The Campus Audit:

Understanding Your Campus from a Student Success Perspective
Essential Questions

- What should we look for on campus?
  - Areas to examine
- What is success & how is it measured?
  - Definitions, expectations
- What data are important to collect?
  - The importance of being selective
- Using data to build institutional culture
  - Conversations about learning
- Tools to promote organizational change
  - Decision support systems

What Should We Look For?

- Organizational Context: The 5 'Ps'
  - Does policy, practice, process, place or people improve or enhance learning?
- Culture of Evidence
  - How do we know? Evidence of impact.
  - Improving data-driven decision making
- Barriers to Change
  - Institutional culture: values and behaviors
  - Openness to change
### P1-Policies: Dimensions of Excellence, J. Gardner

- Approaches the first year in ways that are intentional and based on a philosophy of the first year that informs relevant institutional practices.
- Creates organizational structures that provide a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated approach to the first year.
- Begins a process by which students gain an understanding of what it means to be an educated person according to institutional mission and values.
- Facilitates appropriate recruitment, admissions and student transitions through practices that are intentional and aligned with institutional mission.
- Elevates the first college year to a high priority with faculty.
- Serves all first year students according to their varied needs.
- Builds commitment of first year students to the institution through a clear articulation of its identity and ethos.

### P1-Policies

- Academic managers are required to monitor and report retention rates on an annual basis.
- Institution has student probationary policies that promote success.
- Policy specifies collection of student feedback on learning experiences.
- Highly effective faculty are assigned to first-year courses.
- New faculty orientation program requires presentation on student characteristics and factors influencing success/retention.
- Institution has set goals or benchmarks for student retention.
- Policy specifies formal mid-term grade report.
- Class attendance policy (e.g. students are penalized for unexcused class absences).
- Faculty office hours policy (e.g. faculty must schedule, post and observe office hours).
P2,3-Practices & Processes

- Academic Advising
- Faculty Advising
- Career Counseling
- Personal Counseling
- Orientation
- Success Seminar
- Disabilities/Special Needs
- Minorities
- Gender program
- Mature Student
- Secondary School Liaison
- Campus Tours
- Course Placement
- New Faculty Orientation
- Faculty Development
- Peer Tutoring
- Peer Mentoring
- Math Services Centre
- Language Skills Services
- Learning Skills Services
- Housing Services
- Employment Centre
- Student for a Day
- Extracurricular Programs
- Residence Life
- Supplemental Instruction
- Early Alert Systems
- Health Services
- Service Learning of Learning
- Institutional research

A Passive Model of Services Delivery
P4-Place

- Place: Campus Environment
  - Physical appearance of campus
  - Currency of equipment
  - Informal student study space
  - ‘One-stop’ student services

- Organizational Structure:
  - Vice President for Learning and Student Services
  - Single person is responsible for coordinating retention efforts
  - A separate budget is allocated for student success efforts
  - A student success/retention committee is present on campus

P5-People

- Leadership: creating a values base
- Customer service skills
- Creating a welcoming environment
- Empathy for students
- Engaging instructional methods
- Assessment techniques
Culture of Evidence

• Institutional Research to Create Knowledge
  – Student profiles and student experience
  – Determinants of educational outcomes
  – Predictors of outcomes
  – Identification of ‘killer’ courses

• Using the Knowledge
  – Develop new interventions
  – Impact of local retention practices

Typical Barriers

• Financial
  – e.g. unable to secure project financing

• Cultural
  – e.g. institutional values do not support/encourage first year/student success efforts

• Structural
  – organizational structure inhibits widespread adoption of new initiatives, e.g. multi-campus
What is Success & How is it Measured?

- Definitions
  - Success?
  - Persistence/retention
- Value-Based Perspectives on Outcomes
  - The student
  - Faculty
  - Admin
- Operational Measures
  - Impact evaluations
  - Year to year improvement trends

Convergent Perspectives

- Government Perspective
  - Human capital to drive economic growth
- Taxpayer Perspective
  - Efficient use of tax dollars
- Employer Perspective
  - Need knowledgeable & skilled graduates
- Institutional Perspective: Mandate
  - assist individuals in finding and keeping employment;
  - meet the needs of employers and the changing work environment; and,
  - support the economic and social development of their local and diverse communities.
- Student Perspective
  - Achieving life goals and aspirations = good job
What Data are Important?

- Sources of Information
  - Research literature
  - Theoretical frameworks
- Types of Information
  - Information on student characteristics and experiences
  - Outcome profiles and learning pathways
  - College Exemplary Practice Inventory
  - Culture/Climate Survey

A Place to Start

Research on Student Engagement
Literature on Learning*

- **Verbal, Quantitative and Subject Matter Competence**
  - Individualized instruction produces greater gains

- **Cognitive Skills and Intellectual Growth**
  - Growth related to student involvement in college academic and social life

- **Identity, Self-Concept and Self-Esteem**
  - Development influenced by student involvement in academic and social systems of college

- **Relating to Others and the External World**
  - Evidence for the importance of interaction with faculty & peers

- **Attitudes and Values**
  - Evidence that change is due to college experiences. Interpersonal associations students have with faculty and peers


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**Swail’s Model**

The Student Experience

- Financial Aid
- Recruitment & Admissions
- Academic Services
- Student Services
- Curriculum & Instruction

- Financial Issues
- Educational Legacy
- Attitude Toward Learning
- Religious Background
- Maturity
- Social Coping Skills
- Communication Skills
- Attitude Toward Others
- Cultural Values
- Expectations
- Goal Commitment
- Family Influence
- Peer Influence
- Social Lifestyle

- Academic Rigor
- Quality of Learning
- Aptitude
- Content Knowledge
- Critical-Thinking Ability
- Technology Ability
- Study Skills
- Learning Skills
- Time Management
- Academic-Related Extracurricular Activities

- Recruitment & Admissions
- Student Services
- Curriculum & Instruction

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Virginia Beach, VA
September 30 – October 2, 2007
TINTO’S THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Background Characteristics
- Goal Commitment
- Institutional Commitment

Academic Sphere
- Initial Commitments
- Academic Integration
- Intellectual Development
- Peer Interaction
- Faculty Interaction

Integration
- Grades
- Academic Integration
- Social Integration

Contingent Commitments
- Goal Commitment 2
- Institutional Commitment 2

Institutional Commitment

Collecting Data on Students

Longitudinal, Repeated Measures

Entry to College
- H.S. Grades
- Basic Skills
- Entry Questionnaire

Mid Term
- Mid-Term Grades
- Mid-Term Questionnaire

End of Term
- Final Grades, Enrolment
Student-Based Data: Focus on The First-Year Experience

- Student Profiles
  - Entry diversity: magnitude, dimensions
- First-Year Experience
  - Academic and social integration
- Outcome Profiles
  - Etiology of first-year outcomes
- Learning Pathways
  - Identifying barriers to learning
  - Identifying intervention strategies

THE FACE OF STUDENT DIVERSITY
How Students are Viewed by Many on Campus
Dimensions of Diversity

- **Needs**
  - Financial, learning skills, child care, career guidance etc.

- **Abilities**
  - Literacy, numeracy, computer skills

- **Attitudes**
  - Confidence, preference for f-t work, value of PSE

- **Behaviours**
  - Study habits
  - Class attendance habits
  - Homework completion habits
  - P-T work commitments

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**Student Self-Reported Needs at College Entry**

![Bar chart showing student needs at college entry](image)
The Importance of Planning

- Everyone is guilty of poor planning at some time
- Students may fail to plan but they don't plan to fail.
RESEARCH ON FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

Characteristics, Experiences, Attitudes and Outcomes

Findings From Two Decades of Research
### First-Year of College Outcomes

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Performance</th>
<th>Registration Status</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Failed Persister</td>
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### Outcome Group Profiles at College Entry

#### Outcome Group Profiles
- Age
- % No Dependents
- H.S. Average
- H.S. Study
- H.S. Attendance
- H.S. Advanced
- Literacy Skill
- Numeracy Skill
- Skills Need
- Support Receptivity
- Confidence
- Prefer a Job
- Career Uncertainty
**Student Experience by Outcome Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Perceived Level of Difficulty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dealing with program workload</td>
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<td>Finding time to work and study</td>
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<td>Balancing demands of school and family</td>
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<td>Content of college courses</td>
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<td>Knowing how to improve my grades</td>
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Pan-Canadian Study of College Students Difficulties with College 2

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<th>Area</th>
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<td>Identifying a clear career path</td>
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<td>Knowing who to talk to about a problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowing how well I'm doing in my courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methods used by faculty to teach</td>
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Mid-Term Attitudes by Outcome Group
Count of Failures for Fall Term By Program Semester
and
Preliminary Audit Date Registration Status in Subsequent Term

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Program Semester</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Active\Not Registered</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>% Failed</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>% Failed</th>
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<td>732</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
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Building the Culture

- **Students**
  - Promoting Involvement/Engagement
- **Staff**
  - New Staff Orientation, Pro Development
- **Structure and Process**
  - Identifying barriers to learning
  - Specific student groups
  - Program level
- **Tools to Promote Organizational Change**
  - Decision support systems
Promote Student Involvement and Engagement

Staff Orientation & Professional Development

- Student Profiles
  - Needs, attitudes, values, behaviors

- Factors Influencing Student Engagement
  - Work hours
  - Instructional methods
**Appearances Can be Deceiving**

- Perceptions of Student Involvement
Influencing Student Engagement

- Instructional Method
  - “Sage on the stage vs guide on the side”
- Collaborative/Cooperative Learning
  - Questionnaire Item:
    “Most of my classes have encouraged student participation or involvement”
Identifying Barriers to Learning

Influence of Career Uncertainty

Career Uncertainty and Program Perception

Mid-Term Perception of Program by Entry Career Uncertainty

Program Perception Scale

- Low
- Moderate
- High
- V. High

FIT System 4.1 (n = 15,185)
Career Uncertainty and Academic Behavior

Building Institutional Culture and Evidence-Based Decision Making

Creating Conversations about Learning
Listening to Student Voices

- What one thing could your college have done better to make beginning your studies here easier?
- What one thing could you have done to make beginning your studies here easier?
- Looking back to when you began your studies here, what, if anything, do you wish you had known or better understood when you started your program?
- What advice would you give a first-time college student to help them be successful in their studies?
- What has been your most positive experience at college so far?
- What has been your most negative experience at college so far?

Decision Support Systems
The FastTrack System

- Measures Individual Student Characteristics
- Creates Individualized Learning Opportunities
- Targets Learning Support Services to Specific Learners
- Describes the Student First-Year Experience
- Identifies Barriers to Learning
- An Information System for Decision Making
- Creates an Outcomes-Focused Culture