Enrollment Management: Challenges and Opportunities for Community Colleges

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Today’s Discussion

1. Define Enrollment Management
2. Challenges (External Issues)
3. Opportunities
4. Enrollment Management Strategies
5. Best Practices

Enrollment Management?

• “… an organizational concept and systematic set of activities to enable institutions to exert more influence over student enrollments’
Hossler and Bean (1990)

• “… a comprehensive process designed to help an institution achieve and maintain the optimum recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of students, where ‘optimum is defined with the academic context of the institution.’
Dolence (1996)

Why Enrollment Management?

Community College Enrollment

Changing Demographics
Competition
Limited Resources
Accountability
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Changing Demographics

- Total Community College enrollment growth expected to increase 14% by 2013 (US ED)
- California and Virginia project enrollment growth at more than 50% within the next ten years. (Evelyn 2004)
- Florida projects enrollment growth could exceed 80% over the next ten years. (Shugart 2004)

Changing Demographics

According to NCES:

- Today:
  - Minorities comprise one third of community college enrollment and this will increase as high school demographics change.
  - Students who speak a language other than English comprise 15% of community college enrollment.
  - Over 50% of our students are First Generation College Students.

Changing Demographics

According to NCES:

- In 2012:
  - Total College enrollment will reach 17.7 million students.
  - Community College enrollment will reach 6.3 million students.
  - High School graduates will increase to 3.1 million.
  - Women will comprise 57% of college enrollment.

Competition

- Some states and cities have explosive growth, while others have very limited growth.
- Public and private colleges, both local and out of state, often compete for the same students.
- Periods of near full employment often work against community college enrollments.
- Military, Career Schools, Employer Training Programs, High Schools.
Declining Resources

- Between 1994 and 2003:
  - Community College enrollment increased 14%.
  - State appropriations per FTE declined 13%, adjusted for inflation.
- An increase in state merit scholarships,
  - Often at the expense of state need based aid programs.
  - 13 states have merit scholarship programs.
  - Some of these programs have increased White postsecondary participation rates disproportionately resulting in access issues. (Green 2004)
  - Appears to increase completion rates about 3%. (Dynarski 2005)

Declining Resources

- Value of the Pell Grant has diminished
  - In 1984, Pell paid for 84% of college costs.
  - In 2003, Pell covered just 38% of college costs for all students.
- Federal Government has been shifting federal assistance from grants to loans
  - In 2003, grants comprised 44% of Federal assistance, down from 48% in 1994 (College Board)

Declining Resources

- Over the past decade:
  - Grant aid has increased 64% per FTE
  - Loan aid has increased 111% per FTE
  - Family income for parents aged 45-54 increased only 6%
  - All Adjusted for Inflation (College Board)

Declining Resources

- The shift of financial assistance from Grants to Loans negatively affects disadvantaged students because they are less likely to incur large debt. (Pedersen 2003)
- Annual tuition increases, that are exceeding inflation, have gained national attention, including Congress. (SB 1614 & HR 609)
Declining Resources
• Some Causes of Public College Tuition Increases:
  – Outmoded state revenue systems, combined with tax cutting initiatives.
  – Colleges competing for limited state and/or local discretionary funds as entitlement programs grow.
  – The market itself – public four institutions believe they must compete with private institutions for faculty and students, driving up costs.
• The Results:
  – Most affluent students continue to attend college regardless of costs, thus higher tuition is not an issue.
  – Low income students look to community colleges as their lower priced college option.

Accountability
• As public funds are appropriated for higher education, they are often tied to accountability measures.
• Last Year’s Federal Higher Education Re-authorization proposals contained several new accountability measures.
• Some accountability measures are actually harmful to community colleges, e.g. graduation rates.

Accountability
• Congress and State Legislatures appear to be more willing to require accountability measures and mandates.
• A few of the more familiar:
  – Student Right to Know Act
  – Higher Education Amendments of 1998
  – Graham Leach Bliley Act
  – The Spellings Report Unit Record Proposal

External Challenges
Opportunities

Manage External Issues

College Specific Issues

Leadership

Manage External Issues

- Access is Crucial - the Heart of our Mission in Community Colleges
  - Be Sensitive to Higher Education Costs
  - Understand the Role of Financial Aid and Assistance
- Understand Which External Issues Your Institution Can Influence
- Ensure the Entire College Community is Aware of All Issues
  - Be Prepared to Share Data and Trends
  - Develop a Plan and Strategies to Address Issues.

Manage External Issues

DBCC Service Area Population

Population 2004/05

Population Projection for 2014/15

Three age categories provide 44% of total enrollment and 78% of full-time enrollment.

Manage External Issues

DBCC Fall 2005 Enrollment
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Manage External Issues

DBCC Fall 2005 Enrollment Compared to Population Projection

College Specific Issues

- May Be More Difficult to Address
  - Less Straightforward, Lack of Consensus
  - Data is Often Challenged
  - Resources Often Require Reallocation
- Should Be the Easiest to Address as They Are College Specific, Unique.
- Attempt to Match Supply (students) with Demand (employers and jobs)
  - Ignore Sunk Costs
  - Utilize Data and Institutional Research
  - Work Toward Consensus, Especially with Academic Leaders.

Leadership

Leadership is any attempt to influence the behavior of another individual or group. – P. Hersey

Leadership

Leadership for Enrollment Management

- Set the Vision
- Understand Enrollment Management and Student Success Issues
- Encourage and Use Data
- Promote Collaboration and Relationships
- Develop a Plan
- Be Bold, Creative and Innovative
- Ensure the Plan is Implemented and Evaluated

Source: Enrollment Management Center, Drs. Ron and Dori Ingersoll
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Opportunities

- Manage External Issues
  - Understand the need for data
  - Explore market forces to match demand (students) with supply (jobs)
  - Develop a research orientation

- College Specific Issues
  - Recognize the issues
  - Prioritize the impact on the college
  - Develop strategies

- Leadership
  - Realize that someone must take charge
  - Ideas must translate into plans and actions
  - Collaboration is essential

EM Strategies

- Integrate EM with Academics
- Offer Financial Planning
- Leverage Financial Aid
- Provide Efficient Services
- Ensure Student Success
- Understand Recruiting: Art or Science?

Integrate with Academics

- Academic programs are a major reason why student's seek to enroll at colleges.
- Student demand information is available from various sources, i.e. ACT, College Board.
- Community colleges must have a dialog with local employers, to balance graduates with job opportunities.
- Enrollment Managers must work with Academic Administrators to ensure the demand and supply equation is maximized for the college.
  - Data and information are the keys to this relationship

Recruiting: Art or Science?

Market research is the key to successful recruiting efforts.

- A 1996 study of 675 community college students reveal the top "selection factors were:
  - Overall Quality of the Institution
  - Types of Programs Offered
  - Tuition and Fees
  - Reputation of the College
  - Faculty Qualifications

(Absher and Crawford 1996)
Recruiting: Art or Science?

Market research is the key to successful recruiting efforts.
- A 1991 study of 3,708 freshmen on the student selection and enrollment cycle revealed:
  - 33% began the college selection process before their junior year.
  - 80% began the process prior to the end of their junior year.
  - Only 5% made the process in their senior year.
  - 70% made their final choice during their senior year.
  - Counselors were more important than parents or teachers.
  - Most important resources were college students and friends.

(Johnson and Stewart 1991)

Recruiting: Art or Science?

- Know Your Market - research and institutional enrollment data are vital to recruitment efforts.
- Understand your current students, then recruit new students.
  - New students who closely resemble your current students are more likely to succeed.
- Targeted recruitment is more efficient and the most effective recruitment strategy.

Financial Planning

The cost to attend community colleges has outpaced inflation over the past ten years.
- At DBCC:
  - The estimated cost to attend, as determined by our full-time college credit budget, has increased 114% adjusted for inflation. (DBCC Financial Aid Office)
  - Remember, family income for parents aged 45-54 (the traditional age for parents of college bound students) increased only 6%, adjusted for inflation (College Board).

Financial Planning

- Community colleges are reactive when addressing college costs.
- We provide information on general costs and information on financial aid, but we expect our students to make the connection or link.
  - 1999-2000, 46% of full-time students in community colleges did not apply for financial aid.
  - 25% of the lowest income students at community colleges did not apply for aid.
  - Why? One quarter of the lowest income students responded “they had missed the deadline.” (American Council on Education 2004)
Financial Planning

• Private colleges are *proactive* when discussing college costs, having linked admissions and financial planning for years.
• Community Colleges must be more *proactive*:
  – Ensure students understand the value of higher education.
  – Discuss all financial assistance opportunities.
  – Assist students in developing a plan to pay for college.
  – Offer “College Financial Planning Workshops” for the community.
  – Provide online tutorials on “How to Pay for College”
• Don’t leave it to students to figure it out for themselves
  – remember our changing demographics.

Leverage Financial Aid

*Financial Aid Is a Strategic Enrollment Management Tool.*
– Provide financial aid packages that are incentives for students to select your institution.
– Maintain a mix of merit and need based aid, realizing students select community colleges because they are affordable.
– Ensure financial aid awards keep pace with enrollment cycles.
– Provide a “Personal Touch” in Financial Aid.
  – “Translate” Financial Aid information to the targeted audience.
  – Be “Proactive” in providing Financial Aid Information.
  – “College Goal Sunday”

Provide Efficient Services

*Why Change Enrollment Services?*
• Most routine enrollment transactions have been web enabled.
• Processes that were once clerical transactions available at specific college locations during business hours are now electronic self-help processes available any time from any place.
• Students perceive on-line processes as seamless, allowing them to “flow” through these processes fairly efficiently.

Provide Efficient Services

*Why Change Enrollment Services?*
• Most of our walk-in campus-based services continue to be mostly transaction based.
• Our campus-based services are more focused on specific reporting needs, compliance requirements with Federal or state laws/rules, institutional needs and office efficiencies.
• Students perceive many campus-based services to be very bureaucratic, inflexible and unresponsive.
• Compounding the service level is the perceived need to create “specialist” positions in each office to support the office workload and responsibilities.
• Over specialization results in silos and referrals.
Enrollment Services pre-2000

Most Transactions Completed by Specialists in the Various Offices

Enrollment Services Today

Service Provided by Home Office

Enrollment Management:
Challenges and Opportunities for Community Colleges

Daytona Beach Community College Data:
- January 1 – December 31, 2005
  - 1.75 million student web transactions
  - 607,000 course searches
  - 329,000 web registrations
  - 175,000 web fee statements
  - 104,000 student transcripts (grade reports)
  - 100,000 student financial awards

The Result:
- Students come to the campus for services or answers not available via the web.
- We must “flip” the pyramid.

Student Success

Remember Dolence’s definition of Enrollment Management
- The Key Words:
  - “Recruitment”, “Retention” and “Graduation” (or completion).
- Provide students with tools and services to ensure their success.
- Allow students to define their “success.”
- Implement CQI by working to review processes and remove barriers.
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Best Practices

Academic Affairs: Knowing What to Offer and When to Offer It.
- Advertising alone will not result in sustained enrollment growth.
  - Marketing is essential
  - Marketing, without research, is Advertising.
- Understanding Student Demand is Essential to Success.
  - Research will assist in developing new programs.
  - Class scheduling should be based on student needs, as well as institutional needs.
  - Our competitors understand student demand and they seek to meet the demand.

Best Practices

DBCC Enrollment prior to Fall 2006
- Enrollment had declined for six semesters.
- Retention rates in college preparatory (remedial) courses were below 50%.
- Courses were closing only to reopen when unpaid students were canceled.
- Too few sections of required courses were offered at desired times for students

Best Practices

DBCC Changes for Fall 2006
- College preparatory courses were offered in an accelerated eight week format.
  - Students could complete all required college preparatory courses in one semester.
- Automatic overbooking of non-lab sections by up to three students.
- Required courses did not close (sections were increased or new sections were added).
- Fee payment deadlines were honored and more fee payment options were available.

Best Practices

RESULTS:
- Fall Enrollment increased 9%
- Spring Enrollment increased 12%
- College Preparatory retention rates increased to 70%
- Fewer students were canceled for non-payment of fees.
Best Practices

Learning Communities:
- Are students working in groups to share ideas and gain different perspectives on ideas.
- Require students to support each other.
- Promote more student engagement and higher levels of critical thinking.
- Encourage student success by having students feel more connected to the college.
- Are a proven, successful retention strategy.

DBCC Quanta Program
- Recognized by the Florida Board of Community Colleges as one of the outstanding academic programs in higher education in Florida.
- QUANTA is a learning community where students and faculty work together to share their learning experiences.
- QUANTA students work with three faculty members who collaborate in their teaching of the psychology, cultural arts, and English courses.
  - Students participate in groups with other students to share ideas, thereby gaining different perspectives on the topic they are studying.
  - Students develop critical thinking, reading and writing skills, group and leadership skills, and benefit from a flexible learning environment.

Best Practices
DBCC’s "Question and Answer Center"
Specialists in the Answer Center have the ability to:
- Appeals Applications
- CLAST Waiver Requests
- Enrollment Verification Requests
- Graduation Applications
- Independent Study Requests
- Official Transcript Requests
- Registration Problems
- Reinstatement Requests
- Scholarship Applications
- Withdrawal Requests

Best Practices
Daytona Beach Community College’s “On Site Admissions Day”
- Problem: High School Graduate Capture Rate low (26.6% compared to State Average of 30.9%).
- Solution: Series of On Site Admission Days on each local high school campus.
  - Coordinated with Principal and Guidance at each school.
  - Admission and Testing Staff mobilized.
- Results:
  - In 2003, 348 high school students admitted via this process.
  - Capture Rate increased to 36.4%
### Enrollment Management Models

#### Which One is Best For Your Institution?
- Enrollment Management Committee
- Enrollment Management Coordinator
- Enrollment Management Matrix
- Enrollment Management Division

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### Enrollment Management Models

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<th>Assets</th>
<th>Liabilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment Management Committee</td>
<td>Administrative and operational improvements, increased focus, centralized strategy</td>
<td>Enrollment management committee, efficient decision-making, streamlined operations, improved student experience</td>
<td>Limited influence over institutional policy, multiple reporting lines, make implementation difficult</td>
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<td>Increased focus on enrollment management, centralized strategy, increased efficiency</td>
<td>Enrollment management responsibility, improved decision-making, streamlined operations</td>
<td>Lack of formal authority in decision-making, limited coordination, enrollment management issues not discussed by key administrators</td>
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<td>Enrollment Management Matrix</td>
<td>Coordination and integration of enrollment management activities, increased focus</td>
<td>Enrollment management matrix, improved decision-making, streamlined operations</td>
<td>Senior administrator may not have time or expertise to be effective, turf issues may arise when other key members do not agree on goals and strategies</td>
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<td>Enrollment Management Division</td>
<td>An administrative division headed by a senior administrator who oversees the integration of enrollment management functions.</td>
<td>Brings all essential departments under one senior administrator.</td>
<td>Often difficult to create and is costly to implement.</td>
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New Enrollment Organization

- Marketing
- DBCC TV
- Institutional Research
- Student Accounts & Cashier
- Career Advising
- Mental Health Counseling
- Student Appeals
- Dean Enrollment Services
- Provost
- AVP Enrollment & Sr. Provost
- VP Enrolment
- Ed Fin Services & Financial Aid
- Dean Fin-Aid Services
- Transfer Evaluations (Records)
- Registration Q&A Phone Ctr