

KEYNOTE REMARKS
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Good morning and thank you for welcoming me and all of us from the United States of America. It is an honor to join you at your conference. I am here representing my alma mater, Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers, of which I am member.

Today I share with you insights about “Innovations Emerging in College Admissions & Registration”. I will do this primarily through the lens of an American, but I will offer some global perspectives where possible.

First, let me tell you a little bit about myself.

- ▶ This is my first visit to the Middle East, so thank you for this opportunity.
- ▶ As Associate Provost, I oversee the offices of admissions, financial aid, first year experience, the registrar’s office and a small digital team.

Thank you for inviting me to your conference.

Next, let me frame the context for innovations. An innovation is a new idea, device, or method. There have been so many innovations in the history of admissions, registration, and enrollment management.

Innovation is also driving our language and our perspective. Decades ago it was about recruitment and retention. Today the focus is on access and success. Access ensures that we are providing opportunities and success confirms that we are delivering results. Both are important to the work we do in our field.

This presentation will discuss the following 5 topics in college admissions and registration:

- Innovations in applying to college
- Test optional movement
- Early/middle college movement
- Automated degree planning tools
- Student life cycle management

Now.....let’s start in the beginning.....innovation in applying to college.

Since the advent of the first United States admissions office at Columbia University in 1915, applying for admission to college has been a process. This process has many facets, including the exchange of information used in rendering an admissions decision. Not only has the type of information collected evolved, so have the ways that students experience the process. I’d like to highlight some innovations taking place in college admissions.

Applying to college incorporates a variety of steps and a variety of processes. How students apply for admission to college can be categorized into four primary dimensions: traditional, interpersonal, digital, and divergent. This table showcases these four dimensions and 16 ways of applying to college.

The Traditional dimension involves the initial ways that emerged with the birth of the college application process. Historically, this is how that process began.

The Interpersonal dimension refers to the ways that include a human-to-human interaction. The “human presence factor” has enabled the college application process to move beyond facts and figures and incorporate an applicant’s personal behaviors and characteristics, among other elements.

The Digital dimension comprises the use of technology, software, and hardware. The digital dimension is the one that has grown the most as technology has been introduced and expanded.

The Divergent dimension represents a radical change to the application process – pushing the envelope of innovation in the field of college admissions.

Altogether, as of today, 16 types of applying to college have emerged within these four dimensions. And who knows what the future will bring as more types are developed through the creative minds of admission professionals.

TRADITIONAL DIMENSION

The basic, fundamental way of applying to college historically was to complete a required admission application form. This paper form is typically filled out using a pen and submitted through the mail (sometimes with transcripts and test scores). This form can be from one page to several pages, depending on the number of questions being asked and data being collected by the particular college or university. Historically, at some schools, these paper forms had been reviewed by high school counselors before they were submitted, especially since counselors had a section to complete as a school official. This was a way of “validating” a student’s application.

Application Flashback

To give you a sense of how far we have come even with the admissions application, allow me to share a flashback moment. In 2014, the Chronicle of Higher Education published an article which showcased the evolution of Elon College’s 1913 paper application. That one-page application featured questions such as “Is your health good?” and “what county newspaper do you read?” The author cited the “lack of standardization” that existed in college applications and the college admissions process back then. Elon’s 1922 application requested information about a student’s “room reservation” in the college dormitory. Meanwhile, Elon’s 1950’s application actually indicated that the \$35 deposit was non-refundable “except on doctors certificate of inability to enter.” And by 1977, the Elon admissions application began to look standardized like how most online forms look today. The point is.....Admissions questions on applications have come a long way!

That was the traditional dimension. Pretty simple. Pretty straight forward. Not much innovation in the beginning.

Let's move onto the interpersonal dimension.

INTERPERSONAL DIMENSION

Within the interpersonal domain, there are many demonstrations of how the college admissions process is more than a data exchange and how it has evolved. For example, on-site admissions, auditions, and alumni interviews are ways in which students become more than a piece of paper and more than demographic data.

On-Site Admissions

On-site admissions, first used to increase underrepresented minority enrollments by Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan and then popularized in the early 1990's by Western Michigan University, is the process of reviewing a student's college admission materials in-person, conducting the appropriate admissions review/analysis, and rendering a decision "on-the-spot" for the student within a matter of minutes. On-site admissions enables a student to have insight into the mysterious admissions process and an opportunity to present himself/herself. Sometimes students portray on-site admissions as a pseudo-interview. While it is not technically an interview, it contains some of the elements of an admissions interview. On-site admissions ensures that a student receives an instant admission decision. There is some debate about whether on-site admissions should be used for students being denied. On-site admissions is for everyone. For students not admissible, it becomes a counseling opportunity to educate that student about alternative paths to the same destination, which is often a referral to a community or junior college as a starting point.

Alumni Interviews

Alumni interviews have long been used by private and public colleges as a way to screen applicants, especially applicants who may live quite a distance from the college or university. For many schools, alumni interviews are optional. Some schools, like the University of Richmond, offer non-evaluative interviews. Typically alumni interviews are conducted across the United States in various cities where alumni ambassadors live. Trained alumni ambassadors are graduates of those colleges who volunteer to conduct the interviews and share the results and feedback with the admissions office. These alumni interviews are frequently held in a public setting, such as a library or coffee shop. From the student's perspective, these alumni interviews can be very informative and valuable for learning more about the school, especially through the lens of a former student and graduate. Alumni interviews usually take place after a student has applied for admission. Since 100 percent of applicants cannot be interviewed by alumni, students not completing an alumni interview will not be disadvantaged in the admission decision process.

Auditions

Auditions frequently are the primary admissions evaluation process utilized by performing arts programs and colleges to determine the quality of students' talents and skill set. Auditions are typically held on campus or off-site in person and are usually in addition to the formal application process made with the admissions office. Such auditions are conducted by the faculty in the specific discipline. Audition schedules are published well in advance so students can plan accordingly. Universities that recruit nationally may conduct auditions in several regional locations throughout the United States. Not every applicant may be selected or invited to audition since audition policies vary from school to school. Some colleges use auditions to award scholarships in the fine and performing arts. Audition requirements are

often published online so a student can appropriately prepare for the audition. Such requirements will describe how to prepare and what to bring.

An emerging approach is the use of the internet for digital auditions, which I will address when we get to the digital dimension.

Learner Centered

On the horizon would be an admissions review called “learner-centered,” in which the student makes his/her own admission decision (in consultation with an admissions representative, of course!). Such a process would enable an applicant to self-reflect and engage in the process at the highest level possible. While no known schools are currently doing this, this does reflect a potential upcoming trend, especially as this would align with schools whose missions indicate they are learner centered. Some individuals would argue that a high school senior does not have the skill set to self evaluate his/her potential for success in college. This type of admissions review may not be favored by the faculty because the screening for success in college has been transferred from the college to the student. This approach is similar to “directed self placement,” which is frequently used within academic departments for placement in specific college courses. It will be interesting to see if this approach ever comes to fruition and with what guidelines.

All interpersonal dimensions are still incorporated into today’s admission process, even though technology has begun to trump the protocol. The interpersonal components ensure a “human presence” in a decision that still primarily relies on quantitative data.

DIGITAL DIMENSION

As the use of technology in higher education has expanded, its application in college admissions has also grown. Today’s tech-savvy applicants expect this type of technology integration into the process. In a digital context, these have included faxing/scanning applications, applying online, digital portfolios, self-reported information, applying through mobile platforms, and the new video application.

Era of Pre-Filled In Application Forms

Between the advent of the paper application and before the online admissions application was born, colleges and universities often sent pre-filled in applications as a way to save students time in completing the application. For example, all personal and demographic information known about a student (i.e. address, name of high school, gender) – all information pulled from test score reports and inquiry forms – were pre-printed on a student’s application, which was then mailed to the student to complete the remaining sections. This was primarily done as a recruitment tactic by colleges, but it also provided a “convenience factor” for the student, especially for the student applying to 5 or more colleges or universities.

Faxed Applications and PDFs

Back in the day, as a way to expedite an application, many school counseling offices would send applications using a fax machine. Now, with enhanced technologies, that practice has made the transition to sometimes sending PDF applications via e-mail. While most colleges have discontinued printing paper applications, they often still make a PDF version available, especially for those students who do not have access to the internet. A PDF application can be printed and completed by hand and submitted.

Online Applications

In the early 2000's, the first application to college made its online debut as college websites evolved, became more sophisticated, and were used as a college recruitment tool. In this format, students enter information using a web form and electronically transmit all of the contents directly to the college/university. The online application was controversial for some because in many cases, it unintentionally excluded the high school counselor's involvement. Online applications have also evolved in look, feel, and functionality. Today, students expect a mobile-friendly version of these applications, which mean that they feature responsive design, a feature that changes the look and feel of the application based on whether a student is using a desktop computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone. One feature that arose with the use of online applications was the ability for students to check the status of their application electronically, typically through a college's student information system.

Self-Reported Academic Record (SRAR)

A phenomenon that was tested in the early 2000s was the concept of a student self-reporting his/her test scores and grades as part of the admission process. Schools like Rutgers refers to it as a "Self-Reported Academic Record." Offers of admission made using self-reported data are usually "conditional." Submission of inaccurate or false information typically leads to the revocation of admission as the self reporting process is built on the honor system, often referred to on college websites as "academic integrity." Self reported data is confirmed typically using the final official high school transcript. Self reported academic records are not popular, but are growing, especially because it reduces some of the data entry in the admissions offices since the student is inputting his/her own grades. Some schools, like Stony Brook University, tout the environmentally-friendly factor of self-reported academic records, especially since it requires only one (instead of two) transcript to be sent, the official one. However, in today's world of electronic transcripts, that is fast becoming a non-issue.

Common Applications

In the United States, there are at least 3 types of common applications:

- Common Application
- Universal College Application
- Common Black College Application

In 1975, the Common Application was born. According to the Common According to Forbes staff writer Chase Peterson-Withorn (2014), "The launch of the Common Application in 1975...was one of the most expansive attempts schools made toward revolutionizing the college admissions process." In 2013-2014, Common Application (2014) officially retired its paper application, signaling a new era in college admissions.

Since then, the Universal College Application has been established and welcomes applications for more than 40 colleges and universities. The UCA also reduces the stress of the admissions process by simply and intuitively consolidating complex application requirements into one place.

Common Black College Application

Another organization, EDU Inc. online, offers a common application for students applying to 37 different historically black colleges and universities in the United States. Students can select up to 4 colleges/universities to apply to using this system. This system ensures that African American students have access to colleges and universities that meet their needs.

For students using systems like the Common Application, a few clicks can transmit the same data to multiple colleges and universities. Some have criticized the convenience factor of sending one application to multiple schools as though the process has been too easy. Proponents of access would state that this process increases access to college by making it more efficient. Today, more than 85% of college applications are now completed online using websites, according to 2012 State of College Admissions Report published by the National Association for College Admission Counseling. That percentage has increased from 57% in 2004 to 85% in 2011.

A recent report by SlideRoom, based on their Google Analytics, indicated “about 5% of applicants are completing all — or a significant portion — of the application process on their mobile device.”

Digital Portfolios

Art and architecture schools have also entered into the digital world by offering applicants the opportunity to present a “digital portfolio” as part of the application process. In this venue, students upload samples of their works to a website for access by faculty making admission decisions. Schools like Illinois State University’s College of Fine Arts expects students to use DropBox to upload digital submissions. Other schools may use SlideRoom, another tool for uploading digital submissions. In most cases, a student has to create an account to submit digital items for admission consideration.

Digital Auditions

An emerging approach is the use of the internet for digital auditions. Using a tool like DecisionDesk, student can upload their vocal or instrumental performances for admission consideration.

“DecisionDesk™ is a software-as-a-service company that streamlines media intensive application processes by enabling colleges to accept high volumes of video auditions and video resumes online instead of through the mail”. Schools like Western Michigan University’s School of Music uses this technology tool for students who live beyond a 300-mile radius.

Virtual Interviews

An emerging trend is the use of video technology to conduct virtual face-to-face interviews. Interviews are not required at very many colleges, but it provides an opportunity to put a face to an application. For example, Bard College in New York offers applicants an option to interview using Skype. Virtual interviews can be very beneficial for students applying to an international college or university. Skype appears to be the primary tool used to conduct these virtual interviews.

Video Applications

The latest digital alternative in the college application process is the video application. In 2014, Goucher College in Maryland became the first college to announce it was offering a video application. This two minute video must answer the question, “How do you see yourself at Goucher?” Three criteria are used to evaluate each video: content/thoughtfulness, structure/organization, and clarity/effectiveness. In addition to the video submission, a digital application is still required, along with submission of two writing samples. Goucher College’s president referred to this “video app” as an experiment, one designed to address “undermatching” and relies on the ubiquity of cell phones.

Goucher’s video app was designed to “repair the broken admissions process.” In its first year, only 64 video applications were submitted to Goucher by its deadline. Goucher’s rationale for going transcript free was to attract diverse prospective students who are more than numbers and data on their academic records.

At my home institution of Western Michigan University, we experimented with a video application for our new \$50,000 Foundation Scholarships, an award for high-achieving, high-need students. We decided to forgo the typical in person scholarship competition for a video.

It will be interesting to see if more colleges begin offering a video application.

Admissions via Mobile

With the advent of smartphones, the college admissions application process has the opportunity to “go mobile.” Most colleges these days have developed an “app” (application) on smartphones for students to access information about the admissions process. In 2011, John Marshall Law School in Atlanta was touted as one of the first colleges to offer a mobile-friendly admissions application. As colleges and universities have developed responsive-design websites, application websites are growing in their “mobile-friendliness.” In a 2013 online article, Sabo discusses trends in mobile admissions, concluding that, “as use of handheld devices for communications continue to rise, colleges can capitalize on this trend by developing more integrated apps that allow students to complete the time-consuming admissions and financial aid process exclusively from their smartphones or other handheld devices.” This is a trend worth watching.

Admissions “On Demand”: A Future Trend?

In the digital realm, the possibilities are endless. However, one concept that is just entering the field is “admissions on demand” in which a student can file an application online and then enter a live chatroom for an instant decision. This essentially reflects a digital version of the in-person, on-site admissions process. Northern Illinois University has offered such a service and it is referred to as “Virtual Decision Day.” According to their website, “Virtual Decision Day – like an on-campus, on-the-spot decision day – allows students to experience a virtual check-in, group presentations and private consultations, and to confirm their enrollment and request additional information”. As students’ expectations for an “instant decision” grows, “admissions on demand” may become the norm.

DIVERGENT DIMENSION

The newest dimension, which emerged in 2014, is the divergent dimension. This dimension reflects advanced, radical thinking in the college application process. Currently, there is one such type of divergent component: the dimensional application, created by Bennington College.

“Dimensional Application”

In Fall 2014, Bennington College in Vermont announced that it wanted its applicants for admission to “individually curate” how the college would evaluate them for admission, referring to it as the new “Dimensional Application.” This was a radical departure from the traditional admission application process. Bennington’s official news release indicated this dimensional application does not replace the Common Application. According to Bennington, the dimensional application is designed for students to “create a compelling portrait of their academic achievement, and to demonstrate, in their own way, their potential to enrich, and be enriched by, the Bennington community”. Bennington believes this style of application supports a student’s “intellectual and creative capacities that lie on a continuum”. The dimensional application is designed for students “who want to do more than respond to a set of given prompts”. Applicants using this application format will be evaluated on “the quality of the materials submitted; the caliber of thinking behind them; evidence of a student’s readiness to advance a range of work; and markers of a student’s capacity to contribute to the Bennington community in multiple dimensions”.

In January, U.S. News & World Report referred to the dimensional application and the video application as “3 Holistic College Admissions Trends to Watch.” The question is – are these the latest fad or are they here to stay?

As you can see, the college application process has changed exponentially over the decades as technology as provided new tools and efficiencies. I hope this taxonomy of these dimensions has shown you this evolution. Who knows with 5th dimension will emerge in the years ahead?

Of course, the college admissions and application process is not without its critics. In October 2014, columnist Adam Grant wrote a piece for The New York Times entitled, “throw out the college application system.” I encourage you to read it. He concludes his piece with “Colleges might be less likely to reject the next Walt Disney.”

As we look back in history, we know that criteria for admission into college has morphed and evolved. Admission began with students interviewing with college presidents, then interviewing with professors and then admissions offices were established to manage this work. We know then we moved from a more subjective model toward a more objective model with the introduction of standardized tests and thus the College Board SAT was born, followed by the ACT. This introduced meritocracy into the system. Then after decades of that, we made the transition to holistic review, where we look beyond just a GPA and a test score and seek to learn more about the “whole” applicant. A very big movement in the United States right now is a push for test optional or test flexible. These approaches otherwise de-emphasize the use of standardized tests by making admissions decisions about substantial numbers of applicants who recently graduated from U.S. high schools without using the SAT or ACT.

Let me now talk about the test optional movement as one of the newest innovations in college admissions.

Test Optional Movement

According to the National Center for Fair and Open Testing, more than 800 colleges and universities in the U.S. do not use standardized tests to admit their students. And this number is growing every year.

The National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest) advances quality education and equal opportunity by promoting fair, open, valid and educationally beneficial evaluations of students, teachers and schools.

The latest term is “test flexible,” which means that students can choose any national or international test result. For example, the University of Rochester frequently sees students submitting SAT Subject Exam scores, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate Exam Scores.

The premise behind test optional and test flexible is the realization that other factors can equally or better predict success in college, which leads us to the age-old question: what does it take to be successful in college? After all, college admissions offices are the gatekeepers to the pursuit of higher education. Test scores emerged from a desire to make admissions decisions on merit rather than on more personal factors. Then we saw the growth of holistic admission review.

Holistic admission review is a process that looks at a variety of information about an applicant in order to more comprehensively be able to predict a student’s potential success in college.

However, some have criticized testing optional colleges because some schools still require a test score for consideration for academic and merit scholarships and admission into an honors college or program. In this case, we have to consider the ethical lens when test scores submitted by students interested in being considered for a scholarship or honors of course will likely be higher and thus create a higher test average for that school. And of course, this plays into rankings like the U.S. News and World Report rankings, which continue to be a controversial and highly debated set of metrics used to judge colleges.

In June 2014, Belasco, Rosinger and Hearn published a research study entitled, “The Test-Optional Movement at America’s Selective Liberal Arts Colleges: A Boon for Equity or Something Else?”

“Our findings suggest that test-optional admissions policies, as a whole, have done little to meet their manifest goals of expanding educational opportunity for low-income and minority students. However, we find evidence that test-optional policies fulfill a latent function of increasing the perceived selectivity and status of these institutions. In doing so, these policies may serve to reproduce and maintain the current social structure — and its inequalities — within U.S. higher education.”

This concept of test optional and text flexible will be an interesting phenomenon to watch to see how much more it grows. And, of course, a related topic to this one is what would happen to the entire testing industry if every college and university in the United States abandoned standardized tests for other measures of predicting success in college?

Just last month, the Voice of American website reported that Taiwan is looking to retool its university entrance exams. Taiwan has a goal to improve the country’s prospects for innovation. They are seeking a more diversified exam system to look for people interested in invention or starting a business. This aligns with many colleges and universities in the U.S. adding majors and minors in entrepreneurship.

So, the conversation about test scores, test optional, and test flexible will continue.....

Early Middle College

Another revolution in the United States that is changing how we think about education is the explosion of early middle colleges. Early middle colleges mean that a student stays an extra year in high school but starts taking college courses in the 10th grade so that by the end of the 13th year, he or she earns the high school diploma and the associate degree (the 2 year degree in the United States) at the same time – and the associate degree is awarded to the student at no cost.

This early middle college movement is being driven by a desire for the United States to reach a goal of 60% of adults by the year 2025 having a postsecondary credential.

Let me provide a short history on this movement.

The early middle college movement, interestingly enough, is now 41 years old. In 1974, an innovative educational dream became a reality. Middle College High School, a public secondary school committed to meeting the academic, vocational and affective needs of under-served youth, opened its doors on the campus of LaGuardia Community College in New York City. That was the start of this movement.

Twenty years later, in 1993, with financial support from the Pew Charitable Trusts and the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, an informal network of Middle Colleges came together as the Middle College National Consortium (MCNC).

The next boost came in 2002, when the Consortium launched its Early College Initiative. Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Ford Foundation, the Early College project redesigns existing Middle Colleges and helps open new schools committed to offering students an accelerated course of study enabling them to earn an Associates Degree or two years of transferable college credits, at no cost to students.

In Michigan, we joined this movement in 1991. Mott Middle College high school opened in 1991 on the campus of a community college with a grant funded by a private foundation in town.

In the state of Michigan, we now have more than 80 early middle college entities serving more than 300 high schools.

So....this new mode of delivery and earning of credentials of the students is causing a paradigm shift in the college admissions world. It is challenging our previously held definitions of how education is delivered and evaluated. For example, is a student who comes to college with an associate degree and 60 college credits considered to be an incoming freshman or a transfer student, by definition? From the student's perspective, he/she looks more like a transfer student. In Michigan, we continue to have a state-wide definition that guides us to code that student as a freshman because he or she is starting a four-year degree program immediately following the earning of the high school diploma. Next from the college admissions perspective – how does one calculate a grade point average? How do you handle the student having 2 GPAs? Should the student qualify for a freshman scholarship or a transfer scholarship? Or should we be creating a new category of scholarships for this new hybrid student?

According to Jobs for the Future, early college designs enable more students, particularly low-income and minority students, to experience rigorous high school and college coursework that leads to improved outcomes. Early college students are outperforming their peers nationwide:

- 90% graduate high school vs. 78% of students nationally
- 94% earn free college credit while in high school
- 30% earn an Associate's degree or other postsecondary credential while in high school

It is often referred to as “preparation with acceleration.”

Of course, there is still work to be done on the college side to study the success rates of the early middle college graduates. Are they doing better, worse, or the same as the traditional high school student?

You can see these efforts were made possible by private foundations who have an interest in and a passion for redefining education and looking at educational outcomes.

We will now transition from the admissions world to innovations that are taking place in the world of the registrar. The two topics I will discuss are automated degree planning tools and student lifecycle management.

Automated Degree Planning Tools

One innovation that is transforming how we do business with students are automated degree planning tools. This tool offers comprehensive academic advising, transfer articulation, and degree audit designed for students to graduate on time. It takes an old-fashioned paper checklist process and transforms it into an interactive web-based digital process, one that can be used 24/7, which is very appealing to today's student. Such technology has been around for a decade or so, but it has evolved quite a bit with more web accessibility.

The five 5 primary features or functionality of these systems are:

Degree tracking tools

First, this technology keeps track of all of a student's credits earned, inclusive of transfer credits. The degree tracking system is connected to the student information system, where the transcript and academic record are housed. This enables a student to see what credit is counting for what requirement for their major, minor, etc.

Student plans

Second, degree plans are set up that show a student's 4-year plan for degree completion. Today's students want to see this roadmap as their checklist for graduation. After all, most are graduating from high school with these requirements being spelled out.

"What if"/Look Ahead analyses

The newest technological innovation with degree planning and degree auditing is this concept of "what if" scenarios. Students who are considering changing their major can run scenarios about "what if I change my major to civil engineering, how would my current credits apply to that degree?" What if I added a minor in French? You can see how this tool can help a student make effective decisions.

Advising notes

Another comprehensive feature of an automated degree planning tool is a central place to take and save notes about interactions between students and academic advisors. This is helpful for tracking conversations and advice shared. Some notes are visible to students, some notes are not.

Web transactions

The final major benefit for this technological tool is that transactions can be completed over the web. For example, you can process course substitutions, waivers, and petitions within the system. This is more efficient and sustainable.

From an institutional planning perspective, it provides insight about what courses are needed in future years, based on what students have left to take to fulfill their degree plans and graduation requirements.

Some technology is already incorporating what I call the amazon.com "book referral" system. You took this class, you might like this class – in the same way that amazon says, you ordered/read this book, you will probably like this book by this author. At a time when some colleges/universities offer thousands of courses and students can be overwhelmed, those suggestions could prove to be helpful.

Automated degree planning and audit tools are innovating how we do business. One can only imagine where this tool will go in the coming years.

Student Lifecycle Management

The next topic I would like to discuss is where recruitment and retention once again meet. For the past 2 decades, colleges and universities have used CRMs or customer relationship management systems. These tools are designed to track all intersections with prospective students and to employ strategic efforts to recruit and/or retain those students. Just emerging on the horizon is this concept of "student lifecycle management."

For the last decade, CRM was the phrase on campuses. Then SRM, or Student Relationship Management, made a quick appearance only to be reframed as Student Lifecycle Management. I believe this phrase will stick. It's really a rebirth of the paper version of the cradle-to-grave model of working with students. But technology gives it a more appealing term with SLM or SLCM.

This move to SLM does change our philosophy of how we do business, moving us from a transactional approach to a relational approach. We know that doing business with us requires a series of transactions, which are important. But often forgotten in that process, especially as we have begun to act more like a business than a traditional educational institution, is that person behind those transactions. Furthermore, SLM is a more comprehensive look at a student since its goal is to unite all of the disparate pieces of information and intersections with students across campus.

SLM establishes, builds, tracks, and manages this relationship throughout the student's experience with you – prior to arriving, while enrolled and post enrollment. It is designed to go from pre-recruitment through graduation, alumni status and donor status. And it offers a holistic view of a student's engagement with your school.

Allow me to share this quote from campustechnology.com:

“Student lifecycle management (SLM) software significantly reduces time spent on gathering information because it consolidates and automates information systems so that faculty, staff, and advisors can obtain student information right away -- where previously they needed to consult multiple information sources, including paper files in many cases. This frees up time, allowing staff to focus on education-related responsibilities.”

Consolidation, automation and service to students are the foundation for SLM.

It is designed to streamline and connect ALL data about each student. We recently conducted an inventory on our campus of 24,000 students, we discovered we had 40 different technology systems collecting data about our students. Imagine the power if that was all connected.

The goal is to use technology to create efficiencies, not replace human interactions. But let the human interactions focus on what the technology solution cannot provide. Those tough conversations, that advice on making choices, etc. Another goal is to maximize interactions with students.

Now, one piece of technology does not solve every problem. SLM is a philosophy AND a practice. And it's easier said than done. While it can create efficiency, sound business practices and processes are still necessary, which can be challenging for a decentralized campus. But, SLM can benefit the student and the college.

One innovation that is emerging is a new role on college campuses – Director of Student Lifecycle Management. This person has the big picture on how all of this information intersects in order to best serve students.

If you want to see how one college pioneer is doing this, check out Drexel University, which 2 years ago formed 10 campus committees to begin changing its mindset around SLM.

SLM is the next higher education revolution and we are just at the beginning stages of how this will transform our work and the lives of our college students.

Summary

My session has showcased nearly 20 innovations that are changing how we do our work in college admissions and registration. These innovations are coming from the creative minds of the students we are now educating. They hold the ideas that will inspire our work in the coming decades.

Credentials

Another emerging innovation are the rising number and variety of credentials for our profession. And this is not a shameless plug for my session later at this conference where I will showcase more than 30 such credentials that have been created to offer professional knowledge and training to guide our work in college admissions, financial aid, college access, and enrollment management. These skills are critical to the future leadership of our field and our universities. These credentials give us an educational foundation for credibility in the work we do.

Thank you for your time and attention.

As we leave this portion of the conference, I will leave you with this quotation about innovation:

Innovation is creativity with a job to do.

-John Emmerling

So let your creativity run wild, then put it to work in the form of innovation in the work you do. Enjoy the rest of the conference.