Life Lessons Learned in Distance Education

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NSU: 6th Largest Private Not-for-Profit in US

- Multi campus structure = 26,000+ students
- Main Campus = 300 acre campus
- 16 Colleges/Centers

Locations

- Las Vegas, NV (415)
- Orlando, FL (779)
- Ft. Lauderdale, FL (859)
- Miami, FL (1,670)
- Tampa, FL (845)
- Bahamas (260)
- Jamaica (405)
- NV (494)
Distance Education at NSU

- Cluster Concept – 1972
- Corporate Clusters
  - Disney
  - General Electric
  - American Express
- On Line Instruction
- Student Educational Centers (SEC)
Off-Campus Delivery

ADVANTAGES OF CLUSTERS

• Flexibility, mobility, quick implementation
• Local cluster coordinator to meet onsite needs
• Minimal costs / overhead (facilities, staff)

ADVANTAGES OF SECs

• Visibility, accessibility, full-service center
• Includes advising, financial aid, computer lab, student activities
• Local director
• Community access to facilities
Field Based Degree Programs

• Education
• Business
• Psychology
• Pharmacy
Business Programs Offered through Distance Education

UNDERGRADUATE
   Business Administration
   Management

GRADUATE
   Master of Business Administration
   Master of Public Administration
   Master of Science, Human Resource Management
   Master of International Business Administration
Operational Challenges and Solutions

- Recruitment Admissions
- Academic Program Office
- Student Services
Recruitment / Admissions Challenges

- Accreditation Issues
- Market research
- Establishing institutional commitment to cluster / location; short-term / long-term
Recruitment / Admissions Challenges: CLUSTERS

- Defining critical mass
  - Projecting enrollments for life of the cluster;
  - Anticipate attrition (personal and academic)
- Determining minimum thresholds for transfer (30 vs. 60 credits)
- Development of corporate relationships
Recruitment / Admissions Solutions: CLUSTERS

- Local cluster coordinator
- Initial recruitment efforts HR, email, peer to peer
- Corporate college fairs, professional organizations and conferences
- Use current students to recruit new students for continuing clusters
Recruitment / Admissions Challenges: OPEN ENROLLMENT

- Establish critical mass
- Accommodate variable target population
- No single point of contact
- Providing support services at sites
Recruitment / Admissions Solutions: OPEN ENROLLMENT

- Permanent buildings establish local presence
- Group clusters to house in central location
- Flexibility with target population (junior vs. freshman)
- Attractive and accessible for adult learners
- On site financial aid, student affairs, advising, computer labs
Recruitment / Admissions Tools

• Articulation Agreements
  – Community college pipeline
  – Private two-year feeders
  – Targeted AS and AAS agreements

• Standard Grants
  – Nationally accredited institutions
  – Professional licensure

• Experiential Learning
  – Portfolio course challenge
Academic Challenges

- Faculty Issues
  - Selection
    - Qualifications
    - Full time
    - Adjunct
  - Scheduling
  - Loads
  - Availability
Academic Solutions

Faculty Issues
- Advertise in local markets for faculty
- Know your accreditation requirements for faculty
- Front load if possible
- Utilize full time faculty to assure credibility
- Monitor faculty load
- Availability to travel, conflicts with multiple teaching commitments
Academic Challenges

Scheduling Issues
- Short term / long term planning
  - Business courses
  - General Education courses
  - Lock step (clusters)
- Decisions whether to run a course or not
- Supply / demand
### Scheduling Issues

- **Short term** – establish schedule to allow growth
- **Long term:**
  - **Business courses**: map sequences and levels
  - **General Education courses**: set rotation
  - **Sequence courses**: lock step (clusters)
- Strategic use of videoconferencing
- Consult with advisors, cluster coordinators
Student Services Challenges and Solutions

- Recruitment
- Admissions
- Academic Program Office
- Student Services
Academic Advising

Director of Academic Advising

Associate Director

Main Campus Academic Advising Manager
  Main Campus Advisors
  Corporate Academic Advisor

Off Campus Academic Advising Manager
  Student Education Center Advisors
Student Services Challenges

- Unique character of SEC populations
- Delivery of uniform and consistent information
- Communicating policy and procedures updates
- Reporting structures
- Selection, training and supervision of staff
- Quality control assurance
Regional manager to liaise with site advisors and main campus leadership
Student Services Solutions

- Staffing decisions based on campus size, and student demographics (ex. Jacksonville vs. Miami)

- Invest staff in areas with growth potential
- Meet departmental needs through creative staffing
Student Services Solutions

Ongoing, current communication with all personnel
- Email
- Instant Messenger
- Phone (Corporate Cell)
Student Services Solutions

Uniform, consistent processes linked to main campus
Questions? Contact Us!

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