Innovations & Modernizations in Postsecondary Education

Prepared for the Florida Board of Governors
By Finn Strategies, LLC
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Introduction

In January 2014, the Florida Board of Governors established the Innovation and Online Committee to investigate policies and best practices for transformative and innovative approaches to the delivery of higher education. To support this mission, the Florida Board of Governors is exploring innovations and modernizations in postsecondary education across the nation. This report provides a snapshot of policies and programs that may enhance the learning experience, improve student success, expand access, lower cost, achieve efficiency, and/or leverage technology.

Committee Members:

Chair: Ned Lautenbach
Vice Chair: Ed Morton

Dick Beard
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Executive Summary

Innovations & Modernizations in Postsecondary Education offers a summary of more then two dozen innovations and modernizations in twenty areas under four general categories - Student Services, Tuition and Fees, Online Learning and Self-Paced and Competency-Based Learning. Additional reading material and resources are available at the end of the report on pages 59 - 60.

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2. Data-Based Advising and Financial Planning (pages 9 - 11): MyFutureTx is an online tool that helps students learn about the cost and return-on-investment of degrees, majors and institutions.

3. Guided Pathways to a Degree (pages 12 - 13): Used extensively in the University of Texas System, MyEdu is a free online platform that allows students to create an academic map using information from more than 800 institutions.

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Competency-Based and Self-Paced Education

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19. Employer-Based, Competency-Based Degree Programs (pages 53 - 55): College for America at Southern New Hampshire University offers an employer-based, competency-based associate degree program.

20. Personalized, Self-Paced Degree Programs (pages 56 - 58): UniveristyNow offers rolling enrollment and self-paced education using an adaptive learning platform.

Universal Postsecondary Application

Initiative: Apply Texas

Purpose

Streamline the application process for students.

Description

Texas has 36 universities, including four independent universities and six university systems which are comprised of academic and health institutions. Each independent university and university system is overseen by a governing board. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board coordinates the activities of the institutions and systems.

In 1997, Texas enacted a law (Senate Bill 150) requiring a common undergraduate application for state public universities. The law established an Advisory Committee to assist the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in developing and revising the application. In 2005, Texas expanded the statute (Senate Bill 502) to include public state colleges and technical institutes.

Initially, the common application was a paper form. Although still available in print, most students apply online at www.ApplyTexas.com.

Applications are customized by type of student, including freshman, transfer, graduate, international, transient and two-year applicants. The common application includes biographical information, test scores, extracurricular activities, employment, financial information for scholarships, and essays. Applications are submitted to institutions electronically and students can pay the application fee through the online system.

Universities can customize the common application with additional questions solely for applicants to their institution. Each university maintains their own admission criteria, sets their own timeline for applications and admissions, and establishes their own application fees.

In the online system, students create a profile and complete one application. Additional applications are then pre-populated with the original information. For paper applications, students complete one form and copy the completed form for each institution.

The system provides real-time data on individual student applications and system-wide analytics to high school guidance counselors and postsecondary institutions. High school counselors can view summary information, such as total number and type of applications, as well as status of applications for individual students.

The annual budget for initiative is $650,000 and is funded by participating institutions.

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Outcomes

The online common application successfully streamlined the application process for students. The system has also improved advising by high schools and recruitment by postsecondary institutions.

Lessons Learned

Allowing institutions to create custom questions eased concerns from universities about the common application.

The analytics have become a valuable tool in advising and recruiting. Guidance counselors monitor applications in the system and can intervene if a student begins but does not complete or submit an application. Additionally, the data is used by universities and colleges to target recruiting efforts and by high schools to improve awareness and informational efforts, such as "College Nights."

The role of the Apply Texas Advisory Committee has expanded to include new initiatives. For example, the committee is recommending an enhancement to the application

system that would allow transcripts to be sent electronically to institutions as part of the application process.

Status

The University of West Florida is developing a common application for the Florida Degree Completion Program.

11 of Florida's 12 state universities have their own online application. New College of Florida uses a common application provided by <u>The Common Application</u>, which is a not-for-profit organization that provides a common application for more than 500 colleges and universities across the nation.

The Florida Virtual Campus provides a link to the admission webpage of each public university and college in the state. The website also provides a portal to multiple resources and services for students.

Opportunities

Efforts to create a common application for adult learners may be expanded to all students, including first-time-in-college students, transfer students and international students.

Challenges

Funding would be required to establish and maintain a single application online system.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Data-Based Advising and Financial Planning

Initiative: www.MyFutureTX.com

Purpose

Improve student decision-making to reduce the cost and debt of postsecondary education.

Description

Texas has 36 universities, including four independent universities and six university systems which are comprised of academic and health institutions. Each independent university and university system is overseen by a governing board. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board coordinates the activities of the institutions and systems.

In 2014, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in partnership with not-for-profit College Measures, launched www.MyFutureTX.com, a bilingual, interactive website that generates customized reports that correlate college and careers to help parents and students make informed decisions about postsecondary education. The system includes data from the Almanac and Economic Success Metrics, the Texas Workforcce Commission and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System which is managed by the U.S. Department of Education National Center on Education Statistics.

Students can compare statistics by institution, including:
- average SAT and ACT scores,
- estimated cost of college,
- average time to complete a degree,
- estimated financial aid, and
- average student debt.

Students can also find occupations and industries that offer the greatest growth and employment opportunities, potential earnings based on careers, colleges and majors, and careers and colleges available by location.

The project was funded by a $400,000, two-year grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Texas has three other websites that provide information about college, Gen TX which is designed to inspire students to attend college, College for All Texans which provides information about requirements and financial aid, and Compare College TX which allows students to compare colleges.

Contact: Mark Schneider
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Outcomes

College Measures has launched the website and is working with high school counselors to promote the new website as a tool for decision-making by parents and students about postsecondary education.

Lessons Learned

Collecting the data and building the website were important first steps, but growing utilization by counselors and students is necessary for the long-term success of the project.

Developing a better understanding of the consumer market - students - is necessary for making this financial literacy tool useful. Connecting to students and making the data relevant to their decisions is critical.

Status

The Department of Economic Opportunity, in partnership with College Measures, developed www.BeyondEducation.org, a website which provides data to help students and parents make choices about college and careers. The Department of Economic Opportunity also issues an annual Economic Security Report, which provides data on the financial success

of postsecondary graduates. <u>Senate Bill 1366</u>, enacted in 2012, requires the report to be developed and electronically distributed by high schools and universities to students and parents. The law also requires middle and high schools to provide a two-page summary of the report with a link to the full report to each student and parent.

Florida has multiple websites for students to learn about postsecondary education in Florida, including <u>Florida Virtual Campus</u>, <u>Florida Choices</u> and <u>Smart College Choices</u>.

Opportunities

Florida has taken important first steps to provide important financial planning information to students and parents about the return on investment of postsecondary education. Providing that information to students in an easily accessible, user-friendly format may improve the use of the data in decision-making about postsecondary education.

Challenges

Building and maintaing the website will require funding. Additionally, a comprehensive outreach effort to high school counselors, college advisors and other interested parties may be necessary to build utilization of the tool.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Guided Pathways to a Degree

Initiative: Academic Maps and MyEdu

Purpose

To improve student completion and reduce cost.

Description

An academic map is a term-by-term sequence of courses required to complete a degree in fours years. This planning tool helps student navigate degree requirements to stay on track for timely completion.

Universities and colleges utilize academic maps in a variety of ways. University of North Carolina provides a suggested course of study and the registration system "flags" students who don't register or withdraw from milestone courses that ensure timely progression. At City University of New York Lehman College, freshmen students select from 25 - 30 standardized course schedules. Students who already have credit or want to explore majors may ask to substitute courses in the pre-set schedule.

MyEdu is a free online platform that allows students to create an academic map using information about degrees, courses, class schedules, professors and average grades from more than 800 institutions. Students can create professional profiles and search for internship and job opportunities. Employers can also use the tool to post job opportunities and recruit from the pool of participating students.

Officials at MyEdu say approximately one million students at participating universities used MyEdu. More than 50% of students in the University of Texas System have a MyEdu profile.

Contact: Chad Pomerleau
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Outcomes

The impact on completion is inconclusive.

Lessons Learned

Marketing is critical to participation. Once participation reached 30% at an institution, growth rapidly increased. The oldest functionalities - professor ratings and the schedule planning tool - are the most popular, while the newer functionality - the professional profile - are yet to gain the same usability.

Status

Florida State University and Florida International University use academic maps to advise students on planning their pathway to degree completion. Other universities may also use academic maps.

Opportunities

Under House Bill 7135, students entering a university or college in 2014-2015 must complete one course in each one of five general subject areas – communication, math, humanities, social science and natural science – to earn a college degree. To meet this requirement, students will be able to choose from 25 core courses identified by faculty members during the last two years. Common core requirements for degrees provide an opportunity to create template academic maps for universities across the system.

Challenges

Universities have established system of advising students.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Campus Safety

Initiative: TapShield, LiveSafe

Purpose

Improve safety on campus.

Description

TapShield and LiveSafe are two online applications designed to provide a cost-effective method to improve safety on university and college campuses.

TapShield is mobile app that allows students to quickly contact authorities in an emergency. A tap on the Smartphone app sends the GPS location, key information about the sender such as allergies, and the nature of the emergency to the appropriate authorities.

LiveSafe is a mobile app that allows students to contact campus security in an emergency or anonymously report crimes or other activities, such as accidents, with GPS tagged picture, video, audio and text from their phone.

Both apps allow students to notify their contacts of their movements around campus, such as when they leave a destination, mode of transportation, route and estimated time of arrival. For both apps, universities pay a licensing fee which is $2 to $3 per student.

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Shy Pahlevani, Founder, LiveSafe
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Outcomes

Both apps have improved response time during emergencies.

Lessons Learned

According to University of Florida Police Chief Linda Stump, "TapShield is easy to use and allows our dispatchers to quickly view GPS location and key caller information so emergency reporting is fast and efficient. I believe this helps our department provide pervasive security in a way which resonates with our students."

Status

The University of Florida is using Tap Shield.

Opportunities

A statewide plan for using apps to improve campus security may be more cost-effective than adopting apps on individual campuses.

Challenges

Implementing mobile apps for campus security will require funding.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Mental Health and Wellness

Initiative: TAO - Therapist Assisted Online

Purpose

To provide quality mental health service to more students at a lower cost.

Description

Developed by the University of Florida, Tao - Therapist Assisted Online - is a seven-week, interactive, online program that helps students overcome anxiety. Students watch videos, complete weekly exercises which take a total of 30 - 40 minutes and meet weekly via video conference with a consoler for a 10-15 minute consultation.

Analytics provide counselors with data on the client's activities, including whether the student watched the videos or completed the exercises. Clients also receive four personalized text messages each week to encourage engagement. The online modules have a high production value and an app allows students to complete exercises on their phone. Students also learn badges and awards for progress.

Contact: Dr. Sherry Benton
             Director, Counseling and Wellness Center
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             352-392-1515

Outcomes

Launched in the fall of 2013, the program has helped more than 100 students to date. Based on the Behavior Health Measure-20, which gauges the impact of therapy, students in the online program showed more progress than students in group or individual therapy at the counseling center.

Lessons Learned

The online system maintained the counselor-client relationship while improving the level of engagement by students, which is critical to successful outcomes. The program helps three times as many students at half the cost with outcomes that were twice as good as traditional therapy

Status

University of Central Florida will test the program this summer. If successful, the program will be expanded to Florida Gulf Coast University, New College, Florida Atlantic University and Florida International University this fall.

Opportunities

Tao could provide an enterprise solution for mental health services for all of Florida's public universities and colleges.

Challenges

Funding may be an issue. Concerns may be raised about liability for counseling services.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

College-to-Career Bridge Programs

Initiative: Koru, Fullbridge, MiddCORE

Purpose

Improve student employment success after graduation.

Description

Launched in 2013, the Seattle-based company Koru offers a workplace-based program designed to successfully transition students from college to the workplace. The program includes online learning in job-specific skills, personal instruction, hands-on exercises and professional mentorship.

Koru works with companies, such as REI, zulily, Trupanion, razorfish, Julep, Payscale, Amazon, YuMe and Smartsheet, to implement the program. Each company presents a real-life problem to a cohort of students who are then coached in design thinking to ultimately develop recommendations to address the challenge. The companies have the opportunity to hire individuals at the end of the program and Koru earns a fee from the company for every hire.

Four sessions, which are three-and-a-half weeks in length, are scheduled for this summer and fall in Seattle and San Francisco. Students must apply to participate and each cohort has between 20 to 30 graduates. Tuition is $2750, plus housing and expenses, and need-based scholarships and payment plans are available.

In 2014, Koru established a partnership with 13 universities to recruit soon-to-be graduates from Bates College, Brown University, Colorado College, Connecticut College, Denison University, Georgetown University, Mount Holyoke College, Occidental College, Pomona College, University of Southern California, Vassar College, Whitman College and Williams College.

Launched in 2010, the <u>Fullbridge Program</u> is designed to fill the "liberal arts-to-career gap." The program provides a variety of immersive "boot camps" which combine online learning, collaborative learning and business exercises in a simulated workplace environment. Coaches provide personal feedback and instruction on student work.

Some programs provide general professional skills development while others, sometimes referred to as an XBA, are geared toward specific skills such as business fundamentals, finance and entrepreneurship. Sessions range from one to four weeks. Some sessions are embedded in companies or offered on campus in partnership with a postsecondary institution. Tuition ranges from $1,500 to $5,750, plus optional housing through the network of shared living spaces called Krashpads. Limited need-based scholarships are available.

Middlebury College launched a four-week business primer program in 2006. Called <u>MiddCORE</u> which stands for creativity, opportunity, risk and entrepreneurship, this four-week program is offered on campus to students in January for free. Students participating in the program take a pre and post assessment of defined competencies, such as "leading a team" and "thinking strategically," to evaluate the impact of the program.

Beginning last summer, a new four-week summer immersion program at Sierra Nevada College was open to all students. The cost of the summer program is $9500 which covers tuition, room and board.

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Outcomes

Demand for MiddCORE has increased so much that students must now apply for acceptance to the program. Survey results indicate success in improving student confidence in the core areas.

Three individuals who participated in an eight-day Koru program in January were hired by the company.

Lessons Learned

Cost may be a challenge for students. Students may not recognize the purpose and return-on-investment of these programs.

Status

Florida State University has an initiative to become an "entrepreneurial university." "Entrepreneurs-in-residence" work to ensure students in every major are taught by faculty that have been successful entrepreneurs and business leaders in their discipline.

University of Florida established the Innovation Academy which offers a spring-summer program that focuses on innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship ethics and leadership.

Opportunities

Florida's growing STEM industry may provide an opportunity for embedded bridge programs.

Challenges

Funding will be required for the development and delivery of a program. Student interest in such a program may be an issue.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Next Generation Transcripts

Initiative: Degreed

Purpose

To improve postgraduate success.

Description

Launched in 2012, Degreed is a free online tool that allows students to track and quantify learning from both accredited institutions and non-accredited sources, such as Coursera and iTunes. The system uses algorithms to establish a score that reflects the value of the learning. For example, an economics degree from Harvard is 3,787 points while a programming course at Codeacademy is worth 13 points. Students can have their identity, degree and transcripts verified for $12. The profile can then be used to provide potential employers with a comprehensive perspective on a graduate's skills and knowledge.

Contact: David Blake
CEO, Degreed

Outcomes

In 2013, Degreed partnered with Microsoft's Virtual Academy to give students who complete the training program the option to use the online tool to create a profile that highlights their skills and knowledge in information technology.

Lessons Learned

Awaiting feedback.

Status

A law (CS/HB 7029) enacted in 2013 requires the Florida Board of Governors to develop guidelines for awarding credit for successful completion of massively open online courses.

Opportunities

Degreed may offer an opportunity to quantify learning from non-traditional sources, such as MOOCs, that may not merit credit from a traditional institution.

Challenges

The valuation of learning would need to be aligned.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Guaranteed Tuition

Initiative: Four-Year Guaranteed Tuition

Purpose

To incentivize student completion and provide predictability in the cost of tuition.

Description

In 2005, the University of Kansas established a four-year, guaranteed per credit tuition rate for first-time-in-college freshman students. The tuition remains "frozen" at the same amount for four years which is the average completion time for most baccalaureate programs. After four years, students pay the standard tuition which varies annually. Degree programs may charge an additional fee. Housing and meal plans are not fixed or guaranteed. Transfer and part-time students pay the standard tuition.

For the 2013-2014 school year, the fixed-rate tuition was $307.50 per credit hour or $9,225 per year for 30 credit hours and the standard tuition rate was $279.85 per credit hour or $8395.50 per year for 30 credit hours. While the tuition per credit hour is higher in the freshman year, the cost per credit hour decreases in the last two years. Based on tuition during the last four years, the cost for a degree requiring 120 hours would be $31,500 under the fixed-rate tuition and $31,173 under the standard tuition.

Other universities and colleges that offer a similar guaranteed, fixed-rate tuition. George Washington University and Columbia college offer a guaranteed, fixed-rate tuition for five years or ten terms. Northland College extends the fixed-rate guarantee to fees and room and board.

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Outcomes

The impact on graduation rates is inconclusive.

Lessons Learned

Communication is critical. Because the guaranteed tuition is per credit, not per term, the annual cost varies which can cause confusion. While the tuition is guaranteed, the cost of housing and meals is not, which is a significant portion of the total cost of postsecondary education. An all-inclusive guaranteed rate may be a better approach. Some students and families have suggested the creating an "opt-in" for the guaranteed tuition.

Status

The Florida Legislature establishes the per credit hour tuition in the budget which requires approval from the Governor.

Opportunities

Alternative tuition structures may incentivize completion. Offering multiple options may allow families to make decisions based on their circumstances.

Challenges

Establishing alternative tuition structures may require legislation. Universities could face structural and institutional challenges with adopting an alternative tuition model.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Block Tuition

Initiative: Annual Block Rate Tuition

Purpose

Reduce the cost of postsecondary education and incentivize completion.

Description

In 2012, the Abilene Christian University implemented annual block tuition. Under the structure, full-time students (12 credit hours in the fall and spring terms) are required to pay for 30 credit hours annually but can take up to 36 credit hours during the year, including the fall, spring and summer terms. Students are limited to 18 credit hours in fall and spring terms. The tuition includes all fees (academic enrichment and technology, academic services, healthcare, public safety and student activity and recreation). Housing, meal plans and books are additional costs.

Students who take less than 12 hours pay a per credit hour tuition rate.

Contact: Steven Holley
              Chief Financial Officer
              Abilene Christian University
              325-674-2000

Outcomes

Students are taking more courses during the summer. The new structure has streamlined and simplified billing.

Lessons Learned

Most students appreciate the ability to take courses during the summer without additional tuition and the structure is especially beneficial to students who want to accelerate

their completion. Some seniors who require just 12 credits to graduate have had to pay for the additional 3 credit hours even if they don't take the course.

Status

The Florida Legislature establishes a per credit hour tuition for state public postsecondary institutions. Some institutions, like the University of Florida, have received approval to implement a block tuition program but have not yet done so. The University of Florida Online is currently contemplating a block tuition structure for their four year, fully online baccalaureate programs.

Opportunities

Alternative tuition structures may incentivize completion. Offering multiple options may allow families to make decisions based on their circumstances.

Challenges

Establishing alternative tuition structures may require legislation. Universities could face structural and institutional challenges with adopting an alternative tuition model.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Subscription Tuition

Initiative: Subscription Tuition

Purpose

Reduce the cost of postsecondary education and improve student completion.

Description

University of Wisconsin's Flexible Option offers competency-based education with two tuition structures. The All-You-Can-Learn Option allows students to complete as many competencies and assessments as possible within a three-month subscription period for a flat tuition rate of $2250. The Single Competency-Set Option allow students to enroll in a single competency set for $900. Students can enroll at the beginning of each month and students must demonstrate the competencies within the subscription period to earn credit.

UniversityNow's two universities, New Charter University and Patten University set a flat rate tuition per term for undergraduate students. Students can take as many courses as they can complete during the term but can only take one course at a time. Tuition includes all costs, including textbooks, study materials and other resources. Tuition at Patten University is $1316 per term. Students can pay a lump sum of $1250 which comes with a 5% discount or $350 per month which includes a $21 monthly payment fee. Tuition at New Charter University is $796 per term or $199 a month. Students are also eligible for 5% discount if tuition is paid in a lump sum. If a student is using an employer benefit program to pay their tuition, the universities will discount the tuition to meet the available benefit amount.

At Capella University, students in FlexPath, a competency-based program, pay a flat-rate tuition per quarter. Students can only take two courses at the same time but may take as many courses as they can during a three-month term.

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Gene Wade

Founder and CEO, University Now

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Outcomes

The low cost is making degrees affordable and accessible for students. Additionally, the approach by UniversityNow is making it easier for students to take advantage of the employer benefit programs for education.

Lessons Learned

Financial aid is a significant challenge for competency-based education.

The UniversityNow model has made degree programs accessible and affordable, which has drawn significant interest from prospective students. When they learn about enrollment and payment options, students are more likely to enroll sooner. A self-paced program provides opportunities for greater savings by ambitious students who want to accelerate their completion toward a degree.

While it may seem counter-intuitive, the fact that UniversityNow does not accept financial aid has not been a disincentive for students or a cost-burden for the institutions. The institutions save money by not implementing the financial aid programs and are better able to tailor financial assistance to meet the specific needs of individual students, whatever they may be. Employer education benefit plans play an important role in filling this need.

Status

The Florida Legislature establishes a per credit hour tuition for state public postsecondary institutions. All Florida public institutions accept federal financial aid.

Opportunities

Alternative tuition models that encourage completion and save money for students should be considered as universities develop competency-based, self-paced academic degree and certificate programs. Offering multiple options may allow families to make decisions based on their circumstances.

Challenges

Establishing alternative tuition structures may require legislation. Universities could face structural and institutional challenges with adopting an alternative tuition model. Alternative tuition structures may not accommodate financial aid.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Tuition and Fees for Online Students

Initiative: Differentiated Tuition and Fees for Online Students

Purpose

To reduce the cost of online postsecondary education.

Description

Valdosta State University has different tuition for online and on-campus courses. Online courses offered by the institution are $250 per credit hour and on campus courses are $497 per credit hour. Additionally, students can take courses through eCore, which are online courses provided by the University System of Georgia, for $189 per hour.

Valdosta State University has different mandatory fees for residential and online students.

Fee	On-Campus Students	Online Students
Technology	$48	$48
Access Card	$10	$10
Institution	$295	$295
Student Activity	$234	$0
Health	$87	$0
Health Facility	$40	$0
Athletic	$121	$0
Transportation	$20	$0
Parking Facility	$100	$0
Total	$955	$353

Students who take four or more credits on campus are assessed nine fees for a total of $955 per semester. Students who take less than four credit hours are assessed a prorated

amount of the Activity and Athletic fees. Fully online students are assessed three fees for a total of $353 per semester. Students who take eCore courses must also pay the fees to their "home" institution. Students who take both on-campus and online courses must pay the fees for on-campus students. (Fee amounts are based on the 2013-2014 school year.)

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      229-333-5941

Outcomes

Awaiting feedback.

Lessons Learned

Awaiting feedback.

Status

Except for University of Florida Online, universities charge online students the same tuition and fees as on-campus students. Additionally, many universities charge an additional fee for online courses. Tuition at University of Florida Online is 75% of on-campus tuition and students are only required to pay fees for technology, financial aid and capital improvements.

Opportunities

Lower tuition and fees for online courses may incentivize completion.

Challenges

Establishing alternative tuition structures may require legislation.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Free Online Course Packages

Initiative: Open Course Library

Purpose

Provide high quality content and resources for faculty.
Reduce the cost of postsecondary education for students.

Description

Washington has 34 public community and technical colleges which are overseen by the
State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, a nine-member board appointed by the
Governor. The system serves approximately 400,000 students annually.

In 2011, the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges launched
the Open Course Library, an initiative to develop free, high quality, online content for the
most popular postsecondary courses in the state system. The Open Course Library offers a
whole course package, including textbook, syllabi, course activities, readings and
assessments. These courses were curated by faculty in the Washington college system and
aligned to the learning outcomes for the courses. The courses are designed for face-to-face,
blended and online courses.

Faculty and colleges are not required to adopt the courses but can access, customize and
use the content for free. Students can access the textbooks online for free and can have
textbooks printed for a nominal fee. If the whole course package is utilized, the total cost of
instructional material, including a printed online textbook, may not exceed $30.

Courses and materials were developed by teams comprised of college faculty,
instructional designers, librarians and other experts who were selected through a competitive
bid process. Faculty researched existing open resource material for the courses before creating
new material. All content created or used by the initiative is licensed by Creative Commons
(CC BY) which only requires attribution for the sources.

Courses were developed and released in two phases. The first 42 courses were completed and released in October 2011. The remaining 39 courses were completed and release in April 2013.

The initiative was funded with a $750,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and $750,000 in state funding. There is no ongoing funding for this initiative. The documents are hosted in Google Drive which is free and minor updates to the content are performed by in-house staff.

Contact: Boyoung Chae
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             Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges
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             360-704-1011

Outcomes

Although Washington doesn't track the use of the online courses, surveys of faculty indicate a growing awareness and acceptance of open education resources.

[A 2013 analysis by Student Public Interest Research Groups](#) (Student PIRG) found that students save an average of $96 per course by using textbooks through the Open Course Library. During the 2012-2013 school year, students saved a total of $2.9 million. A 2011 analysis by the same group estimated a savings of $41.6 million if all colleges adopted the course material.

Lessons Learned

According to press reports, the $30 limit on instructional materials has been challenging in courses where students need access to original texts and primary source material, such as a modern translations of ancient philosophy or classic literature, in addition to textbooks. Because these original texts are sold to the general public, publishers are not inclined to provide the content for free. Assigning multiple original texts can increase the cost of the

course beyond the $30 maximum, making the course ineligible for the free textbook in the Open Course Library.

Veteran faculty preferred a broad offering of free resources to the whole course packages, while adjunct faculty appreciated the whole course packages.

Education, training and professional development for faculty are critical to acceptance and use of open education resources. Additionally, financial incentives for faculty can promote use and contribution of open education resources.

Status

In 2004, Florida developed The Orange Grove, a statewide online repository of digital learning resources, for teachers and educational institutions. The repository is a collection of free textbooks, courseware, learning objects, videos, administrative and professional development documents and statewide licensed instructional resources for K12 and higher education. Faculty can access, customize, contribute to and rate items in the repository. The Orange Grove is a project of the Florida Virtual Campus, formerly the Florida Distance Learning Consortium.

In their 2014 report, the Task Force on Post Secondary Education also noted that, "many institutions that have supported faculty development of open eTextbooks for students use (at a lower cost) are abandoning their efforts because they are not financially sustainable or the faculty members stopped using the eTextbooks for their courses."

Opportunities

In addition to The Orange Grove, Florida's statewide course numbering system and the general education core course requirements established in House Bill 7135 provide the opportunity to develop common content and courses across the university and college systems.

All of Florida's public postsecondary institutions and nearly 30 non-public postsecondary institutions use the statewide course numbering system, which describes what

students will learn in the course. The common course numbering system allows for the development of common content.

House Bill 7135 requires students entering a university or college in 2014-2015 to complete one course in each one of five general subject areas – communication, math, humanities, social science and natural science – to earn a college degree. To meet this requirement, students will be able to choose from 25 core courses identified by faculty members during the last two years. Providing high quality, free content for these courses ensures students gain the knowledge required by the course at an affordable cost.

Challenges

Developing common online courses with integrated textbooks will require funding to organize and pay faculty to curate free resources and compile the online textbooks.

In their 2014 report, the Task Force on Post Secondary Education noted that the "adoption of open eTextbooks is also sometimes hindered by potential faculty resistance, lack of awareness, competition from commercial publishers, identification of materials, and sustainability."

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Systemwide Online Courses

Initiative: eCore

Purpose

To increase student completion of degrees.

Description

The University System of Georgia is comprised of 31 universities and colleges which are governed by a 19-member appointed Board of Regents. Students graduating from institutions in the system are required to complete 42 credit hours in six general education areas, including Communication Outcomes (at least six credit hours), Quantitative Outcomes (at least three credit hours), Humanities, Fine Arts and Ethics (at least six credit hours), Natural Science, Mathematics and Technology (at least seven credit hours including four credit hours in a lab science course), and Social Sciences (at least six credit hours), and 18 hours in lower division pre-requisite courses. Individual institutions determine the courses offered at their university.

In 2000, the University System launched eCore which offers online general education and undergraduate courses at 11 affiliated institutions within the system. The courses were developed by teams of instructional designers and faculty from institutions across the system. eCore courses are offered by the institutions and taught by faculty who are experienced online instructors and nominated by their institutions. Credit earned through the eCore program is transferrable to all institutions within the system.

Courses follow the traditional academic calendar and are not self-paced. Students are required to participate in the course which typically includes online comments and contributions, assignments, group projects, quizzes and exams. Courses have a consistent design to ensure ease of use.

Tuition for eCore is $189 per credit hour for both residential and non-residential students. Per credit tuition rates for on-campus courses vary by institution, ranging from

$260 for research universities to $165.80 for regional universities to $154.14 / 165.80 for state universities.

Contact: Christy Talley Smith
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              ctalley@westga.edu
              678-839-5300

Outcomes

Awaiting feedback.

Lessons Learned

Awaiting feedback.

Status

The Florida Virtual Campus provides an online catalogue for online courses offered at public universities, state colleges and participating independent institutions. Each university develops and teaches their own online courses. Credits earned in Florida's university and college system are transferable with the two systems.

Opportunities

House Bill 7135 requires students entering a university or college in 2014-2015 to complete one course in each one of five general subject areas – communication, math, humanities, social science and natural science – to earn a college degree. To meet this requirement, students will be able to choose from 25 core courses identified by faculty members during the last two years. Common core requirements for degrees provide an opportunity for development and delivery of common online core courses.

Challenges

Building and coordinating a statewide online course offering will require funding and participation from university institutions.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Unbundled Online Courses

Initiative: Learn on Demand

Purpose

To improve student success by providing a flexible path to a degree.

Description

The <u>Kentucky Community & Technical College System</u> has 16 colleges and more than 70 campuses. The system offers certificates and two-year associates degrees as well as a baccalaureate transfer program which allows students to transfer to a four-year Kentucky institution after completing an associates degree. The system offers two online programs, Learn by Term, which is a traditional online program, and Learn on Demand, which offers full courses and sub-sets of full courses.

In 2011, the Kentucky Community & Technical College System launched <u>Learn on Demand</u>, which offers both full courses and "bite-size" modules that build toward a complete course. Full courses are comprised of three or more modules. Full courses take 15 weeks to complete while modules take from 3 to 8 weeks. Courses are offered primarily online, although some require site-based activities such as exams and labs which are located at an approved location that is convenient for the student. Students earn a fraction of credit for each module and completion of all the modules in the course results in full credit for the course.

Students can enroll whenever they want and courses are self-paced. Each course starts with an assessment. Students who score high enough on the assessment can go directly to the final exam. Students who pass the final earn credit for the module. Courses have interactive features and faculty members called "facilitators" support student learning.

For example, Principles of Management (BA 283) is comprised of six modules, each worth a half credit:

- Introduction to Management (BA 2831)
- Planning, Decision Making & the Manager's Environment (BA 2832)
- The Process of Organizing (BA 2833)
- Leading & Staffing (BA 2834)
- Controlling (BA 2835)
- Special Concerns (BA 2836)

The modules allow students to take only the content they need. For example, a student earning a degree or certificate in information technology would need to complete a course in Web Development, while a small business owner who wants to learn how to build a website may only need a specific module called HTML concepts.

The cost of a module is a fraction of the cost of the course and financial aid is available.

Contact: TBD
              Kentucky Community & Technical College System
              866-321-7406

Outcomes

Awaiting feedback.

Lessons Learned

Awaiting feedback.

Status

Florida universities do not currently offer courses in modules. However, the Florida College System is developing online modules for developmental education courses.

Opportunities

Florida's robust offering of online courses may provide existing content to develop online modules.

Challenges

The development and production of modules will require funding.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for Credit

Initiative: MOOC2Degree

Purpose

To reduce the cost of postsecondary education.

Description

Several institutions are implementing programs that allow students to earn credit toward a degree for successfully completing a massively open online course. The programs require students to demonstrate mastery of the material on assessments and a final exam.

The University of Cincinnati offers a graduate-level massively open online course, Innovation and Design Thinking, to the general public. Available for the first time during the fall of 2013, the course was co-taught by faculty from two different disciplines, business and engineering. Students who pursue a Masters in Business Administrator or a Masters in Engineering can earn two credits for successful completion of the course. To earn credit for the course, students must earn at least a 75% on 6 of 7 quizzes and pass the final exam. Students must apply for and enroll in the degree programs by January 31, 2015. Credit is awarded after the student completes six credits in the program. The cost per credit for the MBA program is $873 per credit or $1746 for a two credit course.

The University of Texas Arlington College of Nursing offers a massively open online course, Enhancing Patient Safety through Interprofessional Collaborative Practice, in its RN to BSN program. To earn credits for the course, students must successfully complete the course with a score of 80% or higher on all six assessments and pass an online proctored course within seven days of the end of the course with a score of 70% or higher. Students must also apply and be accepted to the program. Students must apply to the program within six months of taking and passing the proctored exam and, once in the program, must request the credits. The total cost for earning the three credits is between $92.50 and $101.50, including $17.50 - $26.50 for the online exam, $50 for the application fee and a $25 fee to process the credits. Conversely, the cost for a three credit nursing course is $771 or $257 per

credit. The MOOC is also available for continuing education credit. Registered nurses must meet certain requirements, complete paperwork and pay a $25 fee to process the credits.

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513-556-6000

Outcomes

More than 2500 people from more than 90 countries participated in the first-ever massively open online course offered at the University of Cincinnati. Although the deadline for applying to the graduate programs is next year, two students have already applied to the programs.

Lessons Learned

Having a comprehensive strategy which includes clearly defined goals, purpose and plan for sustainability, for MOOCs is critical. University of Cincinnati designed their MOOC to become a feeder for two masters degree programs and to build brand awareness. The program allowed students to pilot the program to see if it was a match. The MOOC is now part of both degree programs.

Quality and comparability are important. University of Cincinnati matched the MOOC to an existing course, ensured content and assessments were equivalent and used existing faculty.

MOOCs are a vehicle to bring relevancy to degree programs. University of Cincinnati included representatives from regional industries in the development of the MOOC. The industry experience and perspective offered an application aspect to the MOOC. The addition of industry representation also increases interest from non-degree seeking students who can earn a certificate to demonstrate new skills to their employer.

Marketing is a challenge. Universities need to rethink their approach to marketing to a global audience.

Status

The University of West Florida is implementing a MOOC2Degree Program. Florida International University is developing a MOOC with adaptive technology and a prior learning assessment for its introduction to psychology course. Students will be able to take the assessment for a small fee or take the MOOC and the assessment for $150, a fraction of the cost of the traditional course.

Universities and colleges award credit for passing grades on exams given under the College Level Exam Program (CLEP). A law (CS/HB 7029) enacted in 2013 requires the Florida Board of Governors to develop guidelines for awarding credit for successful completion of massively open online courses.

Opportunities

All of Florida's public postsecondary institutions and nearly 30 non-public postsecondary institutions use the statewide course numbering system, which describes what students will learn in the course. The common course numbering system allows for the development of common prior learning assessments.

House Bill 7135 requires students entering a university or college in 2014-2015 to complete one course in each one of five general subject areas – communication, math, humanities, social science and natural science – to earn a college degree. To meet this requirement, students will be able to choose from 25 core courses identified by faculty members during the last two years. Developing a prior learning assessment for these courses, which would allow students to demonstrate mastery of the content learned through a MOOC or other means, may allow students to reduce the cost of postsecondary education.

Challenges

Developing MOOCs and prior learning assessments will require funding.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Blended Bilingual Pathway

Initiative: Ameritas Hispanic Pathways

Purpose

Improve success of Hispanic students.

Description

Brandman University, a fully accredited, not-for-profit, private university within the Chapman University System, offers undergraduate, graduate, credential and certificate programs online and through a network of 26 campuses in California and Washington.

Launched in 2012, Ameritas College of Brandman University offers Hispanic Pathways, a blended program of online and onsite instruction with bilingual faculty, advisors and academic and financial aid counselors for Hispanic students. The program offers ten general education courses that prepare students to pursue either an associate's or baccalaureate degree at a two or four year institutions.

Most classes are taught in English but all faculty are bilingual which helps overcome any language barriers students may encounter during their course of study. Students are required to participate in one 3-hour class per week at one of four campuses and complete 2.5 hours per week of online instruction. The program also provides a comprehensive support system for students such as personal coaching from success specialists.

Officially called the Blended Dual Language English Immersion program, this pathway allows working adults to master college-level English while earning credit toward their college degree. Unlike other immersion programs, this program has functional bilingualism as a goal.

Contact: Tony Digiovanni
             CEO, Ameritas
             tony@ameritascollege.net, 949-341-7618

Outcomes

The program is finishing its second year. Completion rates for students are 60% to 65%. The model will be implemented in a Texas college.

Lessons Learned

The scope of the initiative shifted from a four-year institution to a first-year program based on feedback from their target audience. The school learned that most Hispanic students want to attend a local community college or university, not a fully bilingual college. In response, the college adjusted their approach to serve as a "bridge" designed to help Hispanic students successfully complete their first year of college before transferring to another institution both within and outside their system.

Status

Florida universities do not currently offer a bilingual immersion pathway for Hispanic students.

Opportunities

Florida has a significant Hispanic population that may benefit from this type of program.

Challenges

Developing and marketing a Hispanic pathway will require funding.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Collaborative Development of an Online Degree Program

Initiative: One Degree, Nine Universities

Purpose

Increase baccalaureate degree completion for adult learners.

Description

In 2013, the nine institutions in the University of Louisiana System launched a new online degree program - a Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Leadership - which was collaborative developed by universities in the system. All of the universities offer the degree program but each university offers a different concentration which provides relevant specialization in a particular industry. The nine concentrations are:

University of New Orleans: Cultural and Arts Institutions
University of Louisiana at Monroe: Financial Services
University of Louisiana at Lafayette: Health and Wellness
Northwestern Louisiana University: Public Safety Administration
Southeastern Louisiana University: Disaster Relief Management
Louisiana Tech University: Public Safety Administration
Nicholls State University: Foodservice Strategies and Operations
Grambling State University: Human Relations
McNeese State University: Strategic and Global Communication

The degree program was designed for students who have an associate degree or at least 60 college credits. Courses are delivered online in 8-week blocks and students can earn credit through prior learning assessments. Students apply and enroll in a "home" institution but can take courses at any university in the system.

The academic major consists of 10 core courses (30 credit hours) in organizational leadership which were designed and developed by faculty across the university system and 6 to 7 courses (18 to 21 credit hours) designed and developed by faculty in each institution.

Each concentration includes a capstone course which requires students to apply skills and knowledge learned in the program.

Contact: Erica Calais

Executive Director for Academic and Student Affairs

University of Louisiana System

225-342-6950

Outcomes

Awaiting feedback.

Lessons Learned

Awaiting feedback.

Status

The Florida Board of Governors establishes criteria for the development of new degree programs and has the authority to approve to new degree programs (BOG 8.011).

Opportunities

Ten of Florida's public universities offer online courses which would make collaborative development of an online degree possible.

Challenges

Development of new degree programs may require funding.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Competency-Based Degree Programs

Initiative: Flexible Option at University of Wisconsin, FlexPath at Capella University

Purpose

Improve student success and completion while reducing cost of a postsecondary degree.

Description

Competency-based degree programs allow students to earn degrees by demonstrating competencies rather than acquiring credit hours. Competencies define the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors students are expected to master. A competency set is a grouping of competencies that together define the skills and knowledge in an education area, such as leadership skills.

The University of Wisconsin Flexible Option offers five competency-based degree programs - Associates of Arts & Science, Business & Technical Communications, Diagnostic Imaging, Information Science & Technology and Nursing (RN to BSN).

A variety of assessments, including tests, projects, papers, portfolios and other activities, are used to measure knowledge. An Academic Success Coach helps students develop a personalized learning plan, find learning resources and prepare for assessments. Resources cans include textbooks, courses, work and practical experience. Students can enroll in the beginning of the month.

Capella University's <u>FlexPath</u> offers two competency-based degrees - a bachelors and a masters in business. The programs are approved by the Commission on Higher Learning and the U.S. Department of Education.

Under FlexPath, students complete a series of assessments, such as papers or proposals, to demonstrate their comprehension of concepts and their ability to apply the knowledge. Courses do not require specific instructional material but suggest learning resources, many of them free, to students. Students have access to Capella's online library and can use textbooks, simulations, videos, articles or personal experience to learn the competencies and complete the assessments. Students work at their own pace and do not have weekly assignments or participation requirements. However, students have a significant amount of personalized interaction with faculty.

Assessments are evaluated by faculty based on specific criteria. Students do not receive grades or earn a GPA. Students must demonstrate the required competencies to move to the next course.

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             University of Wisconsin, Extension
             david.Schejbal@uwex.edu, 608-262-2478

             Capella University
             www.capella.edu
             612-977-5499

Outcomes

Wisconsin's Flexible Option is limiting admission as it builds out the programs.

Lessons Learned

Competency-based programs face two major challenges. First, federal financial aid rules are an obstacle to implementing a competency-based program. Second, student information systems are not built to handle competency-based education systems.

Status

The University of West Florida is developing Complete Florida Degree Program, which will incorporate competency-based education and prior learning assessments.

Opportunities

A competency-based model may be an option for core general education courses and new online degree and certificate programs.

Challenges

Funding may be required to develop a competency-based program. Approval by the U.S. Department of Education may be required.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Employer-Based, Competency-Based Degree Programs

Initiative: College for America

Purpose

Expand access to postsecondary education and reduce the cost of college for students.

Description

College for America at Southern New Hampshire University offers a competency-based degree program provided through participating employers. Students can earn an Associate of Art degree by demonstrating mastery of 120 specific competencies in nine areas, including communication, critical and creative thinking, quantitative skills, digital fluency and information literacy, personal effectiveness, ethics and social responsibility, teamwork and collaboration, business essentials and science, society and culture. Competencies are "can do" statements such as, "Can define and use marketing terminology and concepts," and "Can convey information by creating charts and graphs." The curriculum focuses on the most relevant and necessary skills for the workplace. The degree is transferable.

Students work at their own place to complete 20 to 50 real-life projects, such as create a marketing plan or develop a budget. Students' work is evaluated based on specific criteria. Students do not earn grades. Students must demonstrate mastery of a competency to move to the next task. Students can work on a competency for as long as it takes to gain mastery.

The program has multiple levels of support to enhance success:
- Learning Coach, who helps the student navigate the program.
- Accountability Partner, who is chosen by the student to provide motivation, similar to a "workout buddy."
- Mentor, who is from the student's workplace and focuses on career development.
- Evaluator, who reviews tasks and gives feedback.

Students must enroll through their employer. Tuition is $2500 per year, all inclusive, which is often covered by a tuition reimbursement benefit provided by the employer.

Contact: College for America
www.collegeforamerica.org
855-764-8232

Outcomes

College for America, which was launched in March 2103, has 400 students and 48 participating employers. Businesses include McDonald's, ConAgra Foods, Sodexo, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, and Cumberland Farms.

Lessons Learned

Business partners that provide employees with defined career paths tend to have more success with this program because the purpose and benefits of participation are clear to both the employer and the students. Additionally, businesses with an existing and comprehensive human resources infrastructure tend to have the support system required for students to succeed in this type of program.

Status

The Complete Florida Degree Program, led by the University of West Florida, is developing partnerships with Florida businesses to identify and support potential students for degree completion.

Opportunities

Florida's largest employers may provide an opportunity for implementing an employer-based or competency-based program for degree completion.

Challenges

Universities have an established system of student recruitment.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Personalized, Self-Paced Degree Programs

Initiative: UniversityNow

Purpose

Improve student success by offering a personalized educational experience.

Description

UniversityNow owns and operates two for-profit, accredited universities in California. New Charter University, which is nationally accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council, is fully online and Patten University, which is regionally accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, offers degree programs both online and face-to-face at its Oakland campus. Both universities offer Associate's, Bachelor's and Master's degree programs. Neither university accepts federal funding or federal financial aid.

The degree programs are delivered on a custom-built software platform that adapts to each student's prior knowledge and learning preferences. Courses start with an assessment to determine a student's knowledge of the subject. Results are used to focus instruction on new concepts. The courses use online textbooks, videos and other resources and have multiple practice and self-assessment tools to measure progress. Teachers and students interact on discussion boards and through a messaging system.

As students move through the material, their progress is reported on a readiness meter which helps students determine when they are ready to take the final exam. Students can only take a final exam when their readiness meter indicates their probability of passing the test. Final exams are given online using an online proctoring service.

The universities offer rolling enrollment. Students can start any Monday, excluding holidays. Terms are 16 weeks from the start date but students can finish sooner.

The universities use extensive analytics to monitor student progress and measure the quality of the course. Instructors can predict student outcomes based on a student's online

learning behavior. Improvements to the courses are made continually and students are notified of improvement as they happen.

Contact: Gene Wade
                              Founder and CEO, University Now
                              Executive Assistant: Melissa Villanueva, mvillanueva@unow.com
                              415-354-5648

Outcomes

Although relatively new, enrollment at both universities is increasing and student retention is improving.

Lessons Learned

The technology facilitates the student-centered instructional model. The software platform would not yield the same results if implemented in isolation or within a traditional instructional model.

Status

Florida postsecondary institutions are exploring opportunities to implement adaptive learning technologies. University of Florida Online is evaluating adaptive learning technologies to enhance their learning management system, Canvas.

Opportunities

A competency-based model may be an option for core general education courses and new online degree and certificate programs.

Challenges

Funding will be required to develop or acquire an adaptive learning platform. Federal and state requirements for financial aid may constrain the ability to implement weekly

enrollment options. Institutional resistance to this new instructional model may be a challenge.

Comments by the Innovation and Online Committee's Advisory Group:

Reading Material and Resources

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Washington State Community and Technical Colleges Announces 81-Course Library of Free and Low-Cost Educational Resources, State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, April 30, 2013

State of Washington to Offer Online Materials as Texts, Chronicle of Higher Education, January 9, 2011

MyFutureTX.com helps determine higher education options, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, February 11, 2014

My Future TX Website Provides Texas Students and Counselors with Information to Make Strong College and Career Choices, American Institutes for Research, February 11, 2014

For Profit and People: UniversityNow Rides a Low-Cost Wave, New York Times, November 1, 2013

Ameritas College of Brandman University: Targeting Latino Adults, Hispanic Outlook Magazine, May 27, 2013

New College, New Model, Inside Higher Ed, May 7, 2012

Hundreds of Colleges Offering Fixed Tuition with Promises to Not Raise Rates, Huffington Post, December 23, 2013

Competing with Competency, Inside Higher Ed, August 6, 2012

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The Business of Boot Camps, Wall Street Journal, March 7, 2013

XBA Aims to Fill a Hole Left by an 'Outdated' MBA Model, Bloomberg Businessweek, March 5, 2013

Campus Psychological Counseling Goes Online for Students at U. of Florida, Chronicle of Higher Education, January 13, 2014

Proactive on Prior Learning, Inside Higher Ed, April 15, 2014

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The New, Nonlinear Path Through College, Chronicle of Higher Education, September 30, 2013

Degreed wants to make online courses count, CNN Money, April 15, 2013

Competency as One Answer, Inside Higher Ed, March 27, 2014

Principles for Developing Competency-Based Education Programs, Change Magazine, March-April 2014

Kaleidescope Project