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FUTURE LOOK
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2015: A NEW BEGINNING
CAREER EDUCATION WILL NEVER BE SUPPLANTED

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Welcome to the future.

This greeting isn't intended to be a kitschy introduction to the future edition of our magazine (not entirely, anyway). Rather, it's a legitimate sentiment for our sector as one of the most difficult years in our sector's history has come to a close, and we turn our sights to 2015.

For more than three years, many executives in our sector wondered if there would be a future for our schools, no matter the size, if the impacts of regulation were to take their toll. Fears about the shutdown of programs and, in some cases, schools, came to fruition even before the rule was finalized for public consumption.

But now the speculation about the Department of Education's gainful employment regulations can finally be put to bed, as the regulations were unveiled in their final form last fall. While there will be much debate and surrounding legal activity, the sector now knows the potential ramifications, and the positive outlook is this: After all the school closings, federal investigations and political posturing on Capitol Hill, there will be a future after all – and it looks to be bright.

As we have traditionally done in our January editions of Career College Central, we will take a look at the future of higher education. Based on current trends in higher education, Staff Writer Jenni Valentino offers predictions about what the future holds as we look at the "near future" in the realms of higher education recruitment, retention, instruction, technology and career education.

Many of these guesses might bring a smile to the faces of readers looking back on our thoughts in five or six years. But I encourage you to look for the essential truths in what we write. What is at the core of these predictions is the basis of our speculation and the true focus of future innovation and advancement.

But beyond our best guesswork, in this edition we also offer a new outlook for our schools as Contributing Writer Raul Valdes suggests career institutions build on their strengths, which also happen to be the characteristics that made the sector successful in the first place. Contributor Dr. Pete Savo analyzes charter schools, the movement that should inspire colleges to seek more accountability, take a more student-centered approach and enhance education delivery.

Plus, there are more looks ahead on the following pages because our future story isn't written yet. In many ways, our sector is now starting from a fresh sheet of paper on which to write its story. With this chance, 2015 will be the year our sector not just survives, but strengthens and grows for all the years to come.

Again, welcome to the future. You have made it this far. Now that we've overcome the most stringent challenges ever to face career colleges, it's time to build on our strong foundation.
LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Let me begin by wishing you all a happy new year’s and thanking you for reading Career College Central.

The year 2015 marks the start of an exciting era for Career College Central.

In the past year, Career College Central began working closely with the Imagine America Foundation; 2015 marks the formal start of a communications partnership to elevate the public’s understanding of the vital role of career colleges and their students nationwide.

The partnership represents an opportunity for both of our organizations to better communicate with our common audience of institutions and vendors. Furthermore, our organizations share a common vision that this partnership will inform and contribute resources that can help this audience produce the best possible results for those students who stand to benefit most from excellence in private sector and career education programs.

In discussing our work together, Robert L. Martin, President of the Imagine America Foundation, told me, "At a time when this sector is facing so many challenges, our partnership represents a bright opportunity to communicate important data and student success stories that represent the best in service from our institutions to career education students."

I feel that working with the Imagine America Foundation creates a perfect relationship to deepen Career College Central’s engagement with institutions, better support the vendors serving those institutions and create opportunities to highlight the amazing success stories of the students served by the sector’s schools.

This partnership is a win for Career College Central and the Imagine America Foundation, as well as a win for institutions, vendors, students and especially the sector as a whole.

Yet we can only do this with you, our readers. So reach out to us and get involved with the partnership. Contact either Career College Central or the Imagine America Foundation:

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571.267.3012  
BobM@Imagine-America.org

Sincerely,

Ryan Busch  
Publisher, Career College Central
CREDIT WHERE IT’S DUE?

Student learning should be the real measurable in the academic world, not credits

By Don Arnoldy, Contributing Writer

Just over one-third of college students transfer between schools one or more times during their academic career, and on average they lose 13 credits during their first transfer. This is according to the report, "Transferability of Postsecondary Credit Following Student Transfer or Coenrollment," released in August by the National Center for Education Statistics, based on a six-year study of students who began college in the 2004 school year.

The report warns the authors were not able to discern the reason why credits did not transfer – whether because the student chose not to transfer the prior work, intended to transfer units but was discouraged from doing so based on misinformation or other reasons, was unable to navigate the destination school’s transfer process, or because the receiving institution rejected the units. It also cites another report that more than 30 percent of those identified by institutions as first-time students during the base year of the study actually had untransferred units from a prior postsecondary enrollment.

A 2005 study, "The Road Less Traveled? Students Who Enroll in Multiple Institutions," also from the National Center for Education Statistics, put the percentage of students who attend more than one college at 59 percent.
One response to these findings is that this loss of credit represents a waste of time and money for the students (and for taxpayers who subsidized their education at public institutions) and that somebody should do something to ensure that receiving institutions are not unfairly and capriciously denying credit to incoming students in order to inflate their revenues.

Another response to them is that this is to be expected. Opponents argue college credits are not a commodity to be purchased at the lowest possible cost (in either dollars or intellectual effort), that a college degree should not represent an accumulation of a certain quantity of random credits, that a curriculum is a coherent course of study and preparation, and a degree is a certification that the student has successfully completed that process.

Both responses have a point, but both responses miss what I think is the most important point. We are counting the wrong things. Credits and grade points are more easily counted surrogates for student learning, which is what we should be measuring.

How much can you tell about a student’s learning or capabilities from seeing a B in a three-unit ENG101 course on that student’s transcript? Does it make a difference if those transcripts came from a community college or an Ivy League university? The opacity of the process makes the acceptance/rejection of such units seem arbitrary.

The report also did not address the acknowledgment of learning acquired outside of an academic environment. The typical student today is no longer the traditional student coming in to college straight out of high school. Students enroll in college with training undertaken during military service, skills learned during employment or knowledge gained through on-the-job experience. A system based on time spent in a seat struggles to accommodate such types of learning.

In 1938, Walter A. Jessup, President of the Carnegie Foundation at the time, wrote, "The system of units and credits, which, useful as it was a third of a century ago, is not good enough for American education today." In 1993, Ernest L. Boyer, then-President of the same foundation, stated, "… since the foundation I now head created this academic measurement a century ago, I feel authorized this morning to officially declare the Carnegie unit obsolete." Today, more than 20 years since, the credit hour remains the dominant medium of exchange in the intellectual economy of higher education.
If we can, instead, articulate meaningful and comprehensive student learning outcomes for our programs – what skills, knowledge and attitudes the students are expected to possess upon successful completion – and acceptable mechanisms by which the student can demonstrate the attainment of those outcomes, then we can stop talking about credit transfer and start actually talking about prior learning. We can also stop talking about the classes we offer in terms of the hours to be spent, and start talking about them in terms of the how they will help the students achieve those objectives.

It is very difficult for traditional colleges, which are bound by a complex web of articulation agreements and graduate school entry requirements, to break away from the current system.

Career colleges have a different mission. Our task is to prepare our students for membership in their chosen professional community, not to prepare our students for admission to advanced studies. (Some of our students will pursue those, but it is not our mission.) This difference should provide us with the freedom to take a leadership role in the implementation of mastery learning in our schools. Our degrees and certificates can and should signify what skills, knowledge and abilities our students possess, instead of how long they sat in our classrooms.

Throughout the last 20 years, Don Arnoldy has worked at several for-profit career colleges as an Instructor, Department Chair and Dean. He is currently an Instructor at Carrington College in Portland, Oregon. You can reach him at Don@Arnoldy.us
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2015: A NEW BEGINNING

The need for career education will never be supplanted

By Kevin Kuzma, Editor
own the hall from here is the bedroom where my son spent the morning sick with the flu during our first winter in this house, and I spent my first night here – four years ago – dehydrated from the heat of our July moving day.

My daughters used to share a room down the same hall, but they eventually reached an age where they needed their own space. The youngest kept the original room, decorated now with an assortment of stuffed cats and otherwise feline appropriations, and my oldest took over the basement, complete with a writing desk where she would draw cartoons and write stories in her private creative journal.

Strange to use the past tense to refer to our home while I’m still here, writing in the same place where I’ve always written – a space I call the den, although it’s only a small corner of what might pass for a living room. This, what you’re reading, is the last column I will write from this place.

My family and I have entered the cold, cruel world of the real estate market. We have spent the last few weeks receiving the harsh reports of our home as interpreted by potential buyers who were turned off by some of the house’s modest shortcomings.

In a few weeks we will be calling a new house "home," and we can gladly leave this place and a few fond memories behind. You see, when a house goes up on the market, it’s no longer the destination of comfort you have always found it to be.

Several rooms are now arranged in ways they aren’t ordinarily. The kitchen is cleaner than it has any right to be, for one where a single father with three children cooks and occasionally cleans up.

While the future ahead should feel exciting, I have a haunting feeling – a strange vibe. This is our house, and yet it already has become someone else’s possession – decorated and “staged” the way another family might find it more appealing to live in together.

The same lonely feeling can permeate our thoughts, especially when those thoughts concern the future. In the career college realm, the future has been uncertain for the better part of three years. We have occupied a present that, strangely, was altered by the anxiety of an unknown future.

Every January for the last few years, we have used the pages of this magazine at the beginning of the year to make our best estimations of what the future will hold. In years past, we have speculated about technology and the implications it will have on how and where we learn. We have foreseen an eventual death to textbooks and, one day deep in the future, maybe a repealing of instructors who might be replaced by other learning resources. But most recently, what has driven our uncertain feeling is the impact of the Department of Education’s gainful employment regulations and how they might change the face of the sector as we know it. The final rule was published this fall, and now it appears legal battles will decide its
ultimate fate. Industry analysts are all too willing to offer predictions on possible effects of the regulations in many other publications and blogs. You might even read a few, as I have, that have forecasted the end of career training.

What we haven't predicted, though, is career education being supplanted by some other method of learning or sector of higher education.

No matter what anxiety might magnify or make temporarily unclear, there are students out there who need you.

There will always be the need for institutions for students who want to learn specific career skills and not necessarily gain general knowledge on the chance that someday they might be able to apply it in their professional lives. So, in that sense, there will always be more practical learners who hear a calling to come to our schools.

What draws people to change their lives at our institutions in the first place? The answer to that question, for me personally, is the single most motivating aspect to being a part of the career education sector. Can we agree that there will always be working adults who have labored long enough in demeaning jobs – or stress-filled, unfulfilling corporate roles – who want to make a fresh start? Who want to follow careers that really matter? There will always be the student right out of high school who knows his or her real strengths are not in the classroom necessarily, but in the workroom – be it an auto repair shop, an operating room, a veterinarian's office, a kitchen or behind a computer desk. These individuals will know their strengths lie with baking, making patients feel comfortable, diagnosing a computer virus, explaining a complex auto repair issue, or keeping an office in order and files up-to-date.

In addition, there will always be those students who begin an educational journey on a college campus, either in a university town or in their own community, and find out in the first few days of classes that the method of teaching does not connect with them. Sitting, listening and reading is boredom beyond their imagination. Without expending some sort of energy, without engaging in some kind of movement, their brains fail to gear up.

Their instructors miss a connection. The lesson is lost. Grades suffer. Those students will always pursue another method of learning. Career colleges, just as they are now, will be there to receive them.

No matter what anxiety might magnify or make temporarily unclear, there are students out there who need you. The best viewpoint to take on the future is to know these students are in even more uncertain circumstances than you are experiencing now. Help them make a new beginning. In doing so, remember that you determine your own reality. This is the truth, no matter what the present era tells you.
FUTURE LOOK

A look at the not-so-far-away future, and five areas in which career colleges can make a difference in their processes

By Jenni Valentino, Staff Writer

As another year, ripe with possibility, looms ahead, it is natural to reminisce on the past and to look forward to things to come – in global events, our personal lives and professional environments.

And while it’s always fun to speculate about what things will be like in the far future – where we all sleep through our automated flying car commute to work and our students interact with their instructors via hologram – such conjecture doesn’t help you keep current with the coming student, government, and employer actions and expectations that will affect the immediate decisions, success and bottom line of your institution.

In an effort to keep you one step ahead of the curve in career education, let’s take a close-future look at five categories in which you can actually begin making a difference in your processes now:

Recruitment: The college application process is going digital. Maybe your institution has already implemented an automated intelligent capture for transcripts solution in order to save your admissions department hours of manual labor and the potential for mistakes. If not, be prepared to find room in your IT budget within the next few years.

But the digitization of college recruitment goes beyond that to the meticulous crafting of an online persona – both your school’s and your students’. Think about it: Five years ago, LinkedIn was a “nice-to-have” enhancement to a job application, a tool for applicants to network with current and former employees of an organization and for hiring managers to inquire about potential matches for open positions. Now, a robust LinkedIn profile is crucial not only for a job seeker, but for an employer.

"Resumes will be displaced by constantly evolving representations of individual experiences, skills and aptitudes that exist purely in the digital realm," said Bob Myhal, CEO of NextHire. "By 2016, innovative tools that use social media, big data and other technologies to give tremendous insight into individual job seekers will [be] the primary screening method."

Soon, the same will be true for potential students and schools, and students are already getting wise. A 2014 report from Kaplan Test Prep found that of 403 polled undergraduate admissions officers, 35 percent had visited an applicant's social media page – a 9 percent increase from 2012. However, just 16 percent said they had discovered information online that hurt a student's application – down from 35 percent in 2012.
"Students are more aware that any impression they leave on social media is leaving a digital fingerprint," said Seppy Basili, Kaplan's Vice President for College Admissions. "My hunch is that students are not publicly chronicling their lives through social media in the same way." Has your institution followed suit? Be careful that your school doesn't soon rank among the many companies and figureheads (including the CEO of Twitter himself) that have made very public social media faux pas in recent memory.

Retention: Career colleges and the federal government will continue to make the retention and success of low-income and minority students a top priority. Eastern Connecticut State University, for example, is "using a data-driven approach to increase the success of low-income, minority students and first generation students," said "Horizon Report: 2014 Higher Education Edition." "Gathering data from sources such as residential, library, tutoring programs, and surveys, the university is hoping to understand and predict why some students are more likely to drop out than others."

Also, consider who your school plans to recruit. As has been the trend for years, the profile of the average college student continues to change. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the number of public high school graduates in Massachusetts, for example, increased almost 12 percent from 2003-04 to 2008-09. From 2008-09 to 2021-22, however, that measurement is projected to fall more than 5 percent. Of course, career colleges are better positioned than most to handle this change in student population, having catered to the needs of nontraditional students, especially those who have taken a break from education after high school, for decades.

One major player found in retention (and later employment) for these students is, surprisingly, childcare. Student parents finish school with an average of 13 percent more debt than students without children, according to Institute for Women's Policy Research, and struggle to complete their education within six years – only about a third actually do. "Too often, when people have kids, they think that has to mean the end of their college education," said Barbara Gault, Executive Director of Institute for Women's Policy Research, which has analyzed the data. "If we really are serious about equity in education, it’s very important to consider parenthood status."
Few institutions offer childcare options to students, and for those that do, the demand is almost always higher than the supply. Much like career colleges already work with employers to provide their students with internships, on-the-job training and career opportunities after graduation, you will need to begin working with childcare providers in the same way as baby boomers exit the workforce. Otherwise, you will miss out on retaining much-needed facets of your student body.

**Tuition and funding:** America’s student debt problem is no secret. This year, the nation’s student loan debt grew to more than $1.2 trillion. Senator Elizabeth Warren’s (D-Mass.) insight that “millions of young people ... can’t buy homes, can’t buy cars ... all because they are struggling under the weight of student loan debt,” hit a nerve with many. President Obama touched on the subject again as well, saying, “We're still seeing too big a debt load on too many young people” and signing into action an effort to extend income-based repayment programs.

Currently, tuition increases continue at almost triple the rate of inflation, which is a rate that experts predict cannot continue. However, two reports released in November 2014 by the College Board found that tuition increases have actually slowed pace compared to the past several years. In fact, the same findings showed the amount of money borrowed by Americans for higher education fell for the third straight year in 2013.

Americans certainly aren’t getting richer, so where will colleges and universities make up the lost dollars? Across the country, states spent an average of $2,353 (28 percent) less on each student in 2013 than they did before the recession began. Soon, federal funding won’t be a given for higher education. All schools – not just career colleges – will be subject to performance-based funding, measured on metrics including retention and graduation rates. In fact, Colorado is putting this practice into place for its state schools beginning in 2015-16.

Does all this add up to a burst higher ed bubble, as some experts have predicted for years? In some form, probably. Watch out for all institutions to begin following a profit-based business model similar to those of the career colleges, and keep up with the transparent data standards – you’ll likely be asked to make good on them soon.

**Technology:** It’s been established that many colleges and universities may no longer have the funding to maintain their sprawling campuses and beautiful limestone buildings. But will students of the future even care? According to the Department of Education, 5.5 million students took at least one online course in 2012. Online and distance learning – spurred by blazing-fast Internet speeds and the growing prevalence of videoconferencing – will soon begin to replace in-person education. Brick and mortar institutions and classrooms full of desks, textbooks and chalkboards will quickly become a thing of the past. Students of all profiles already recognize the benefits of virtual learning; colleges and universities will soon follow suit.

While your campuses remain, get ready to provide robust Wi-Fi coverage everywhere from the lecture hall to the athletic fields. Students (and instructors) are already beginning to expect it.
And as long as private funding can keep up, technology is about to make academia a lot more fun. Drones, virtual reality, wearables (like Google Glass) and 3-D printing will become mainstream quickly – and not just as toys, but as important research tools.

**Career education:** As the rest of these future trends come to fruition, students will recognize the need to make smarter decisions about their educational path. After all, the decisions they make about school today will greatly influence the opportunities they have in their careers tomorrow.

Due to residual hiring demand left over from the recession, rejuvenated corporate growth and next year’s increased turnover, those career opportunities look bright for the first time in a half decade. According to a report by Michigan State University that surveyed more than 5,500 employers across the United States and Canada, hiring for those with Bachelor’s degrees increased approximately 16 percent during the 2014-15 school year.

But which graduates are most likely to get hired as this uptick continues?

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) conducted a survey of hiring managers, asking which skills they planned to prioritize as they interview recent graduates. In order of importance, the 10 skills employers look for most in an employee are:

1. Ability to work in a team structure.
2. Ability to make decisions and solve problems.
3. Ability to communicate verbally with people inside and outside an organization.
4. Ability to plan, organize and prioritize work.
5. Ability to obtain and process information.
6. Ability to analyze quantitative data.
7. Technical knowledge related to the job.
8. Proficiency with computer software programs.
9. Ability to create and/or edit written reports.
10. Ability to sell and influence others.

How does this information affect career colleges, who have long marketed their schools’ ability to teach technical skills rather than soft skills like these? It’s time to start making sure students graduate from your institution with both skill sets. As hiring continues to pick back up, employers are going to start looking for graduates possessing both sets of skills. As career college leaders, you should make sure your curriculum for all programs includes life skills instruction on top of technical instruction, so that your graduates can meet the needs and expectations of their future employers.

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**Jenni Valentino** is a freelance writer and editor with years of involvement and experience in the career college sector. She can be reached at JZValentino@GMail.com.
Imagine America Foundation Golf Tournament

June 2, 2015 • Arrowhead Golf Club • Shotgun start at 8:30 a.m.

Join the Imagine America Foundation (IAF) and Gragg Advertising for the 2015 Golf Tournament, which will be held at the Arrowhead Golf Club in Denver, Colorado at the APSCU Annual Convention. Priority registration is now open for IAF 21st Century Workforce Fund supporters and schools participating in the Imagine America Scholarship and Award Programs.

For sign-up information, contact: Lee Doubleday at 571-267-3015 or email LeeD@Imagine-America.org.
TAPPING THE SOURCE

Engagement survey results provide a direct view into career college students' thoughts about their education experience

So many of our career college institutions for years have relied on beliefs when it comes to student engagement. How often have you heard a school owner or administrator talk about "the positive feeling" that permeates the halls of their school and characterizes its daily atmosphere? They mistakenly believe when students seem to be in high spirits and ready to learn, their institutions are properly delivering on their promise to offer a high-quality education.

Feelings, though, are subjective, and they can be terribly misinterpreted.

Often our schools begin to depend on these impressions of how they are performing for students. They miss countless opportunities – one for each student who passes through their classrooms – to ask them their thoughts on the education they received.

Many schools that do survey students don't widely share the information, preferring to keep it within the walls of their institution. When this information is kept close to the vest, it doesn't allow the full story of what our schools deliver to students to properly formulate. Those of us in our schools (and even those outsiders looking in) miss the big picture of our full accomplishments because the stories of individual school successes are kept private.

The easiest way to get to the truth is to go directly to the source. That has always been my philosophy – and it's been the approach of the Imagine America Foundation since we formed our organization in the 1980s.
Earlier this year, the Imagine America Foundation (IAF) partnered with Wonderlic to conduct an engagement survey of students attending schools that offer IAF scholarships and awards. Our primary goal was to go directly to the source – for the first time – and share what our students think of how our schools are engaging them. A secondary goal was to take this information and shape a picture of how our schools are performing nationally.

We developed a survey for students with questions we thought were most critical for sharing how students feel about their educational experience. You can review some of the questions and related percentages in the sidebar to this article. But I wanted to share the responses to what I feel are the most important questions pertaining to how our schools perform.

Ninety-seven percent of respondents agreed that their experience at their school has improved their prospects for the future. Isn't this what college is all about? Students come to our schools with a hope to improve their future, and 97 percent believe that goal was accomplished.

To that end, 98 percent of students also agreed the training they received at their school would help them obtain a better job. This statistic alone proves the mission and vision of career education work. The demand that students rightfully place on our institutions to receive the training they need to improve their station in life is being satisfied.

Ninety-nine percent – nearly every student who took our survey – agreed that the skills they learned in class are up-to-date and important for the job they wanted. And 98 percent agreed the programs and classes at their school are preparing them for the job they want.

What's most impressive to me is that these numbers come directly from students. They are in response to our survey, not one generated by the college where matters of privacy could potentially impact their responses.

As a sector, it's time we rely on more than just impressions. We are providing the education students need to better their lives. We are delivering exactly what we promise – to all students. The positive feeling you might have about your school could be real.

Robert L. Martin
President and CEO, Imagine America Foundation

Responses to the Imagine America Foundation’s Student Engagement Survey:

97% of respondents agreed "My experience at this school has improved my prospects for the future."

99% of respondents agreed "The skills I learn in class are up-to-date and important for the job I want."

98% of respondents agreed "The programs and classes at this school are preparing me for the job I want."

98% of respondents agreed "The training I get at this school will help me get a better job."

92% of respondents agreed "The admissions representative focused on my needs and interests."

98% of respondents agreed "The admissions representative treated me with respect."

99% of respondents agreed "My teachers are experts in their fields."

99% of respondents agreed "My teachers are committed to providing a quality education."

98% of respondents agreed "My teachers want me to succeed."

96% of respondents agreed "I’m on track to complete the program as originally scheduled."

95% of respondents agreed "I’m proud to go to this school."

90% of respondents agreed "The education at this school is worth the cost."
FULLY ENGAGED
SURVEY RESPONSES DISPLAY THE DEEP LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT OF CAREER COLLEGE STUDENTS

The best way to obtain feedback on how engaged students are in their education is to go directly to the source. The Imagine America Foundation has joined forces with Wonderlic Inc. to bring career colleges the student pulse and engagement surveys. This series of surveys is designed to provide a voice to the most important member of our sector – the student. Students are invited to participate in these surveys at enrollment, mid-program and postgraduation. This ongoing, longitudinal study will impart student insights at each step in the educational process. As a result, our schools will better understand our students and the key metrics to their success. These are the opinions of career college students about the performance of their institutions and those responsible for educating them.

Felicia Santone
YTI Career Institute, Lancaster, PA

Do you feel that the training you are receiving at this school will help you get a better job? Why?
The training I have received at YTI Career Institute has already helped me get a better job and I don’t graduate for another two months. I was taught valuable skills for the medical billing and coding field. In addition to skills taught through my courses, my instructors regularly share helpful advice from their personal experience in the field that will help me to succeed. The school provides a professional development course that helped me to develop skills for perfecting my resume, writing outstanding cover letters to land an interview, excelling in the interview, and identifying ways to succeed after getting a job. I owe getting hired before graduation to this course and the variety of hands-on experiences YTI provides in their curriculum.

Do you feel that your teachers are committed to providing a quality education to you and want you to succeed?
My instructors are definitely committed to providing a quality education. So many of them have gone out of their way to help me and my classmates succeed. If the tutoring provided does not fit our schedules, instructors offer to plan a time to meet outside of their school schedule. There have been several occasions where an instructor does not have an answer to a question, so they get in touch with somebody who is still active in the field to ensure we have the most accurate and up-to-date answer. Each and every instructor takes the time to go over test answers to ensure everybody understands how to avoid the same mistakes in the future. I am often surprised by how supportive the staff and faculty are at YTI.
Ellece Williams
Everest College, Tacoma, WA

Do you feel that your teachers are committed to providing a quality education to you and want you to succeed?
Although I have already graduated as of July 2014, I definitely feel that the skills I was taught in school by my instructors were up-to-date for the job I was seeking. At my current place of employment, I am able to fully exercise and put to great use those skills. We see a variety of patients everyday, and with what I learned from the computer software, textbooks and highly qualified instructors, I feel very confident in helping provide quality care. As I mentioned, although I have already graduated, I was and I still am very proud of the school I attended. I learned and studied with some of the best there is, in my opinion. My peers and instructors had ambition, motivation, focus and a love for the field they were studying in just like me. My teachers and the staff at Everest had a genuine interest in all the students and always made themselves available whenever we needed help. I have acquired skills and knowledge that I will be able to use anywhere in the medical field.

Chris LaChance
Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology, Tulsa, OK

Has your experience at this school improved your prospects for the future? Why do you feel this is true?
The skills I am learning in both aviation and business are providing me the necessary abilities to be relevant in current global commerce. I will be prepared for the life I want, by starting my lucrative business and flying jets for fun. After graduation, I can also charter private flights for an inflated flight ticket price. Flight school is providing me the training I need to accomplish my dream of supersonic flight. Business school is giving me the real-world knowledge and network to create substantial proprietary means.
Dana Bowman  
Sullivan University, Louisville, KY

Has your experience at this school improved your prospects for the future? Why do you feel this is true?
Yes, my experience at Sullivan University has improved my prospects for the future tremendously. I feel that this school prepares you for the realistic area that you may plan to get into once it is time for graduation. With the support of the staff and the best given updated material, I believe that I will be set and will be prepared for whatever may come my way. With everything that the school is known for, it seems as if it is set up to prepare all students for their future and their field – that’s why I chose Sullivan. Sullivan is the best school and I am very proud that I’m a student and a soon-to-be graduate.

Do you feel that your teachers are committed to providing a quality education to you and want you to succeed?
Absolutely. The instructors that I have had online and the instructors that I have had while on campus have all been very helpful and supportive. I’ve never met such a great group of people as the ones that teach at Sullivan University. In the beginning of the quarter, they remind each of their students of the reasons that they are there and the first thing that they say is to see their students succeed and they’ll do whatever it takes to make that happen. Knowing the fact that they are willing to go above and beyond makes the schooling journey the best thing for a student who doesn’t know what to expect when they get back into school. I’m very grateful for their hard work and their dedication.
Shayna Reinbold
Sullivan College of Technology and Design, Louisville, KY

Has your experience at this school improved your prospects for the future? Why do you feel this is true?

My experience at Sullivan College of Technology and Design has immensely improved my prospects for my future career and life in general. Without the knowledge that I have gained at Sullivan College of Technology and Design, I'm not sure what my future would have looked like. Now, I can look forward and see a successful career. My experience at SCTD has allowed me to gain knowledge of computer graphic design through intensive, hands-on training. Without the hands-on approach, I don't think I would be near as far in my understanding of graphic design as I am now.

Do you feel that the admissions representative focused on your needs and interests, and treated you with respect? How so?

The admissions officer that I have worked with here at Sullivan College of Technology and Design couldn't have been any better. Erin Murphy provided – and still provides – me with information on upcoming scholarships. She treats each student with the utmost respect and is always respectful of your time. She gave me her personal cell phone number the first day I worked with her just in case I had any specific questions. I couldn't give Erin enough kudos.

Brandon Herbert Wilson
Universal Technical Institute, Orlando, FL

Do you feel that the training you are receiving at this school will help you get a better job? Why?

Yes, I attend Universal Technical Institute and this school is 75 percent hands on. This is how I learn the best – by hearing and then doing. I feel I will be well prepared for getting a better job because of the school I went to plus the training that I received. I also received quite a few certificates through this school along the way that provided additional training. When I graduate college, I will not only feel prepared, but feel confident to show prospective employers what I learned.

Are you proud to go to the school you are attending? Why?

Yes, I am proud of the school I am attending. The reason is because when people hear that a student is attending UTI, they know that the student is receiving a great education. I have heard that employers will only look for students who graduated from UTI because they know that they have been educated and trained by the best. Professionalism is the key to success in this field. Once the uniform goes on, I know that I am representing a brand and UTI.
Justin Bold
Triangle Tech, Bethlehem, PA

Are the skills you are learning at your school up-to-date and important for the job you are seeking?
I feel what I have learned at Triangle Tech in the past year has helped me a lot. The school helped me find a job and will continue to help me into the future. The teachers are willing to answer any questions and give us as much knowledge as we are willing to learn. They tell us what the codes are for building and they also tell us different ways to do certain things. They allow us to try it out for ourselves and help us learn from our mistakes.

Do you feel that the education at this school is worth the cost? If so, why?
I’d say that the school is well worth the cost. We can always approach our teachers with any questions. They teach us certain things that they know are being used in construction. Even if it’s not used in construction, they tell us what it is and how to do it, just so we are informed in case we are ever in that situation. It is the best school and the teachers are very knowledgeable in their fields.

Francisco Ledesma
Lincoln Technical Institute, East Windsor, CT

Are your teachers experts in their fields? Why do you think so?
The teachers at Lincoln Tech are experts in their fields because they have at least ASE Master Technician status and a lot of years in the field. All of the teachers that I have had always share their knowledge and experience with the students. If I have any problems while working on something, the teachers are always there to help us as much as they can. The teachers have also shared their experiences working for big dealerships like Honda, Toyota, etc.

Are the skills you are learning at your school up-to-date and important for the job you are seeking?
The skills that I’m learning at Lincoln Tech are up-to-date. They do focus on giving ASE style questions, which are a big help when I go get my ASE certification in the future since I will know what to expect. These skills that I’m learning are important because since I have been here I have learned so much about the automotive world and wish to continue on that path. For example, most of the skills focus on electrical since many of the cars these days have many electronic devices. The books and equipment at Lincoln Tech are up-to-date, so that will help me fit in when I get a job.
Cathy Marbry
Grantham University, Lenexa, KS

Do you feel that your teachers are committed to providing a quality education to you and want you to succeed?
Yes, I know that all my teachers are committed to providing a quality education to me and want me to succeed. If I have ever had any problems in any class, they are quick to respond and explain how to do the problem. They also will put in websites so you can see more examples of how things are done. When you turn in an assignment or lab and you miss something on it, they will send it back to you with explanations of how it was supposed to be done. If you happen to be struggling, they will help you obtain a tutor so that you will not fall behind and you can achieve your goal in being able to complete your class.

Are you on track to complete your program of study as originally scheduled? Please explain.
I am completely on track to complete my program of study as originally scheduled. My student advisor has been on top of everything making sure I get the classes I need and that they start on time. She has helped me in choosing the best electives that will work with my program of study. After graduation, I will have a Bachelor’s in Electronics Engineering Technology, with classes that I will be able to use to get a job. I greatly appreciate that she has been there for me when or if I need her.

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The Imagine America Foundation (IAF), established in 1982, is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing scholarships for education, research and training support for the career college sector. Since its inception, the Foundation has provided more than $110 million in scholarship and award support for graduating high school seniors, adult learners and U.S. military personnel attending career colleges nationwide through its programs. The Foundation also publishes vital research publications for the higher education sector, honors achievement in career education and offers comprehensive financial literacy education to thousands of enrolling career college students through its Financial Planning Made Simple tool.

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The entrepreneur who once touted himself as "The Man to See" in advertisements for his consulting company became "The Man to Listen to" on the last installment of Career College Central's Leading Through Innovation webinar series.

The flamboyant and always charismatic Michael Clifford has become a legend in the higher education realm for his ability to turn struggling colleges around in dramatic fashion. The former musician and born-again Christian did not disappoint in the number of quotables and sound leadership suggestions (more of his thoughts can be found on his blog at www.MClifford.com) he made in the hour-long conversation with the series' moderator, Jim Hutton of KUCCel.

As the founder of the predecessor to Bridgepoint Education and a key leader behind the success of Grand Canyon University, Clifford is one of the leading thinkers on how to successfully run a private sector school. He is also the Chairman of SignificantSystems.org, a company focused on helping schools of faith stay relevant to 21st-century students.

Clifford offered his thoughts on the future of the proprietary education sector during the webinar conversation, addressing his experience in taking Grand Canyon from nonprofit status to for-profit status. But as the last year in for-profit education has shown, the regulatory climate has changed the direction that struggling schools might take to turn around their enterprises.

"Ironically, it looks like the pendulum has swung and now I am an advocate of taking for-profit schools and converting them back to nonprofit," Clifford said. "Art Keiser, Chancellor of
Keiser University, who led the conversion of for-profit Keiser University to nonprofit status in 2011, is my hero. He was the first guy out there doing it. Several people have done it since. I think that's the future trend."

The differences between operating institutions with nonprofit and for-profit statuses are numerous, and Clifford addressed many of those areas, beginning with the differences he sees in their management structure and governance.

"If you have a nonprofit mentality – where you're never going to have surplus or profit – you are never going to make it," Clifford said. "We've seen examples like Liberty University. Ron Godwin is the guy who built Liberty and he came out of the for-profit world. The management is good management, whether it's nonprofit or for-profit. The benefit of being nonprofit right now is that if you really want to be in education – and you really want to do a great job and shareholder value is secondary – you can't argue with being a nonprofit company."

In 2004, Michael Clifford and the core group of investors who bought the failing nonprofit Grand Canyon University were setting a trend in higher education. They were the first buyers of a traditional nonprofit school with intentions to convert it to for-profit status.

"The experience was pretty harrowing, because we put our money in and we went to work turning the school around and the Department of Education did not know how to handle it. There was no process. We called all the education lawyers. Nobody knew how to do it. So we put our money in and operated the school for 18 months without having a change of control, without having ownership and not knowing what was going to happen. It was a huge leap of faith. It worked out OK, but it was super high risk."

Both nonprofit and for-profit colleges operate differently given their taxpaying statuses, which alter how the schools can handle marketing, advertising and admissions. But there are other differences, beginning with the way the Department of Education monitors the schools.
"The biggest difference is primarily regulatory," Clifford said. "Having owned some for-profit, regionally accredited schools, it was taking us a year to 15 months to get approval for a new program. When we asked for a branch campus, we were pretty much denied. On the nonprofit side, the ability to get a program approved in 30 days or 60 days, the ability to branch or create learning centers, to create marketing plans based on demographics – it gives you a very fast way to move.

"If you're really committed to a mission of education, you need money and you have to connect your dream of education with what you have in your hand to work with."

Dr. Michael Clifford, Chairman of SignificantSystems.org

"The other area people talk about is compensation. How do you pay for top management in the nonprofit world? Compensation packages, while they can't offer incentive commission, can be very attractive in the nonprofit world."

Clifford said nonprofit schools benefit from breaks on direct mail marketing and other major advantages, such as not paying property taxes.

"By running a nonprofit school, are you going to make $4 billion off the school like John Sperling did?" Clifford asked. "No, you don't have the stock market play, but I think what we're seeing is people are understanding that services like Velocify or different managed services or products can get that kind of shareholder return versus owning the schools."

There are differences, too, in academics. Clifford said in the for-profit model, academics are treated with a general sense of customer service, and it's in the DNA of for-profit educators to have a student-centric model. In many of the nonprofit structures, especially in state schools where there are tenured faculty and strong unions, customer service is less of a focus.

"From an academic standpoint, they all kind of come out on the same page," Clifford said. "Academics that work in the for-profit world are much more open to innovation, like e-books, digital textbooks, competency-based learning and other technologies. Some of the nonprofits, generally speaking, are not as open to innovation and customer service. That is sort of the nature of the for-profit world."

One realm in which career colleges are often thought to stand out in comparison to nonprofit schools is in the area of job placement. While most career schools offer job placement programs for their soon-to-be-graduates and, often, alumni, Clifford said more could have been invested to position career college students for success a decade ago.

"If some of the more dramatic profitability had been redirected into career preparation and skills, e-portfolios, etc., there would have been a lot less heat," he said. "But many of the proprietary schools got very greedy and a lot of the marketing was horrible. It was very, very deceptive."

Clifford said the status transition at Grand Canyon was advantageous because the college was unique in that its core degrees were education and nursing. That meant many of the students already had jobs working in their industry. But nonprofit colleges, even failing ones, have certain advantages over career colleges, he said.

"When I met with Grand Canyon's board, they were about nine weeks away from closing their doors," Clifford said. "I went into it trying to find fundraising, and we actually had developed a managed services approach. We went in with the idea that we would raise some donations and manage the online portion. That was the original pitch. But I started calling donors and no one would donate. They were fatigued.

"However, investors were just frothing at the time. They were throwing money at anything that looked like
University of Phoenix online, specifically Brian Mueller, the undisputed champion operator of online education. I made the decision to see if there was a way to convert the school to for-profit and take advantage of the investment community."

This particular experience conveyed an important message for Clifford in regard to transitioning the status of schools.

"If you're really committed to a mission of education, you need money and you have to connect your dream of education with what you have in your hand to work with," he said. "Had we been able to get $3-5 million in donations, Grand Canyon probably would have been a nonprofit school with a managed services agreement, but no one would give the money."

To listen to a recording of this webinar or any other installments in the Leading Through Innovation series, visit http://CareerCollegeCentral.com/2014LeadershipWebinars.

Martin Lind oversees the business development, product marketing and thought leadership for Velocify's enrollment management solution. Lind holds a Master of Public Administration from the University of Southern California and a B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania.
Charter schools serve as inspiration for colleges seeking more accountability, student-centered approaches and enhanced education delivery

By Dr. Pete Savo, Mont Vernon Group
In the United States, there are many options for K-12 education: charter schools, private schools, magnet schools, vouchers, tuition tax credits, home schooling and simply moving your family to a new local public school district. Parents will drive the necessary change to ensure their children are prepared for the unlimited world ahead of them, and in response, public school education is evolving. The change is charter schools.

As Career College Central takes a look at higher education in 2015 and beyond, I felt it was important to review the latest developments with charter schools since they are the ideal representation of schools acting to enhance accountability, student-centered approaches and education delivery – all while operating with a for-profit business model.

This change is coming at a fantastic and inspirational time in our history. The traditional kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) system is today under attack for being expensive and poorly preparing our children for either college or a career. The United States traditional public education system has become overly focused on the element of accountability at the expense of progress, and our children are not prepared for the world outside of K-12.

Charter schools function on a for-profit mindset with an entrepreneurial approach. In many cases, charter schools operate on about two-thirds of the average funding for a child in a traditional public school.

We champion an accountability-only emphasis on setting targets, yet we do not commit to developing educational systems to ensure our children can meet these targets. The problem is we as a nation have been spending about 85 percent more on public education since 1970, according to Education Week’s cover story, “Charter Schools Grab Rural Toehold.” Common sense tells us the more we spend on public education the better the education should be, and therefore the more prepared our children should be for what comes next in their lives. But it depends who is telling the story. For the most part, school spending between rich and poor school districts across our nation has been balanced over the last 30 years.

You can argue that it has not been equally, as the poorer school districts have seen per student spending rise faster than that of the richer school districts. Those poor school districts that have the greater need received the additional money. Yet, both poor and rich school districts have all ended near the same 85 percent increase in spending since 1970, according to the report in Education Week. Education is the greatest expenditure for most towns and clearly an area where cost efficiency is needed. It is no secret towns are struggling to fund the highly publicized antiquated education problem.
The average funding expenditure for traditional public school education in the United States is $12,608 per student as reported by the U.S. Department of Education. The average for charter schools per student is $8,256. To put this into some context, the New Hampshire Department of Education reports the average student funding expenditure is $13,459 as compared to the average. The cost per student at a New Hampshire charter school is $5,495. In many states, funding charter schools has become their cost-saving and educational-improvement strategy.

Necessity brings about change, and leading the change are charter schools. The charter school story is fueled by everyday people taking an astonishing interest and driving positive and productive change in K-12 education. Education processes are always in some form of evolutionary change. Today, more than 2.3 million students attend about 6,000 charter schools in 42 states, including the District of Columbia. The waiting list is estimated at a million students, according to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, a 13.4 percent increase from the preceding year according to Reichgott Junge’s research paper "Charter Schools Are Changing the Landscape."

Education is an adaptive evolutionary process that waits for no one, and the charter school performance data is beginning to flow in. Los Angeles charter schools are outperforming charters in California and nationwide. Forty-eight percent of Los Angeles charters outperformed traditional public schools in reading and 44 percent outperformed traditional public schools in math, according to the Education Week report "Charter School Performance in Los Angeles." In New York City charter schools, 86 percent of all students come from the lowest-income families, 95 percent are African-American or Latino, and 83 percent go to college. In 2012, 15-year-olds attending BASIS Tucson North, a charter school in Arizona, outperformed every country in the world.

In the case of many charter schools, flexibility is the key to their success. A great example is the charter school law in New Mexico that allowed a school to design student growth and evaluation plans that helped teachers, students and parents visualize education progress in real time. I asked Kate Baker, Executive Director of the Network for Educational Opportunity (NEO), a New Hampshire K-12 education scholarship organization, if charter schools could have the same funding as traditional K-12 public schools, what would our community’s return on investment be?

"I’m thinking about your ROI question from 50,000 feet. In the long run, I expect innovation in education, like at Polaris Charter School of Manchester, New Hampshire, where the curriculum is student-centered and they are utilizing technology and authentic supply and demand,” she said. "[There], parents and students are not trapped by their Zip code, and they have many education options. The average cost of a private elementary in New Hampshire is $6,500 per student, as compared to $13,459 for public school students in New Hampshire."
Charter schools are designed from the ground up to be academically strong. Charter schools must be fiscally responsible or go out of business; there is no golden government parachute for charter schools. A charter school is a required and viable choice within the traditional public school system. Charter Schools offer parents a high-quality education alternative for their children who may not do as well in a traditional public school.

Charter schools are more focused; embody the basics that work; offer instruction in the STEM fields; and stimulate project-based learning for all students that results in quantifiable results toward predetermined, measurable goals. Charter schools function on a for-profit mindset with an entrepreneurial approach. In many cases, charter schools operate on about two-thirds of the average funding for a child in a traditional public school.

The for-profit educational management organizations (EMOs) are developing education miracles in public education and are a fundamental part of charter school transformation across our nation.

"Miracles" by better preparing our children for the future in an education environment where the normality is spending more on public education and getting less. My research identified that charter schools operated by for-profit models take on a more entrepreneurial approach while providing a higher quality K-12 education. The charter school movement is one of the most efficient self-organizing education models in modern history. An educational efficiency endowed by social-entrepreneurs who refuse to accept the failures of K-12 education – failures that traditional public education shows no capacity to solve.

In the charter school world, the greatest advantage is that modern, innovative education revolves around knowledge that students, teachers and parents learn through experience. Perhaps traditional education is evolving to better simulate the spontaneous adaptive nature of the human community it serves. These experiences become the next natural evolutionary level of education, today resulting in education success stories by the power of one inspired student at a time.

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FIRST DAY, EVERY DAY

Customer service makes every day "day one" and increases retention

By Neal Raisman, N. Raisman & Associates
In our work with colleges, we have found that the New Year's holiday is a time for resolutions and new starts, so many people decide to start college. But once that resolve withers a bit, they often drop out. Their initial enthusiasm is lost or, to be more precise, is dampened down by weak to poor customer service.

That’s right. We are too often the reason why the enthusiasm that brought students to our doors is tamped down. But it does not have to be that way at all if we just invest some time and effort in providing some good, not even great, customer service. We just need to look at every day as if it were day one.

Colleges go all out on day one to make students feel welcome and important, but by day two … not so much. On day one, presidents will walk around greeting students and parents. A few may even help carry something. Administrators are on hand doing the same, and at some schools faculty are around to help out too. Plus, of course, student ambassadors are everywhere helping, pointing, guiding and smiling to try and make the start easier and friendlier. Great start. Sort of like a "drop-off day at summer camp" feeling.

But by day two, the president goes back to his or her office. Administrators too. Now faculty will be available for classes and help when needed. The student ambassadors wash their polo or T-shirts and put them in a bureau to be pulled out at the next start of classes or orientation day. Basically, the excitement and happy welcome ends.

Make each day as exciting as day one
The days after the first day are some of the most important there are to build retention. They are the days the real anxiety builds. When the real work of college starts for students. When they need the most help.

But this is when we have decided to let the new students sink or swim. Now, when the new students need to set up the psychological stuff to stay hyped about college, we are not there to help enough. And it is the emotional concerns that will be coming into play when the thoughts of "I am here and where is that?" and "Will I fit in and like this place?" and "Did I choose the right place?" and "I feel so alone … and the work is harder than I thought it would be" start to disrupt the new students.

WHY STUDENTS LEAVE A SCHOOL

- College Doesn't Care
- Poor Service
- Not Worth It
- Finances
- Scheduling
- Grades
- Academic Quality
This is when a little irritation such as showing up late for the first class at 8 a.m. can become the first step on dropping out because the student didn’t know how to get to the humanities lecture hall and the signs don’t help so the professor used him or her as an object lesson about never coming late to his class.

And all that was needed were some of those same administrators and ambassadors, and yes the president, out and about with T-shirts that say "ASK ME AND I’LL HELP" to assist new students. The administrators and the president really do not have any work more important than helping students. Yes, that is right. Students are their business – their core business. They need to be seen and recognized as a positive and friendly force.

**Colleges go all out on day one to make students feel welcome and important but by day two – not so much.**

There should be someone at the entrance/exit of every building, at every parking lot walkway and at every intersection on campus with some in front of various administration offices to let new students know if they are at the right place. On the first two days of classes, there should be a full effort with everyone out there to help students. This way you’ll be sure to get both the Monday-Wednesday-Friday and the Tuesday-Thursday class schedules.

After the first two days, the ambassadors should still be at intersections and paths from the parking lots just to handle any issues or questions that might come up during the first two weeks. After that, set up a Q&A area in the main student area or a main lobby to continue helping any students and any visitors.

Also make sure that every student is greeted as you walk by him or her in the hall. Always ask how he or she is doing. It is simple customer service and will make the students realize that you do see them and care about them. Remember that our study found the main reason students leave a college is they believe the school does not care about them.

**Kissing the Year Off Right**

And here’s an idea for the first days of classes that will make that first day a sweeter and memorable occasion. It is taken from an ancient Jewish tradition for students on their first day of studying. The day the youngster is to go off to school for the first time, the parents take a prayer book and drop honey on it. It is given to the student, who then licks the honey off, symbolizing the sweetness of learning.

Have student ambassadors or others greet students at the doors to classes. They greet the new students with a welcome and give each a small candy to start the year right. It sounds corny and it is. But it is also very effective in creating that set of feelings that the school is a special place. We did this at a school where I was President as part of a larger customer service excellence plan that raised retention by 14 percent.

It is not hard to retain students and keep their enthusiasm going if you just employ some basic academic customer service.

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Neal Raisman has a Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst in Neurolinguistics, was a Fulbright Fellow in France, and has published six books, over 400 articles and the blog www.AcademicMaps.Blogspot.com. He can be contacted at NealR@GreatServiceMatters.com.
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REINVENTING OURSELVES

The way back ... by building our strengths

By Raul Valdes, Quantum Integrations
Since the spring of 2010, our sector has been on a downward spiral both in new students and reputation. I believe it would be useful to examine how we fell and how we get back up to do a better job for our students.

Career schools have historically been a small but important component of postsecondary education for students looking for hands-on education not offered at community colleges. These career schools offered small classes, strong graduation support systems, placement help and reasonable pricing. There were programs in electronics, computer-aided drafting, computer repair and more.

The foundation for our sector was predicated on following these strategic outcomes until the 1970s when DeVry, ITT, the Art Institutes, UEI and others started expanding their chains. They became eligible for the Federally Insured Student Loan (FISL). These loans had a maximum of $1,500 per academic year. There were no Pell Grants or Plus Loans. Money from a FISL covered about 50 percent of an academic year. Students and their parents had to contribute the rest. In fact, many of our schools helped students find part-time jobs to help defray their educational costs.

Fast-forward to 1987, when Bell and Howell sells DeVry, which then goes public in 1991. So does University of Phoenix, ITT, Art Institutes, Corinthian, Career Education and others. Eventually, close to 20 companies become publicly traded. Additionally, Vatterott Colleges was purchased by a private equity firm. Now, an obscure and small sector of postsecondary education gains prominence. Public companies are trading at multiples often in the 40s, fueled by earnings growth of more than 20 percent. Private equity jumps in with both feet, attracted by potential returns of 20-30 percent per annum.

Results? From 1999 to the zenith of 2010, our sector grew from $4 billion to $35 billion a year in revenues. We began offering Master’s and Doctorates. Several institutions became regionally accredited. There were innovations, such as University of Phoenix with online programs. DeVry entering medical degrees and attaining respectable board scores. Career Education and others expanding into Europe and Latin America. Up until then, everything seemed great. Except that the pressure to grow, increase revenue and expand profit was rising exponentially. You have seen the results – negative press, federal investigations, indictments, school closings, etc. I don’t want to focus on those. I want to focus on what we did right and where we have to return. I want to discuss building our strengths and diminishing our weaknesses. I want to focus on what made us good.

Our strengths:

Faculty – We have some of the most dedicated and caring faculty in higher education. They give students home phone numbers, take them to interviews, tutor on their own time and buy supplies schools do not provide. They teach and motivate. They care for their needs outside of the classroom. They help and care about graduation. They often have teaching and work experience in their fields. We should be adding full-time faculty, providing training for them and actively working on their retention. We all know we lose students if we lose their faculty. We need to increase support for faculty training and hire more full-timers.

Placement services – At traditional colleges, placement is a directory of jobs and career fairs. We used to prep our students for interviews, help them dress and speak appropriately, help them research their employer, and follow up after they were hired. Are we cutting or expanding our placement departments? Are we still following up on the performance of our graduates? If we are cutting placement activity, we are destroying our reason for being.

Tutoring – We all know we need to retain students. "Outcomes" was a word virtually invented at our sector in higher education. Having good faculty is often not enough. Students will have gaps in their knowledge. Repeating or flunking a class can lead to a drop. That is why many of our colleges, either using faculty, learning resource centers or tutors, help their students fill the gaps.

Small classes – Unlike the large lectures at state institutions, we offered classes with 15-to-1 student-teacher ratios. Students and faculty had ability to interact, ask questions and receive individual help.

Hands-on instruction/labs – The quality of our labs and ability to get your hands on equipment, even after lab hours, was always an attraction. We did not have to be state of the art. Instead, we were "industry standard." Students used what employers were using. We encouraged additional lab time and using the buddy system to learn. Often, lab time with friends was a recruiting tool.

We have some of the most dedicated and caring faculty in higher education. They give students home phone numbers, take them to interviews, tutor on their own time and buy supplies schools do not provide.
On the other side of the ledger, we must reduce our "strength gaps."

**Pricing issues** – After two decades of 6-8 percent increases, tuition in some programs became inexcusable. Allied health, which currently constitutes more than 80 percent of students in nationally accredited schools, should not cost $30,000-35,000. These students will start at around $25,000 and face modest raises from their employers. Other programs may have more flexibility but tuition, in my opinion, should not be more than 80 percent of expected first year salary.

**Living expense borrowing** – I believe we have gone overboard, by omission or directly, in using living expenses as a recruiting tool. These students, if they have problems, need help before they enter college. Students living in their cars, with no jobs, are not ready to enter college. These are defaults in the making. Students should be making a payment, even if it is $20 a month toward their education. The result will be more commitment and lower 90/10.

**Admissions** – Who do we accept? We know the quality of today’s high school graduates – 61 percent need remedial education. We also know of myriad testing services that correlate cognitive and aptitude levels to success in a program or in a job. Why in the world would you have open admissions if the life of the college depends on whom you admit? Why would you ruin the lives of students with no hope of success? You can be profitable by scaling down. You do not have to recruit every student who bites on an ad. We used to be better at admissions and accepting students who truly would benefit from an education. The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges has this as a standard, though I do not know if they still enforce it. In today’s environment, you have to get official high school or GED proof. It is too tempting for students, or admissions, to lie or fabricate a bogus diploma. Unemployment and underemployment in the 18-34 age group is north of 20 percent. It is too tempting to get living expenses by lying. As we have gone more upscale in degree levels and intensity of programs, why would you be dropping admissions tests or remediation? This is not allowing access to anything but failure. Even if intentions are good, look at the big picture!

**Compliance** – If you don’t have internal audits and you are not inspecting financial aid, VA, state grants and accreditation, you will eventually fail. If you are not constantly training financial aid and admissions on best practices and then "shopping them," you are going to get caught.

**Defaults** – I am amazed at the fact default management is not more in demand. Deferments and forbearances will only help for a while. I am amazed, talking to executive recruiters in our sector, that default managers and compliance people are being laid off.

**Demonstrating quality** – As a sector so closely scrutinized, we should all be using standardized employer competencies as third-party endorsement of our work. While there are glimpses, it is not yet a trend. To have employers say we do a better job than our competitors in the public sector would validate our worth in front of the public, the Department of Education and Congress. We can’t settle for good enough. We have to be better than our competition, and we have the advantage of not being as bureaucratic or political as state programs. Why not truly partner with employers by "custom building" employees with the skills they want? Using employer-based competencies would go a long way to providing legitimacy and rebuilding our sector.

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Raul Valdes Pages was the founder and CEO of Denver Technical College, a for-profit college offering Associate, Bachelor’s and Master’s programs. Valdes was also CEO of Sextant Education and Marketing Manager and Vice President at DeVry. Valdes is currently CEO of Quantum Education, a developer of employer-based competencies, and the author of five college textbooks. Valdes is a former Commissioner at the Accrediting Commission of Schools and Colleges of Technology (ACCSC). You can reach him at Raul@QICurriculum.com.
What will continued changes mean for talent acquisition in the sector?

By Vincent Scaramuzzo, Ed-Exec Inc.

It sure is strange out there. The winds of change continue to blow (OK, they are howling), but how they have impacted talent acquisition in the career college sector has been anything less than predictable. The sector always seems to run opposite of the economy, and this is true for hiring as well. When schools were booming, hiring great people wasn’t as difficult because they could be poached from other sectors that were struggling. As enrollments now continue to decline or go flat, those same other sectors are doing very well and offering viable options to candidates.

So, where do I think things are heading in 2015? Here are some key trends we have been observing:
Exodus of talent continues
But where are they going? Ed Exec Inc. will be putting together a formal poll to better measure this between now and the next issue in coordination with Career College Central. But in the meantime, the most popular sectors candidates are fleeing to are sales related, including:

- Automotive
- Real estate
- Insurance
- Financial services
- Hospitality and service industry

But why are they leaving?

- Candidates who were never really from the sector, or didn’t develop a passion for its inherit mission, gave up easily.
- Couldn’t relocate for their next position.
- Pressure, hours and unrealistic goals were just too much.
- Didn’t know how to perform in a down cycle.
- Salaries were really inflated by some of the larger education groups. Now that they have leveled off, many candidates cannot stomach the lower incomes for the same work.

Slow hiring processes will continue

- Schools are in a fragile state. The wrong hire now has a much larger impact on a campus or system. Mistakes cannot be afforded, which has led to erring on the side of caution. Some organizations are paralyzed by fear.

Hiring will become even more difficult

- As the cost of living continues to skyrocket, candidates won’t make a change unless there is a huge financial upside.
- Fear of change. In uncertain times, the "devil they know" is better than the one they don’t.
- Succeeding in a down cycle requires a team built of those individuals who truly have a passion for the sector. That is a rare breed and hard to find.

Technology

- Traditional interview processes just don’t cut it anymore. A strong indicator of this we have observed is high turnover of internal recruiting and HR professionals in the sector. The same people who used to be successful are now struggling for many of the reasons we listed above.
- If you don’t have a slick, state-of-the-art talent acquisition process, candidates will turn you down for someone who does. It is highly perceived that how good you are at hiring and onboarding is a reflection of how good you are at running your schools.

Fewer executive search firms

- During the boom times, our sector was flooded with a variety of new firms. Like the candidates they brought with them, they have returned to the sectors where they first started. What remains is a specialized, select few that only seek out the best partnerships.

**ONE PRINCIPLE THAT SEEMS TO REMAIN CONSTANT IS THAT YOU REALLY DO NEED TO BELIEVE IN THE MISSION OF OUR SCHOOLS TO BE SUCCESSFUL LONG TERM.**

I’ve learned so much about this sector over the past 10 years, and I am so thankful for the school leaders who have mentored and continue to support me. One principle that seems to remain constant is that you really do need to believe in the mission of our schools to be successful long term. You can’t just drink the Kool-Aid, you have to be the leader that brews up a batch every night for your team, then distributes it daily at both the corporate and campus level. Belief becomes reality very quickly.

Without a doubt, organizations that have surrounded themselves with this type of talent continue to succeed and serve students in good times and bad. The best system in the world is nothing without people who believe in it and perpetuate it every day. The year 2015 will be the year of the believers – the final separation of educators with a passion and drive from those who were just along for the ride.
The Career College Central LinkedIn group is a forum full of invoking questions, thoughtful responses and animated discussion. If you haven’t joined our LinkedIn page yet, you’re missing out. Come join us and make your voice heard!

Raul Valdes: Will for-profit colleges give up and become nonprofits?

Barbara Snyder: I think any for-profit, just one, should set a standard and reduce tuition. Show that an education, especially those that liken it to vocational schools, can be had at a reasonable cost while still making a profit. It can be done with quality programs and exceptional faculty. Why is this not an alternative?

Raul Valdes: A for-profit can make decent profits at lower tuitions. The problems in the sector were, in my opinion, accelerated by two types of for-profits: 1) Public companies and 2) Private equity owned.

Additionally, debt as a way to grow became favored by private equity firms and public companies. Debt repayment and interest requires higher tuition or lower operating expenses. I believe all of the above contributed to the environment we are in.

Sean J. Kennedy: No more loans for education … period!

Jeffrey Olson: Hello Barbara. Raul’s observations are on point, although I think overstated. However, let’s leave the quibbling over details for another discussion. The two points I would make are this: The 90/10 law does nothing to protect taxpayers or students, yet it forces schools to set tuition at a rate above the level of Title IV. I would bet that a strong majority of schools would lower tuition if that law were revoked, as it should be. The other point might also be quibbling, but the truth is that it costs about the same amount to train a student at a public institution as it does at a for-profit school. The tuition looks higher on paper because there is no public subsidy reducing the tuition. In other words,
if the student pays $2,000 per semester for tuition at the local public university, the state government is subsidizing probably another $3-4,000 to educate the student for the semester.

**Raul Valdes:** Jeffrey, I believe you are right on the cost side. The only issue is “leverage” (debt), which for-profits have and state schools do not, and profit. These two account for at least 30 percent of expenses. You are right of course when you say that our schools are normally not subsidized, though many states have grants that include our students. Why then are some of our schools charging $30k for programs in allied health and some in the high teens?

On 90/10, I am quite sure that the formula of pricing that takes available Title IV, divides by 90 percent to account for 90/10 and then sets the price, is at least frowned upon by the department, if it is not illegal (it once was). I am not sure whether it helps contain costs or not, but the idea of students, whether in-state schools or for-profit, paying for part of tuition out of their pockets makes immense sense to me. When I started at DeVry (a long time ago,) loans only covered 50 percent of tuition. There were no Pell Grants and no stipends. Somehow, using part-time jobs, parental contributions, etc., we managed to build a 25,000 student school.

In my opinion, there is too much money in higher ed!

**Dennis Cariello:** Department of Education releases Gainful Employment Rule - eliminates Programmatic Cohort Default Rate metric.

**Raul Valdes:** I would imagine deleting program default rates is more likely to stay close to portions affirmed by the court in the last decision and more likely to become final.

**Mike Dourgarian:** Good article. Thanks for the pointers to additional information.

**Dr. Jerald L. Feinstein:** Nice backgrounder. Thanks Dennis!

**Karen Bond:** I think if there is an upside, the full force of the rules will not go into effect for three years and by then there will be a change in administration. If a Republican manages to get elected, we know they are more for-profit college oriented so it could all go away or at least be diluted. In the meantime, however, I think we are going to see more for-profits under siege from the federal agencies. The fact that Grand Canyon wants to go private is a huge sign in my opinion since they are so successful and have avoided any major issues to date.

**Raul Valdes:** I don’t know what will happen if both Congress and the President are Republican. Gainful may go away, but student loans will remain a problem. Some in the Republican camp do not believe government should be the biggest lender in the country and want to do away with loans and put them in private hands again. Defaults will remain an issue.

Look at the damage done to the sector by the steady drumbeat of negative articles. Gainful is not in effect and the sector is down approximately 25 percent since 2010.

**Karen Bond:** Raul, that’s an excellent point and one that I agree with. Using EDMC as an example, the stocks that sold for $20 a share in 2009 are now worth 62 cents per share. Student loan default rates are not limited to the for-profit sector, which is what the DOE and the Obama administration would like the public to believe. I believe that a careful examination of the data of student loan default rates across all sectors needs to be made before any reasoned solutions can be made. Another issue is legislation such as that introduced by Senator Durbin to make all military educational benefits part of the 90 percent of the 90/10 rule instead of it counting in the 10 percent as it currently does. If that happens, then that could be the final nail in the coffin for the for-profit sector if 10 percent of the students do not pay cash out of pocket for their education.

Gainful employment is simply the tip of the iceberg and could, in fact, be what sinks the sector, but personally I think that there are many larger issues facing the sector when you look at legislation such as Durbin’s attempt to further damage the sector through restriction of military educational benefits.
Moving forward in 2015 and beyond

By Amir Moghadam, Ph.D., MaxKnowledge Inc.

In the past year, we have observed many changes in the career college sector of higher education that deserve reflection. Perhaps some of the most significant events included the closure and sale of multiple Corinthian College campuses, the sudden bankruptcy of Anthem Education and, of course, the publishing of the Department of Education’s final gainful employment rule.

Philosopher Søren Kierkegaard said, "Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards." So, while it is important to reflect on that which is behind us, what will institutions need to do in order to move forward? This is not an easy question to answer, however, since it is the people within organizations that drive change, performance and achievement, I believe it is imperative for institutional leaders to put a greater emphasis on developing their talent. Thus, I’d like to share three key ideas on employee development that I hope will provide some perspective for institutions in 2015 and beyond.

1. Increase focus on employee development and training

As we know, the demand for higher education is expected to increase. However, higher education institutions will face increased competition not only from other institutions, but from an increasing amount of freely accessible learning opportunities available online (e.g., MOOCs and open education resources). Thus, institutions will have to differentiate themselves from their competition and demonstrate value by providing the best educational experience for their students. This will put a greater emphasis on instructors’ having excellent teaching skills and not just subject-matter expertise. Moreover, it will put greater emphasis on exceptional student services, which result from effective performance of all employees within the institution, particularly those in functions with high student contact.
2. Align training with individual employee needs and preferences

Institutions will have to align the training they provide with the individual needs and learning preferences of their employees if they wish to attract, engage and develop top talent. Recognizing that each employee has different needs and preferences, institutions should be able to provide a learning experience tailored to the unique needs of each employee to maximize ROI on their training investment. Online training enables institutions to provide custom curricula tailored to individual employee needs and learning interests. Training workshops alone do not provide this opportunity to customize. Moreover, online, just-in-time training is available 24/7 and enables mobile learning as opposed to face-to-face learning opportunities that are one-time events restricted by time and space. Employees should be able to learn on their own schedules and at their own paces versus having to wait for a scheduled event. Simply put, employees should have a variety of learning options, including face-to-face, online, formal and informal learning opportunities.

AS INSTITUTIONS CONTINUE TO RESTRUCTURE THEIR OPERATIONS, MANY ARE REALIZING THE BENEFITS OF PARTNERING TO FULFILL THEIR EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS WHILE REDUCING THEIR INVESTMENT COSTS.

3. Expand training capabilities and improve efficiency through partnership

As institutions continue to restructure their operations, many are realizing the benefits of partnering to fulfill their employee development needs while reducing their investment costs. Institutions are realizing that strategic partners can expand their training capabilities and provide services that reduce the costs of internally developing, maintaining, updating, delivering and administering employee development. Institutions that utilize established employee training providers collaborate with their chosen partners in providing the tools and resources necessary for effective professional development. These opportunities help the institution to more clearly focus on facilitating the transfer of training, yielding improved performance results.

Dr. Amir Moghadam is the Founder and CEO of MaxKnowledge, the leading employee training company for the career college sector of higher education. He has more than 25 years of experience in career education, serving in many capacities, including Professor, Director of Education, Academic Dean, Director of Student Affairs, Campus Director, and College President and Owner. Moghadam earned his Ph.D. in Engineering from the University of Cambridge at the age of 22. He is a recognized leader in career education and has been selected as a Top Innovator by Career College Central. Moghadam can be reached at AmirM@MaxKnowledge.com.
LOOKING FORWARD TO LANDING THE JOB

Successful career preparation renews hopes of adult learners

By Karen Watts, Karen Southall Watts Consulting

"Begin with the end in mind."

– Stephen Covey

Just as educational leaders are going into the new year with fresh ideas and new success strategies, our students and potential students are doing the same. Nationwide, thousands of adults are examining their career and education choices at this very moment. For the most part, these students will begin the process of education with the end – a job or career goal – in mind. In the minds of these driven students, the true culmination of the adult education process is not the graduation ceremony but the successful job interview. As we realize that a successful job interview is the endgame for our students, it is important to begin helping them work toward that goal from day one.

Great job interviews don’t just happen. Outstanding job candidates possess a combination of earned credentials and cultivated talents and skills. While the obvious mission of our colleges is to impart the industry-specific knowledge needed to gain credentials, it is just as essential that we model and teach the other, less tangible components of success. Building communication and soft skills is a key part of adult education, as it is these skills that will separate the truly successful graduates from the rest.
The process of landing a job after graduation begins with crafting an impressive resume. The modern resume should be a living document that changes to reflect the candidate’s growing skill set, as well as respond to employer needs and preferred language. Gone forever are the days when students could go to the student services office and create one resume that would serve them for any and all job-seeking circumstances. A graduating student should be prepared to create his or her resume in multiple formats, as well as understand how to deconstruct the document when facing online job application software. Dated language and conventions, as well as those dusty resume sample books from a generation ago, need to be tossed. A well-written resume that displays an understanding of the current trends in hiring as well as attention to detail is the door opener for our students. Advisors, counselors, and English teachers need to know what this modern, living document looks like.

Employers review resumes, but they hire people. Qualifications and skills beautifully displayed on paper or in an electronic format are just the beginning. Our graduates must go to interviews prepared to address issues like corporate culture, communication skills, and leadership ability. These areas require that we begin the interview preparation process on day one – when the student enters into our college.

There is so much information available about the lack of soft skills among college graduates and job applicants that we’ve become a bit desensitized. However, instead of tuning out the stream of reports detailing the absence of critical-thinking and communication skills, we ought to be incorporating these concepts into the total student experience from enrollment to graduation. Our students are looking forward to the day they land their dream job. We can assist them in this process by providing specialized knowledge and also modeling and teaching professional behavior. Exactly how do we do this?

As we realize that a successful job interview is the endgame for our students, it is important to begin helping them work toward that goal from day one.

Generate new enrollments from your existing inquiry data.

If 10% of your incoming inquiries go on to become students, that means 90% of your marketing budget is spent building a list of unconverted inquiries. Find out how you can extract value from this data with an automated Inquiry Nurturing Program with MDT Marketing.
In the classroom: Today's job market is hypercompetitive, and sometimes faculty are out of touch with the brutal realities of looking for nonacademic work. This does not mean instructors cannot assist students in developing the qualities that will eventually land them a job. However, it does mean that teaching faculty will need to have an attitude of intention when it comes to building knowledge and soft skills in students that may be outside their proclaimed area of instruction. Instructors can do this by modeling and insisting upon professional conduct within the classroom at all times, using real-world examples whenever possible, and incorporating critical thinking into classwork and other assignments. These strategies set the groundwork for the higher level of communication required to impress an interviewer and land a job.

Advancing and student services: Staff in advising and student services offices are typically the primary source of information for students when they are ready to begin a job search. Charged with reviewing resumes and perhaps conducting workshops on job seeking, these individuals absolutely must have current knowledge about hiring practices. Networking with human resources professionals is a good first step here. Like the rest of campus personnel, it is important that these individuals understand the hiring process of local industries, which is often faster and more focused on marketable skills than that of the typical educational institution. Part of that understanding should be played out in mock interviews with students. Practice interviews are incredibly important. However, they need to mirror the current practices in the graduates’ geographic region and field or they will be a waste of time.

At the leadership level: Relationships with area employers are one of the best ways to stay current with regard to the demands and trends in the job market. Colleges that proactively build relationships with businesses can and should have frequent discussions about desired hiring criteria and feedback regarding the performance of graduates. In addition to maintaining a link with employers, college leaders must openly acknowledge the successful job interview as a student, and therefore institutional, goal. Language denoting the importance of placement and employment should be worked into institutional documents, especially those around vision and strategic goals.
Perhaps it’s been a while since your last noneducation-related job interview, and yet you want to connect with students around this forward-thinking goal – the day they land and then ace an interview. For the last year, I’ve been conducting workshops called "You’re Hired" to help job seekers see their resume and interview skills in a new light. Here are some tips to get those key conversations with students started:

• A resume is not carved in stone; it’s a living document. Job candidates should always be prepared to update and refresh their resume before each new submission or application.
• Before an interview, candidates must research not only the company history and the basics of the position, but also the corporate culture. A job seeker should be familiar with industry trends, salary expectations, and appropriate language or jargon.
• Much of our communication is nonverbal, and so interviewees should utilize confident body language.
• It is essential to listen attentively during an interview. Sometimes an interview question is not really about the obvious.
• Follow-up after an interview is expected; stalking HR or the hiring manager is not. Multiple calls, emails or texts may be interpreted as a sign of insecurity or emotional immaturity.

Employers are seeking job candidates who have the essential skills to perform the required work, as well as the social awareness and emotional intelligence to flourish in the work environment. These complex qualities do not develop overnight, and this is the reason we must begin work in this area as soon as students enter our institutions. As we look forward to a future where students graduate and move on to fulfilling employment, our task becomes clear: We must "begin with the end in mind" and blend the cultivation of soft skills into the whole of the adult education experience. Preparing our students for future job interviews is one of the most important parts of our work.
An overview of gainful employment regulations and impacts

By Don Arnoldy, Contributing Writer

On Oct. 31, the Department of Education (DOE) published the final version of its new gainful employment regulations. A little more than three weeks later, the legislative affairs team at the Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities (APSCU) presented the first of a planned series of webinars to explain what the rules mean and how career colleges can comply with them.

The regulations have three parts: the reporting requirements, an accountability framework and the disclosure requirements.

**Reporting requirements**
Although the regulations don't take effect until July 1, 2015, depending on the outcome of the two suits filed in opposition, they will require data for the 2008-09 through 2013-14 academic years to be reported within a month of that date. Schools should not wait until July to assemble that data.

For each student in a covered program who received Title IV funds, the school will need to report the student's ID info (Social Security number); the total tuition and fees for enrollment in the program as well as the total for books, supplies and equipment included in the cost of attendance for each year; the date of initial enrollment, attendance dates, status, and whether they were full or part time on first day of enrollment; the date of completion or withdrawal; the total amount of private loans and institutional debt; the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP), credential level and length of the student's program; placement rate for the program calculated using the methodology required by the school's accrediting agency or state and the name of that accrediting agency or state; and other information the secretary requires if published in the Federal Register.

**Disclosure requirements**
There is an extensive list of items that schools need to disclose in online and printed promotional materials that identify a covered program by name. The disclosure must use a template created by the DOE and be updated at least annually.

These items include primary occupations for which the program will prepare the student (by name and SOC code) and a link to profession profiles on O*Net; the program length in calendar time and clock or credit hours; the total cost for completing the program on time; the annual earnings rate of graduates; the placement rate of the school for that program; the name of the programmatic accreditor, if applicable; whether or not the program satisfies the prerequisites for licensure in the state in which the school is located (and any other state included in the school's metropolitan statistical area); if the institution has made a determination that the program meets the applicable educational prerequisites for licensure or certification in any other state and a list of those states; and a statement saying for which states the school has not made a determination regarding licensure or certification requirements.

The disclosures continue with the total number of enrollees in most recent award year; programmatic completion rates for full-time and less-than-full-time students and withdrawal rates; the percent of enrollees who incurred debt; the median loan debt (by total enrollees, completers and withdrawals); the loan repay rate (by total, completers and withdrawals); the mean or median earnings (by total, completers and withdrawals); the cohort default rate; a link to College Navigator; and any warnings to students that may be required by the department.

**Accountability framework**
In order to maintain Title IV eligibility, covered programs will be required to meet minimum standards for the education-debt-to-earnings ratios of their graduates.
There are three possible scores:

1. Pass – Programs whose graduates have annual loan payments less than 8 percent of total earnings or less than 20 percent of discretionary earnings.
2. Zone – Programs whose graduates have annual loan payments between 8 percent and 12 percent of total earnings or between 20 percent and 30 percent of discretionary earnings.
3. Fail – Programs whose graduates have annual loan payments greater than 12 percent of total earnings and greater than 30 percent of discretionary earnings. Programs that fail in two out of any three consecutive years or are in the zone for four consecutive years become ineligible for Title IV funds.

The calculations are based on those who complete the program. If a program has less than 30 completers, the calculations are not used to determine eligibility, but if the program has more than 10 completers, the ratios must be included in the disclosures.

According to statistics provided by APSCU, those programs that will be most impacted by these regulations are those in the creative fields: graphic design, commercial photography, interior design, fashion design and other fine arts. Those that will be least impacted are mechanic, health, massage and cosmetology programs.

Certification

By Dec. 31, 2015, the most senior official at the school must certify that all of its programs that are subject to the regulations meet all of the requirements; that each program is approved by, or is otherwise included in the institution's accreditation by, its recognized agency; that the programs are programmatically accredited, if required; that, for the state in which the school is located, or other states as required, each program satisfies the educational prerequisites for licensure or certification requirements in that state; that a new program is not substantially similar to a program that, in the last three years, became ineligible, or was failing or in the zone and was voluntarily discontinued by the school; and that if a state or federal agency requires, that programs demonstrate a "reasonable relationship" (defined as the program not exceeding by more than 50 percent the minimum number required clock hours) between program length and the training needed for the occupation for which the program prepares students.

Regardless of which programs face the biggest impact, it is important for all schools to consider the ramifications of the new regulations. Reviewing requirements for reporting, disclosure and accountability should be a priority for institutional executives.
WHY I STRIVE
FOR EXCELLENCE

LORRAINE CREADON
Certified Higher Education Professional (CHEP) in Teaching
Berks Technical Institute

How many years of experience do you have in higher education?
I have 14 years of experience.

How did you begin your career in higher education?
I was working as a certified school nurse at Muhlenberg High School and had attended two educator externships during my summer off. The externships were with companies in the area, and the intent was to find out firsthand what employers are looking for in a future employee. These externships inspired me to get involved in the educational process. I started working summers for Berks Technical Institute (BTI) teaching the Medical Assisting program and then full time when I retired from the school district.

What part of your job brings you the most personal satisfaction?
I believe that education is a lifelong process and want to be involved in bringing that message to learners of all ages. The challenges of teaching a diverse population and making a real difference in their lives gives me the most personal satisfaction. I think that I am as proud as some of the family members when I see my students walk across the stage.

What advice do you have for fellow educators in the career college sector of higher education?
The most important thing you can do is really care about the success of your students. If they know that you want them to succeed, they try even harder. Also, you must be flexible and adapt to the different learning styles of your students. What works for one student does not work for another. The most important lesson is that you have to teach to the level of your students to help them be successful. The expressions on their faces let you know if you are getting through. Seeing the light bulb go on when students finally understand a concept is reward in itself.

Why are professional development and continuing education important to you?
As I said, I believe that education is a lifelong process, and it is so rewarding to be able to learn new things through the process of professional development and continuing education. I share new knowledge learned with my students and it helps them take an interest in continuing their quest for knowledge after their program has reached completion.

What is one thing you think career education leaders can do to improve institutional performance?
Career education leaders must strive to hire teaching professionals with the right attitudes about the education process. Also, providing access to continuing education is invaluable in improving the knowledge and attitudes of staff about teaching at a career education institution.

The CHEP certification is awarded by the National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Private Schools (NASASPS), an association of state regulatory agencies that govern private postsecondary education in the U.S. The CHEP certification recognizes employees of career schools, colleges and universities who strive for excellence in their respective positions with the ultimate goal of enabling institutions to develop high-performing, compliant and ethical employees to better serve students. CHEPs have successfully completed 48 hours of approved training in their area of concentration and are required to complete eight hours of approved training annually to maintain their certification. Visit www.nasasps-certified.org to learn more about the CHEP certification.
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