The Suite Spot for Student Success: Collaborative Approaches for Improving Student Outcomes

Assessment, Technology, and Communications Conference
University at Albany

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Agenda

• About Amelia
• About NASPA
• Big Issues in Higher Education
• The Suite Spot in Three Areas
  • Co-Curricular Learning
  • Holistic Support for Students
  • Predictive Analytics
• 4 Questions for Transforming the Student Experience
• Audience Q & A
What is The Suite Spot?

Effective Communication + Ongoing Assessment + Innovative Technology = The Suite Spot
About Amelia

• Connector of people and ideas
• Optimist
  • First career day profession was a clown
• Former college track and field athlete
• Career-shaping experiences
  • Internal auditor
  • Upward Bound program instructor
  • Policy analyst

NASPA | Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
About NASPA

• NASPA is the leading association for the **advancement, health, and sustainability** of the student affairs profession.

• Our work provides high-quality professional development, advocacy, and research for **15,000 members** in all 50 states, 25 countries, and 8 U.S. territories.

• **Divisions and Groups**
  • Small Colleges and Universities Division
  • Community Colleges Division
  • Public Policy Division
  • Professional Standards Division
  • Commission on Equity & Inclusion
Big Issues in Higher Education

• Mental health
• Alcohol abuse prevention
• Drug abuse prevention
• Sexual assault and gender-based violence
• Suicide
• Crisis management
• Gun violence
Really Big Issues in Higher Education

- Closing the achievement gap
- Building a socially just campus community
- Increasing dialogues about race, religion, ethnicity, gender identity
- Increasing civic and democratic engagement
- Bringing personalized learning to scale
- Developing and leveraging technology
- Delivering high-impact practices
- Helping students develop cross-cutting skills in preparation for career and life
What I See: Current Focus Areas for Higher Education

1- The value of a college degree
2- More access for underserved students
3- Evidence that institutions are effective
The Suite Spot for Co-Curricular Learning
Audience Poll

Have you recently been involved in a conversation about the use of a **co-curricular transcript, badge, e-portfolio**, or other tool to help students capture their learning?
Capturing Student Learning

Four Focus Areas

• Process
• Technology and Data
• Assessment
• Audience
New Tool: Comprehensive Student Records

Why are institutions doing this?

1- To give students a tool for narrating the depth and breadth of their learning for:
   • themselves
   • graduate degree programs
   • potential employers

2- To develop a more comprehensive approach for assessing learning
Comprehensive Student Records

Partnership between NASPA and the American Association of Collegiate Registrar and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) with funding from Lumina Foundation

• **12 institutions** developed and piloted a comprehensive student record (CSR) model

• The CSR documents and distributes student learning outcomes and competencies from academic courses and co-curricular activities

• [Luminafoundation.org/csr2025](http://Luminafoundation.org/csr2025) | Twitter: #BeyondTranscripts
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Enrollment size</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brandman University</td>
<td>Irvine, CA</td>
<td>7795</td>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
<td>4-year comprehensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Oklahoma University</td>
<td>Edmond, OK</td>
<td>16,840</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>4-year comprehensive regional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dillard University</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>1185</td>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
<td>4-year undergraduate focus, HBCU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elon University</td>
<td>Elon, NC</td>
<td>6483</td>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
<td>4-year undergraduate focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>4-year doctoral research</td>
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<tr>
<td>LaGuardia Community College</td>
<td>Long Island City, NY</td>
<td>20,231</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>2-year community college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinsigamond Community College</td>
<td>Worcester, MA</td>
<td>8453</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>2-year community college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford University</td>
<td>Palo Alto, CA</td>
<td>16136</td>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
<td>4-year extensive AAU research I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Houston Downtown</td>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
<td>14439</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>4-year comprehensive regional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maryland University College</td>
<td>College Park, MD</td>
<td>54032</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>4-year extensive research I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of South Carolina</td>
<td>Columbia, SC</td>
<td>32972</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>4-year extensive research I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Wisconsin Extension and Wisconsin Colleges</td>
<td>Madison, WI</td>
<td>300 - 1000</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>4-year extensive research I; 2-year community colleges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### The Suite Spot for Co-Curricular Learning: 3 Considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • How do we measure learning that happens in co-curricular environments?  
  • Existing models (LEAP, DQP)  
  • In-house model  
  • Hybrid model | • How do we involve all students, especially those who have other obligations?  
  • Part-time students  
  • Low-income students  
  • Students who have off-campus employment | • How do we create records that will integrate with the student information system?  
  • Connect data across systems (OrgSync, Collegiate Link)  
  • Validation of experiences  
  • Permission to edit or modify the record |
The Suite Spot for Co-Curricular Learning: 3 Examples of Collaboration

### Assessment
- **University of South Carolina**
  - Developed a catalog of 300+ co-curricular engagements as a tool to assess learning
  - Partnered with the registrar to develop a co-curricular transcript

### Communication
- **University of Central Oklahoma**
  - Developed a Student Transformative Learning Record for all students; process starts during freshman year
  - 6 domain areas embedded in campus activities

### Technology
- **Stanford University**
  - Developed a tool called MyLocker, which houses students’ academic documents
  - Features electronic seal for certificates
The Suite Spot for Holistic Student Support
Audience Poll

Does your institution have an emergency aid program?
“Many individuals are ill-prepared for a financial disruption”

- Federal Reserve Board’s Survey of Household Economics and Decision Making – October 2014

- 47% of respondents said they either **could not cover an emergency expense costing $400**, or would cover it by selling something or borrowing money.

Landscape Analysis of Emergency Aid Programs

• Conducted with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
• Primary Goals:
  - Describe the current condition of emergency aid programs across institutional sectors
  - Highlight connections to student outcomes
  - Provide examples of exemplary practice
  - Surface emerging institutions
The definition of emergency aid is still evolving

For the purposes of this project, emergency aid included one-time grants, loans, and completion scholarships of less than $1,500 provided to students facing unexpected financial crisis, as well as food pantries, housing assistance, and transportation assistance.
Method

• Campus interviews (October–December 2015)
  • 20+ institutions
  • Multiple perspectives
    • financial aid, student affairs, development
• National survey (January–March 2016)
  • 695 institutions responded
  • 523 have an emergency aid program
Sector of Responding Institutions

- Public, 4-year or above: 35%
- Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above: 25%
- Private for-profit, 4-year or above: 2%
- Public, 2-year: 38%
Size of Responding Institutions

- Under 1,000: 11%
- 1,000 - 4,999: 19%
- 5,000 - 9,999: 13%
- 10,000 - 19,999: 40%
- 20,000 and above: 18%
Respondent Job Title

- Vice President for Student Affairs: 32%
- Dean of Students: 13%
- Financial Aid Director: 38%
- Vice President of Development: 1%
- Vice President of Enrollment Management: 1%
- Other: 15%
Over 70% of institutions from most sectors have an emergency aid program.

- **Public, 2-year**: 70% Yes, 27% No, 3% I don't know
- **Private for-profit, 4-year or above**: 38% Yes, 54% No, 8% I don't know
- **Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above**: 73% Yes, 27% No, 1% I don't know
- **Public, 4-year or above**: 82% Yes, 17% No, 1% I don't know
Both small- and large-sized institutions have emergency aid programs.

- **20,000 and above**: 91% Yes, 9% No, 0% I don't know
- **10,000 - 19,999**: 81% Yes, 16% No, 2% I don't know
- **5,000 - 9,999**: 79% Yes, 19% No, 2% I don't know
- **1,000 - 4,999**: 68% Yes, 31% No, 1% I don't know
- **Under 1,000**: 65% Yes, 32% No, 3% I don't know
Over 80% of colleges that have an emergency aid program have had it for 3 or more years.
Institutions are offering six primary types of emergency aid.

- Completion Scholarships: 33%
- Emergency Loans: 67%
- Restricted Small Grants: 47%
- Unrestricted Small Grants: 54%
- Vouchers: 47%
- Food Pantry: 45%
Food pantries are the second leading type of emergency aid provided for public 2-year and 4-year institutions.

Public, 4-year or above

- Completion Scholarships: 38%
- Emergency Loans: 75%
- Restricted Small Grants: 54%
- Unrestricted Small Grants: 51%
- Vouchers: 43%
- Food Pantry: 55%
Food pantries are the second leading type of emergency aid provided for public 2-year and 4-year institutions.

Public, 2-year

- Completion Scholarships: 28%
- Emergency Loans: 59%
- Restricted Small Grants: 50%
- Unrestricted Small Grants: 44%
- Vouchers: 59%
- Food Pantry: 55%
Food Insecurity and Emergency Aid: New Reports

College and University Food Bank Alliance Report - *Hunger on Campus: The Challenge of Food Insecurity for College Students*

NASPA Report – *Landscape Analysis of Emergency Aid Programs*
Word of mouth is the primary method for disseminating information about all types of emergency aid.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Institution Website</th>
<th>Email or Mass Communication</th>
<th>Direct, Targeted Communication</th>
<th>Word of Mouth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Pantry</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vouchers</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted Small Grants</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Small Grants</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Loans</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion Scholarships</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>24%/25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most institutions do **not** use data to proactively identify students who would benefit from emergency aid.

Does your institution use data to proactively identify students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Type</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public, 2-year</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public, 4-year or above</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Factors that Prevent Use of Data to Proactively Identify Students

- Concerns about students' privacy: 16%
- Not comfortable using data to target students: 19%
- Do not have capacity to analyze data: 30%
- Do not collect the data that is needed: 30%
- Too many students qualify: 42%
- Not clear what data is relevant: 40%
Lack of financial resources is the leading barrier to serving more students with emergency aid.
University foundation and individual donors are the leading sources of emergency aid funds.

- Over 50% reported it as the source for grants; 44% for completion scholarships; 41% for loans
- The next leading source was the operating budget.
- No more than 2% of institutions reported alumni giving as the source for any type of emergency aid.
Questions and Critiques

1. **Is the delivery of emergency aid outside of the mission of higher education?**
   “Institutions are not social service agencies.”

2. **What if students “game the system”?**
   “If a student needs emergency aid, perhaps that means he or she cannot afford to go to college.”

3. **Should emergency aid be considered a one-time resource for students?**
   “We should not expect students to build emergency aid into their yearly budget.”
The Suite Spot for Emergency Aid: 3 Considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How do we know that the provision of emergency aid positively influences degree completion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• One-time award vs. ongoing support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How do we effectively inform students about the availability of the aid without depleting resources?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify which students would benefit most from the aid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How do we automate some of the process to relieve the administrative burden?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify application procedures that can be administered online vs. in-person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Suite Spot for Emergency Aid: 3 Examples of Collaboration

**Assessment**
- LaGuardia Community College
  - Found that students who visit their Single Stop USA center have higher rates of persistence at the institution

**Communication**
- Dillard University
  - Presidential SAFE Fund operates with collaboration of several offices (student affairs, chaplain, financial aid)
  - Offices connect the goals of the fund to the campus retention plan

**Technology**
- St. John’s University
  - Combines data from the student information system and students’ swiping of their campus ID card to proactively identify those who might benefit from emergency resources
The Suite Spot for Predictive Analytics
Audience Poll

Does your institution have a student retention committee?
“I have a really good relationship with my campus IR director and I can call at any time. That is good because data is power.”

- Anonymous Vice President for Student Affairs
Data Collection and Analysis in Student Affairs: Emerging Themes

• Several types of approaches and tools are used but there is no clear leading option.
  • **Advising Examples:** GradesFirst; TutorTrac; Starfish
  • **Student Engagement Examples:** OrgSync/Campus Labs; Symplicity
  • **Dashboard Examples:** Tableau, Excel

• The appropriate amount of data collection, particularly the number of variables to examine, is not clear.

• More synergy is needed with regard to learning outcomes.
Predictive Analytics

The “process of discovering, analyzing, and interpreting meaningful patterns from large amounts of data.”

### Types of Student Success Data

#### Pre-enrollment
- High school grade point average
- Test scores
- Parents' experience with college
- Demographics

#### Academic
- Midterm grades
- First semester grades
- Class attendance
- Use of Learning Management System
- Login to student web portal
- Grades in select core courses
- Registration for next semester

#### Motivation and Self-efficacy
- Financial issues
- Comfort with academic ability
- Depression
- Homesickness
- Lack of friends or connections

#### Use of Support Services
- Advising
- Tutoring
- Disability support
- Financial aid
- Library
- Career services
- Counseling
- Health Center

#### Student Engagement
- Campus membership
- Leadership roles
- Athletic team affiliation
- Campus residency
- Recreation center
- Dining center
- Participation in campus programs
- Campus WiFi usage
NASPA Landscape Analysis of Predictive Analytics - Key Findings

• Senior-level administrators are leading an institutional culture of data-informed decision making.

• Data is collected and managed strategically for the purpose of improving enrollment management and increasing undergraduate retention.

• Although engagement data is being collected throughout student affairs divisions, it is often stored outside of the student information system.

• Ongoing communication and training is critical.
The Suite Spot for Predictive Analytics: 3 Considerations

**Assessment**
- How do we measure the influence of students out-of-classroom engagement on their retention and degree completion?
  - Know your institutional data
  - Strengthen partnerships with the IR office

**Communication**
- How do we share the findings of our predictive model to foster collaborative interventions across divisions?
  - Set campus-wide definitions for the terms “at-risk” and “low-income”
  - Share results widely

**Technology**
- How do we leverage the tools we currently use to gather the data we need?
  - Develop a more uniform data dictionary for data collection across student affairs functions
  - Connect your engagement data collections to your campus data warehouse
The Suite Spot for Predictive Analytics: 3 Examples of Collaboration

**Assessment**
- University of South Carolina
  - Tracks students’ participation in co-curricular activities
  - Connects co-curricular engagements to institutional learning outcomes and success factors

**Communication**
- Florida Atlantic University
  - Monitors students who request a transcript
- DePaul University
  - Monitors students who do not use their ID card at events or service offices

**Technology**
- Valdosta State University
  - Uses location tracking to follow students who are connected to the campus Wi-Fi
  - Notifies students when they are near a service office that could benefit them
Predictive Analytics: Primary Focus Areas

1- Data Privacy
2- Inherent Bias
3- Communication
4- Interventions
4 Questions for Transforming the UAlbany Student Experience
1- Which students are visiting your campus recreation center at off-peak hours?

Why might students visit the center as soon as it opens or right before it closes?
2- Have you noticed any changes in students’ method of payment?

Why would a student shift from paying by personal check or debit card to paying with a credit card?
3- Are students signing up for the full meal plan?

Why would a student live on campus but not purchase the full meal plan?
4- What percentage of your students have withdrawn from multiple courses?

Virginia Commonwealth University examined their data and found:

• On-time graduates had withdrawn from one course or less over the duration of their collegiate careers
• Students who graduated in five years had, on average, withdrawn from four courses
• Students who graduated in six years had withdrawn from roughly eight courses
• International and in-state students had a higher number of course withdrawals

Student Affairs Divisions Have The Suite Spot!

Effective Communication + Ongoing Assessment + Innovative Technology = The Suite Spot
Questions?
References


Thank You (and keep in touch)!

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Twitter: @ameliaparnell