changing landscape/future of higher education

Change Minds, Behaviors, and Outcomes Through Effective Leadership

BY RANDY WEBER

Today's community college landscape is evolving, and change seems to be a constant—particularly at institutions embracing innovation as part of their culture. That is why it is imperative for all community college leaders to be mindful about how their teams handle the change required to remain relevant in the postsecondary sector. For each of us to successfully execute our unique missions, we must lead with focus toward an end goal.

> *When a vision is not clearly defined, even the best and brightest team members can second guess how they contribute to the college's goals.*

Much of my professional development has focused on leadership studies, and I've learned that community college leaders come in all shapes and sizes. In addition to the presidents, chancellors, and CEOs, there are formal and informal leaders throughout our campuses. And regardless of titles, specific tenets must be followed to lead effectively. These include having a vision for what the organization is working to accomplish, an ability to motivate others to work toward the goal(s), and the skills to manage resources effectively.

I've found that promoting the organization's vision is the first critical step to leading effectively. Too often, individuals in formal leadership positions assume others have a clear understanding of priorities and the work necessary to accomplish objectives. When a vision is not clearly defined, even the best and brightest team members can second guess how they contribute to the college's goals. A leader's vision needs to be about more than just achieving a desired outcome. It's imperative that the case is made for why the work must be done. Making this case requires the utilization of both impactful stories and meaningful data.

Once a vision is set, leaders must ensure buy-in exists from key stakeholders. This includes confirming that everyone understands their role and how they will impact a desired outcome. Team members may need help prioritizing their responsibilities so new work does not hinder their regular responsibilities. Successful leaders encourage others to embrace the work by recognizing previous accomplishments and rewarding calculated risk-taking. Individuals motivated by emotional thoughts need to be compelled just as much as those motivated by rational thoughts. Efficiency and budget constraints are rarely enough to inspire a team to change. Employees want to believe their work makes an impact on others, and sometimes just need a helping hand to understand their influence.

With the team on board, effective leaders allocate their resources appropriately to accomplish their goals. When everyone is behind a cause, and it is derailed due to lack of personnel or budget resources, confidence in an organization can be quickly lost. It can also be difficult to earn future buy-in. Leaders must be knowledgeable about their progress toward a goal and prepared to make appropriate resource adjustments as needed. Reallocating resources effectively requires the ability to assess situations and outcomes, as well as the courage to change direction when necessary.

Although lack of vision, inability to motivate others, and poor resource management are the primary reasons initiatives fail, they should not prevent organizational leaders from fostering an innovative culture. And it is important to note that even when following the necessary tenets for leadership, if a goal is too ambitious, the most effective leaders and teams may not succeed. What separates innovative cultures from those stifled from previous failures is that they learn to move forward together. Hopefully, as leaders follow these critical tenets, their teams will choose to support and work toward a collective goal. After all, the success of our students depends on effective leadership and improved outcomes.

Randy Weber is Vice President, Student Success and Engagement, Johnson County Community College.

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State of Higher Education Funding

CHALLENGES

State spending **down** 18%[1]

Average state fiscal support could reach **$0** by 2059[2]

Revenues sources - **Down**
Enrollment revenue - **Down**
Government revenue - **Down**
Other sources of revenue - **Down**

Lower revenue =
Faculty reductions, fewer course offerings, campus closings

TRENDS

Fewer number of donors giving greater amounts of money[3]

Chief Advancement Officers typically measured on **total dollars given**, followed by % of alumni giving[4]

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Incorporate predictive **analytics** and personalization into your campaign

Make the donation process **user-friendly**

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Sources: (1) Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2016; (2) Thomas Mortenson, 2012; (3) Low, 2015, and Tyson, 2014; (4) Ruffalo Noel Levitz, 2017

SPOTLIGHT

WALMART BRIGHTER FUTURES 3.0:

The Optimal Industry Partnership

BY ANDREW MEYER

With Walmart Brighter Futures, the League for Innovation in the Community College continues its long history of leading workforce development initiatives. Walmart Brighter Futures 3.0, the third iteration of this workforce development project funded by the Walmart Foundation, focuses on career mobility for incumbent retail workers, specifically by providing the core skills and knowledge needed to move into management and leadership roles in the retail industry.

To meet the challenges of Walmart Brighter Futures 3.0, the League has partnered with the Western Association of Food Chains (WAFC) to build its "gold standard" Retail Management Certificate (RMC) into the project. Scaling the RMC to the entire retail sector is the first of two overarching goals. The second major goal is to increase employer

support for employees who are seeking the credential. The Walmart Brighter Futures 3.0 cohort of 12 colleges is currently expanding the footprint of the RMC and recruiting more retail sector employers to the initiative.

With its primary mission to provide educational and leadership opportunities for food industry associates, the League and colleges participating in Walmart Brighter Futures 3.0 have found the optimal industry partner. The expertise that the WAFC's RMC Director brings to the table is critical to the project's success. Since the inception of the RMC in 1999, Cherie Phipps has partnered with over 150 community colleges and has worked with WAFC-member employers to advance the program in the retail grocery industry. WAFC's commitment to community colleges is evidenced by its choice to partner exclusively with these institutions because of their accessibility, affordability, and scalability. As a result of Phipps's efforts, industry and employer engagement and support are contributing to the success of participating students.

The League values its association with the WAFC and applauds the RMC program, which was recognized by the White House in 2015 as a tool to build education depth in retail and help "upskill the nation."

For more information about the Walmart Brighter Futures 3.0 project, visit www.league.org/wbf3.

WAFC
ADVANCING THE FOOD INDUSTRY THROUGH EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP

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Andrew Meyer is Vice President, Workforce Development, League for Innovation in the Community College.

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY: 21st CENTURY APPRENTICES SET UP FOR SUCCESS AT SAIT

BY SHELBY FELDMAN

The Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) began in 1916 with 11 students and two pieces of donated machinery. Over the last 100 years, SAIT has become a leader in applied education, specializing in action-based learning. Today, SAIT welcomes more than 50,000 students each year—offering degree, diploma, and certificate programs; continuing education classes; pre-employment programs; and, importantly, a long-lasting focus on apprenticeships.

Historically, an apprentice would be bound to an apprentice master for skills training, food, and a few shillings. Of course, this is a notion of the distant past. As society has evolved, although the core idea may remain, the teacher-to-student method of instruction has also evolved.

In 1948, training for apprentices under the province of Alberta's Apprenticeship Act marked the beginning of a new era for SAIT in applied education, with 171 students enrolled in five apprenticeship programs. As the economy continued to boom, SAIT's evolution continued and, fast-forwarding to today, now offers 35 apprenticeship and pre-employment programs.

Balancing their time between technical training and hands-on work in their chosen trade, SAIT's apprentices are equipped with both knowledge and experience to effectively continue succeeding in the province's growing trade industries.

> *"Apprenticeship is a proven education model that integrates on-the-job and classroom learning ...*

"Apprenticeship is a proven education model that integrates on-the-job and classroom learning," says Nino Belvedere, SAIT Apprentice Coordinator. "It's highly effective for helping learners connect theory and practice—which works particularly well for students who learn best by doing."

At SAIT, there are several pathways to take to enter a trade with varying delivery methods to meet student needs and interests. The more apprentices who can be effectively trained, the more opportunities there are to satisfy industry demands for skilled labour.

If there's one thing that remains true about past apprentices, it's that each individual is highly skilled in his or her trade. Whether students are using SAIT's state-of-the-art facilities or working on the job, apprentices dedicate an unprecedented amount of time to perfecting their abilities, with some beginning their journey while still in high school.

In 2017, four SAIT competitors earned the right to represent Canada at WorldSkills Abu Dhabi in the Aerospace Technology, Cabinet Making, Culinary Arts, and Industrial Mechanic Millwright categories, respectively. To represent the nation's top skilled youth in trades and technologies is no small accomplishment. From day one of the program, apprentices gain valuable work experience and access to professional mentors and networks to further enhance their skillset.

"[Students] represent a cultural shift that is going on right now at the high school and postsecondary levels to reposition the skilled trades as not only in-demand jobs or careers, but also requiring very high levels of capabilities as leaders and problem solvers, pursuing excellence in their particular skilled trades," Belvedere says.

SAIT's earn-while-you-learn apprenticeship programs, alongside grants, scholarships, and the eligibility for employment insurance, eases the financial burden students sometimes face. "The apprentice is a paid employee, developing valuable skills while adding productive value on the job," Belvedere says. This model not only provides students with the opportunity to begin their career early, but also provides them with networking opportunities with key industry people they meet along the way.

Just as apprenticeships have evolved, SAIT works to improve and develop its apprenticeship curriculum. The in-house development of modules allows for regular updates, and improvements to training scenarios are made as the industry continues to evolve, further ensuring student success. Apprentices have never been more vital in today's modern workforce. As an educational institution and training ground for such skilled workers, SAIT's nimble approach and industry connections provide a successful platform for apprentices to thrive in this ever-changing world of work.

Shelby Feldman is Communications Coordinator, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology.

INNOVATIVE INTERVENTION to Address Food Insecurity as a Barrier to Graduation

BY SHAR-DAY CAMPBELL

According to Wisconsin HOPE Lab's *Hungry and Homeless in College* (2017), 67 percent of community college students across 24 U.S. states are food insecure, with 33 percent of those students experiencing the very lowest levels of food security. Moreover, about half of community college students experience housing insecurity, and 14 percent are homeless.

In a fall 2017 Houston Community College (HCC) survey, 88 percent of student respondents indicated that food giveaways helped them focus more on school (Hernandez, 2018). As a result of survey findings, the college initiated an effort to combat basic needs insecurities that negatively impact student retention and success.

At HCC, the financial aid department's financial coaches are on the front line of addressing basic needs insecurities affecting student persistence. They see students who register with eagerness and hope later become discouraged by economic challenges.

In a natural extension of their work, HCC financial coaches forged a partnership with the Houston Food Bank for a game-changing food scholarship program in conjunction with a two-year research study to explore the academic impact of providing food assistance.

COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION ADDRESSING AND ANALYZING FOOD INSECURITY

In 2012, Houston Food Bank's Food for Change initiative identified that individuals who frequent the pantries were not advancing economically. The organization saw an opportunity to collaborate with institutions and organizations that position clients for greater economic opportunity.

"Our clients were dealing with so many issues outside of food that unless we dealt with those issues, and connected them with programs to advance economically, they would not be able to move beyond needing food assistance," said Reginald Young, Director of Food for Change, which oversees the food scholarship program at the Houston Food Bank.

In 2016, Houston Food Bank's Food for Change awarded HCC's financial coaches a grant to offer food scholarships. Shortly thereafter, the partnership between the Houston Food Bank and the HCC financial coach team was strengthened by the opportunity to analyze the impact of food scholarships.

Funded by the Kresge Foundation and William T. Grant Foundation, co-principal investigators Dr. Daphne Hernandez of the University of Houston and Dr. Sara Goldrick-Rab of Temple University are evaluating the two-year impact of HCC's food scholarship on students' academic performance and persistence in college.

HOW THE FOOD SCHOLARSHIP WORKS

During the spring and fall semesters of 2018, 1,000 students—most Latino or African American—were selected for access to the food scholarship program through a randomized process based on income reported on their FAFSA. To participate, these students were required to opt in to the program through a quick online form. Of the 500 students offered access to

> *"67 percent of community college students across 24 U.S. states are food insecure, with 33 percent of those students experiencing the very lowest levels of food security.*

the scholarships in spring 2018, 53 percent opted in; 500 additional students were offered access to the scholarships in October 2018.

Twice a month, a Houston Food Bank refrigerated food truck delivers to food distribution locations set up as farmers market style experiences at two alternating HCC campuses. The food scholarship program provides each participating student with 60 pounds of produce, meat, and nonperishable food. Students' financial aid packages are not affected, and participating students are encouraged to allocate the money saved to handle other costs.

CURRENT IMPACT

HCC's Director of Financial Aid Operations, Bianca Matlock, described the program as "a large undertaking made possible through cross-departmental partnerships." Setting up the program was a collaborative effort between financial coaches, campus management, security, a PeopleSoft analyst, information technology, communications, and the call center.

The project is in early stages and data collection is ongoing; however, anecdotal reports indicate that students consider the program a great benefit. One HCC food scholarship recipient stated, "I just want to let you guys know how thankful and grateful I am for what you are doing to help the students, their families, and the community. You have no idea how much your program helped our family. I will always be grateful for all your help."

Armando Galvan-Cruces, HCC financial coach, said, "The food scholarship has been intense, deeply gratifying work that we know our students need."

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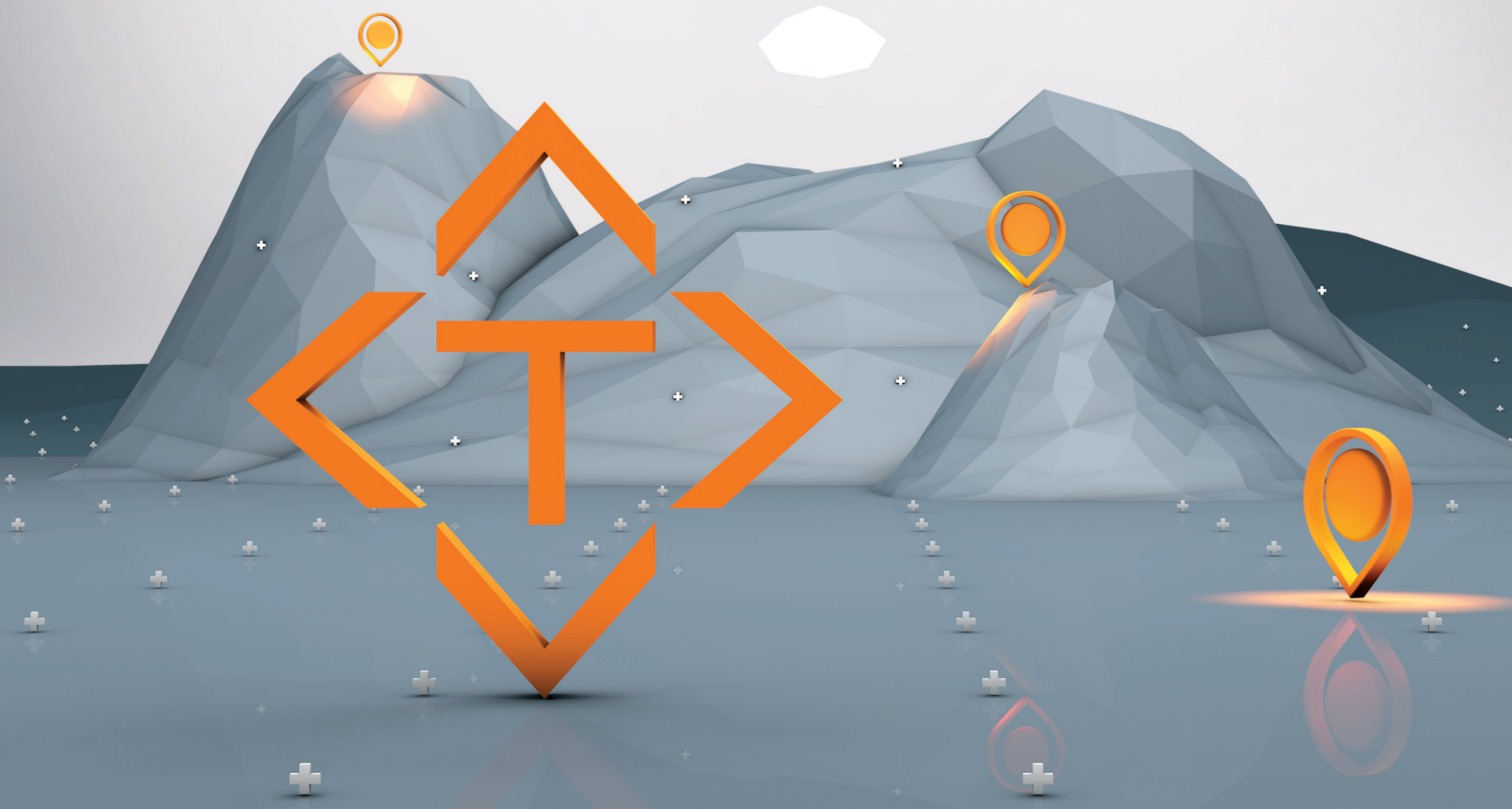

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> *There are now more actionable conversations about food insecurities and basic-needs gaps, as well as plans for campus food pantries.*

Beyond the direct impact on students, the food scholarship program has ignited an institutional domino effect. There are now more actionable conversations about food insecurities and basic-needs gaps, as well as plans for campus food pantries.

While the partners await the research results, the innovative HCC food scholarship program continues to help change participating students' lives. "We lose students struggling with food insecurity one at a time," said Galvan-Cruces. "With the food scholarship, we can help students complete—one food distribution at a time."

Visit www.league.org/node/18888 for the reference list.

Shar-day Campbell is Financial Aid Communications and Social Media Coordinator, Houston Community College.

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CHALL

COMMUNITY COLLE

NOT EVERYONE GRADUATES

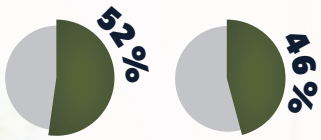
47%
of community college students drop out[1]

Female community college students have a higher completion rate (**41.5%**) than their male counterparts (**35.7%**)[2]

THEY HAVE FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

30%
have children[6]

17%
are single parents[7]



In 2002, 52% of two-year public institutions had on-campus childcare; in 2013, only 46% did[8]

53%
of all college student-parents leave college with no degree[9]

THEY FACE OTHER FINANCIAL WORRIES

One in three community college students has a family income of less than $20,000[15]

1/5th
of community college students say they would not be able to financially deal with an emergency; close to half say they had run out of money in the past year, forcing them to rely on family, friends, charity, or loans[16]

Half of all community college students struggle with food and/or housing insecurity; 20% are hungry and 13% are homeless[17]

ENGES

GE STUDENTS FACE

THE MAJORITY DON'T ATTEND FULL TIME

62% of community college students attend part time[3]

Full-time students are more likely to graduate[4]

THEY JUGGLE WORK AND SCHOOL[5]

22% of full-time students work full time

40% of full-time students work part time

41% of part-time students work full time

32% of part-time students work part time

THEY WORRY ABOUT PAYING FOR COLLEGE

Nearly **one in five** community college students is so worried about finances they've considered dropping out[10]

Community college students are **less likely** to borrow and borrow less on average, yet are **more likely** to default on federal loans than students at other institutions[11]

58% receive aid, **38%** receive federal grants, and **19%** receive federal loans[12]

32% of all college students say they've neglected their studies at least sometimes because of the money they owe[13]

30% of college students use financial aid money to buy required books[14]

2x

Community college students are nearly **twice as likely** to use financial aid for books as students at four-year private or public schools

↑ 73%

The cost of a textbook has increased by **73%** since 2006—more than four times the rate of inflation

Visit www.league.org/node/18888 for the reference list. Compiled by CampusLogic.

FROM SPEED BUMP TO ON-RAMP:

Holistic Assessment and the Reinvention of Placement

BY ROSS MARKLE

The last decade has seen a remarkable and much-needed wave of innovations in developmental education, and the mechanisms for placement are no exception. As recently as 2011, a survey of community colleges (Fields & Parsad, 2012) found that nearly all used a placement test, with the vast majority relying solely on that measure to make placement decisions.

But with growing concern about the validity of placement test results (Burdman, 2012), many institutions looked for alternative placement models. Work from the Community College Research Center (2012) showed the capacity for multiple measures to improve placement accuracy, and by 2016, more than half the states had some form of multiple measures policy in place (RFA Multiple Measures, n.d.).

The use of multiple measures, as well as other innovations in the developmental education space, are a welcome change to a system that simply was not an effective means of remediating students (Burdman, 2012). Yet there is still important work to be done, especially around the issue of placement. This process is, in many ways, the first

conversation that a college has with a student. Thus, it is critical that this conversation be well-informed, supportive in nature, and guided toward a student's best path to success.

There are three key points that, in my opinion, shape the next wave of innovation in placement.

1. **Distinguishing between multiple measures and holistic assessment.** Shifting from a single placement test to multiple measures can happen in many ways, including the consideration of high school grades or providing additional assessments for students who score close to college level. Multiple measures, as operationalized in this way, are a definite improvement over a single-test system. In fact, doing so aligns with recommendations from organizations such as ACT and the College Board.

However, models such as these still prioritize the academic components of college readiness. Several years ago, Terry O'Banion and I (2014) wrote a piece on noncognitive factors, the research supporting their relevance in student success, and the need to more appropriately address and support these areas in placement, advising, and other student success efforts. While multiple measures help to address concerns about placement tests, they fail to provide key information about the behavioral, motivational, emotional, and social components of student success.

> *Innovation in developmental education is key because it is the means by which we give any student, regardless of the challenges faced, the best chance to be successful.*

2. **It's not about placement; it's about support.** A more holistic model of assessment and placement is crucial because determining which course a student should take is only one part of the on-ramp to student success.

   In the aforementioned study by the Community College Research Center (2012), the holistic placement model was able to identify some students who were placed into a college-level course based on a test score alone, but were likely to fail that course based on other indicators. The author referred to these students as "over-placed," yet I would argue that these students were under-supported. It would seem that the challenge these students faced was not the level of content, but rather the strategies used to pass the course.

   Placement should be considered as a moment of determining support in both the academic and cocurricular domains. Based on proficiency in math or English, a student may require academic support (e.g., tutoring or a corequisite course), but holistic assessment might also identify the need for advising, counseling, or other interventions that could support success beyond those gateway courses.

   Multiple measures placement is an advantage for students whose success may be misrepresented by a placement test, allowing them to forgo a semester (or more, in some cases) of developmental education. Yet as a placement system more capably identifies students who are likely to succeed, it better predicts those who will likely fail. Thus, it is not just placement, but support, that is critical in these early conversations with students.

3. **The next step is innovative pedagogy.** Placement is just one of many innovations in developmental education. The corequisite movement, first through institutional experimentation and increasingly through state policy, has gained widespread adoption (Complete College America, n.d.). Innovative instructional delivery, such as emporium models, has changed the pace of remediation at many institutions. Certainly, developmental education, as it stands today, is a far different system than the one that stood ten years ago.

   The reason these innovations are so important is that they change the intervention that is designed to remediate students' academic needs. We've long known that students who are placed into developmental education have little chance of completing those courses and, ultimately, completing a degree (Bailey & Cho, 2010). While we have maligned placement tests, secondary curricula, and a host of other factors, one of the key issues was that our primary existing intervention—that is, providing additional semesters of coursework—was not demonstrably effective in achieving that goal of remediation (Burdman, 2012).

Community colleges have long been a gateway to higher education and a lever of economic change for our citizens and our nation. Innovation in developmental education is key because it is the means by which we give any student, regardless of the challenges faced, the best chance to be successful. Holistic assessment, placement, and support—coupled with effective pedagogy—is simply the next logical step in achieving that goal.

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Ross Markle is an independent assessment and data use consultant.

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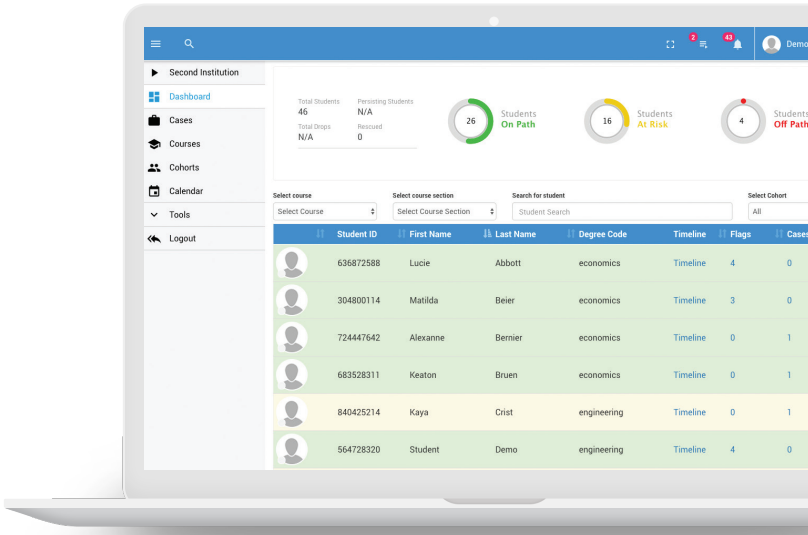

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