The Trusted Expert and Internationally Recognized Leader for all Postsecondary Student Transitions
New Faces in Our Spaces: Who are Our Students and How Do We Best Serve Them?

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Let’s begin at the beginning...
What are words you would use to describe today’s college students?
MILLENIAL CHARACTERISTICS

TECH-SAVVY

CONNECTED 24/7

OPTIMISTIC

COMFORTABLY SELF-RELIANT

GOAL ORIENTED

SELF-CONFIDENT

SUCCESS DRIVEN

LIFESTYLE CENTERED

Youth

ENTITLED

SPOILED

Selfish

Lucky

Tech Savvy

Young

Lazy

OK

Learning

New

Generation

Unemployment

Disrespectful

Kids

Future

Dreamers

Time

Generation

Children

Learning

STEM
• Optimistic
• Millennials
• High achieving
• Civic-minded
• Moral
• Tech-savvy
• Group-oriented

• Followers
• Dependent
• Multicultural
• Collectivist
• Non-political
• Conformist
• Entitled
• Over-programmed
2021 Beloit College Mindset

• “They are the first generation for whom a “phone” has been primarily a video game, direction finder, electronic telegraph, and research library.”
• “Electronic signatures have always been as legally binding as the pen-on-paper kind.”
• “There have always been emojis to cheer us up.”
• “By the time they entered school, laptops were outselling desktops.”
• “Women have always scaled both sides of Everest and rowed across the Atlantic.”
“Millenials are lazy and self-absorbed, often found taking selfies, telling the world every detail of what they’re doing and feelings, hyper-aware of [social media] ‘likes’, and piling up hashtags in tweets. In short, they’re obsessed. With themselves.

At least that’s how the stereotypes go; these behaviors have been detailed, chronicled, and parsed for accuracy across many marketing plans. But we need to look beyond popular convention, and for this group that is no easy task. While brands and advertisers are racing to marker this particular generation, we have yet to truly look at the facts.”
Why should I care?
“We need to meet students where they are”
“We need to meet students where they are.”

“Educators need to identify how their programs, policies, and pedagogies capitalize on the multiple perspectives that...college students bring with them—perspectives that contribute to the total campus environment.”

(Keup, 2008)
Nevitt Sanford

Support

Challenge

READINESS
“Readiness [is] the notion that certain kinds of responses can be made only after certain states or conditions have been built up in the person. What the state of readiness means, most essentially, is that the individual is now open to new kinds of stimuli and prepared to deal with them in an adaptive manner.” (Sanford, 1968)

“The idea of readiness underlies many of our common-sense practices in child training and education.”
How are the characteristics of today’s college students affecting how you interact with them?
Topics & Learning Outcomes

• Overview of today’s college students
  – Changing demographics and multiculturalism
  – Learning and critical thinking
  – Health, well-being & support
  – Co-curricular involvement

• Learning outcome:
  – Explore recent national data on undergrads and first-year students to inform your work and affect their transition, development, learning, and success
Section 1a:

**DEMOGRAPHICS & MULTICULTURALISM**
Changing Demographics: Gender

• Women will continue to outpace men in enrollment, numbers, and persistence
• Women are making gains in educational aspirations
• More women are pursuing traditionally “male” fields
Changing Demographics: Race & Ethnicity

- White, Non-Hispanic students represented 90% of new students in 1969
- Decrease in HS grads (less pronounced in NY)
- Projected changes in the demography of HS grads
  - 50% increase in Hispanic public HS graduates
  - 30% more Asian/Pacific Islander public HS grads
  - Small declines in American Indian/Alaska Native
  - 6% fewer Black, non-Hispanic public HS grads
  - 14% fewer White, non-Hispanic public HS grads

www.sc.edu/fye
Changing Demographics: Multiculturalism

- 7% of undergraduates are not US citizens (5% are permanent residents and 2% are foreign)
- 1 in 10 college students are from families in which at least 1 parent was born outside the US
- The proportion of K-12 students who speak a language other than English in the home has increased over 10 percentage-points in 25 years
- Projections show that multiracial individuals will comprise 21% of the population by 2050
Changing Demographics: 1st Gen

• **One-third** of currently enrolled undergraduates are first-generation
  – Challenged by definition

• Only **27% of first-gen students earn a degree in 4 years**; 42% for continuing-gen

• **Intersectionality** (first-gen “plus”)

• 82% of institutions offer **formal programming and support** for first-gen students
Other special populations of first-year students?
• Women and minorities in STEM
• Men
• Religious minorities
• LGBT students
• Students on the spectrum
• Learning disabilities/differences
• International students
• First-generation
• Low income/working
• Adult and returning
• Veterans/GIs
Women and minorities in STEM
Men
Religious minorities
LGBT students
Students on the spectrum
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Veterans/GIs

How do these students “see” themselves at the institution and in your work?
• Women and minorities in STEM
• Men
• Religious minorities
• LGBT students
• Students on the spectrum
• Learning disabilities/differences
• International students
• First-generation
• Low income/working
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• Veterans/GIs

How do these students “see” themselves at the institution and in your work?

How do we make it safe for “invisible” populations to self identify?
Section 1b:

DEMOGRAPHICS & MULTICULTURALISM
Not just who they are but also what they do.....
4 Elements of Diversity and Campus Culture

- Historical
- Structural
- Behavioral
- Psychological

(Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1998)
Diverse Interactions in HS

• 97% of freshmen report that they socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group.

• 86% report that they discussed politics within the last year.

• 81% of first-year students agree that same-sex couples should have the right to legal marital status*

• 59% report that “improving understanding of other countries/cultures” is “Very Important” or “Essential”

• 47% indicate that “helping to promote racial understanding” is “Very Important” or “Essential”

2016; 2015*
## Self-Rated Diversity Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to work cooperatively with diverse people</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance of others with diverse beliefs</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to see the world from someone else’s perspective</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to discuss and negotiate controversial issues</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to having my own views challenged</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Rose by Any Other Name...Choosing Your Words

- Diversity
- Intersectionality
- Identity Areas
- Bias
- Intercultural
- Majority/Minority
Section 2:

LEARNING & CRITICAL THINKING

“The human foot was not built for ballet. Only with discipline, training, and pain can it endure the strain and produce beauty. The human mind was not built for independent thinking. Only with discipline, training, and pain can it endure the strain and produce knowledge.”

(Daly, 2015)
Building Blocks of Critical Thinking

- Knowledge base
- Information literacy
- Academic/study skills
- Research skills
- Writing and oral communication skills
- Self-efficacy
- Desire, drive, and motivation
- Challenging learning tasks and opportunities
- Learning and thinking strategies and support
HS Learning & Critical Thinking

• Students arrive to HS with little instruction in subjects that aren’t tested.

• “Most tests being used consist primarily or solely of multiple choice items.” Thus students arriving in HS lack “experience and knowledge about how to do the kinds of writing that are expected at higher levels of education.”

• Grading rubrics are often concerned with content and not argument, which “works against development of the kinds of writing that would be expected in a true college-level course.”
“NCLB [Common Core] went into effect for the 2002-03 academic year, which means that America’s public schools have been operating under the pressures and constrictions imposed by that law for a decade. Since the testing requirements were imposed [in grade school], the students arriving in your institution have been subject to the full extent of the law’s requirements.”

(Bernstein, 2013)
First-Year to Sophomore: Developmental Potential

### Source of identity and meaning-making:

- **Ea**: External voice- unquestioning
- **Eb**: External voice-low tension
- **Ec**: External voice-high tension
- **E(I)**: External with awareness of internal
- **I(E)**: Internal with acknowledgement of external
- **I(a-c)**: External

Critical Thinking as a Goal

Goals for HIPs

- First-Year Seminars (96%)
  - Retention/Graduation Rates: 89%
  - Student Contact/Connection: 90%
  - Critical Thinking: 74%

- Service Learning (83%)
  - Retention/Graduation Rates: 31%
  - Student Contact/Connection: 42%
  - Critical Thinking: 3%*

- Learning Communities (57%)
  - Retention/Graduation Rates: 83%
  - Student Contact/Connection: 86%
  - Critical Thinking: 60%
Employment Metacompentencies

- Multicultural competence
- Civic engagement/development as citizens
- Ability to identify, seek, and utilize organizational resources and student programs
- Leadership skills
- Moral and ethical development
- Project management
- Information literacy
- Quantitative literacy
How is what you are doing contributing to critical thinking and learning?
Section 3:

HEALTH, WELL-BEING, & SUPPORT
Self-Rated Well-Being in HS

Physical Health

Emotional Health

Frequently Felt Overwhelmed

Frequently Felt Depressed
Challenges During the First-Year

% of students reporting that they “frequently” or “occasionally” felt:

Lonely or homesick 71
Isolated from campus life 57
Worried about their health 53
Had difficulty getting along with roommate(s) 46
Unsafe on campus 24

% of students reporting that they “frequently” felt:

Overwhelmed by all you had to do 47
Depressed 19
Physical Health & Wellness

• HS drinking among new students is decreasing
  – Drinking goes up 10-12% during the first year
  – 39% of male & 25% of female colleges students reported binge drinking the last time they socialized
  – Students with learning disabilities, ADHD, & psychological disorders report higher rates of drinking

• First-year students experience a decline in HPW spent on exercising or sports & leisure activities

• 42% of undergraduates reported getting enough sleep to feel rested ≤ 2 days per week
Emotional Health & Wellness

• The number of student self-injury cases is rising
• Significant increases in students who enter college already on psychotropic medication
• Directors of campus counseling centers report:
  – 52% of clients have “severe psychological problems”
  – 8% have impairments such that they cannot remain in school or do so with extensive psychological or psychiatric help
• Few first-year students reported at least “occasionally” using student psychological services (18%) or the disability resource center (12%)
Support Networks in the First Year

Interacted “daily” with:

- Close friends at this institution: 75%
- Parents/Guardians: 36%
- Close friends not at this institution: 33%
- Siblings/extended family: 24%
- Faculty & staff: 9%

*2015
Support Networks in the First Year

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<tr>
<td>Close friends not at this institution</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings/extended family</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty &amp; staff</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
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*2015*
Support Networks in the First Year

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Section 4:

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT
Would you rather...?
Socialize with friends  Online social networks
Socialize with friends

Online social networks
Partying

Volunteering
Partyng

Volunteering
Studying  Working for pay
Studying

Working for pay
Student clubs/groups  

Watching TV
Student clubs/groups

Watching TV
Partying

Household/childcare duties
Partying

Household/childcare duties
# HS Time Management...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socializing with friends</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise or sports</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying/Homework</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working for pay</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online social networks</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student clubs/groups</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partying</td>
<td>11.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household/childcare duties</td>
<td>10.7</td>
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• “Many Undergraduates Work Long Hours Balancing Jobs with Studies” THE CHRONICLE
  – 23% of FT students work 20 or more hours/week
  – 62% of PT students work 20 or more hours/week
• The greater the number of hours worked, the more likely students are engaged in off-campus employment
• 33% of first-year students report that their job responsibilities “interfere with their schoolwork” at least occasionally
## Economy & College Choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason/Factor</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>Diff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important reason for going to college:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be able to get a better job</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important factor for choosing your college:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The cost of attending this college</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was offered financial assistance*</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates get good jobs</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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*Continuing reliance upon loans: 47% of incoming students expected to use aid which must be repaid (loans, etc.) to cover their first year’s educational expenses.

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## Expectations for College

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<td>Participate in volunteer/community service</td>
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<td>Participate in study abroad</td>
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<tr>
<td>Play club, intramural, or rec sports</td>
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Section 4:

CONCLUSIONS & TAKEAWAYS
“The construct of *thriving* as an expanded vision of student success provides a framework for conceptualizing new ways of helping students reap the full benefits of higher education. The very word thriving implies that success involves more than surviving a four-year academic obstacle course. Students who thrive are vitally engaged in the college endeavor—intellectually, socially, and emotionally. They experience what Tagg (2003) calls *deep learning*; they are investing effort within the classroom and managing their lives well beyond it.” (Shreiner, Louis, & Nelson, 2012)
Questions & Comments

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Data Sources

CIRP  ACHA-
NCHA  NSSE
WNSLAE  Almanac  Census
NCES  CCSSE  NSPL
YFCY  U.S.
DOE  ACT
WICHE  IPEDS