RE-ENGINEERING RETENTION:
NEW WINE IN AN OLD BOTTLE

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Session Overview

- Welcome and Introductions
- Context
  - The John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education
  - Overview of Foundations of Excellence (FoE)
- The Studies
  - Retention. Retention-Related Tuition Impact, and Return on investment Analyses
- Promising Practices – "What They Did"
  - Retention Related Practices
- Questions and Discussion

Session Goals

- To share the context of and research supporting the benefits associated with creating a plan for new student success
- To show some promising practices associated with plans for new student success
- To share why, when it comes to retention, creating and implementing a plan for new student success is "new wine in an old bottle!"
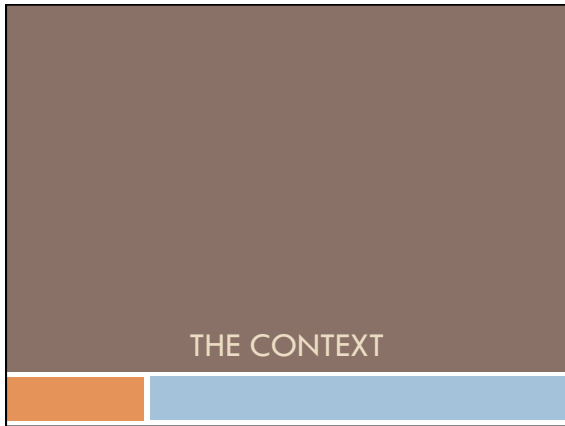
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THE CONTEXT

Who We Are

John N. Gardner
Institute for Excellence
in Undergraduate Education

Foundations of Excellence® Institutions by Accreditation Region: 2011 - 2012

Foundations of Excellence®
Transfer Focus

Foundations of Excellence®
First Year

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What is Foundations of Excellence?

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- Comprehensive Improvement process
- A task force-based form of assessment
- Affirms what is working well
- Identifies areas for improvement
- Results in a strategic action plan
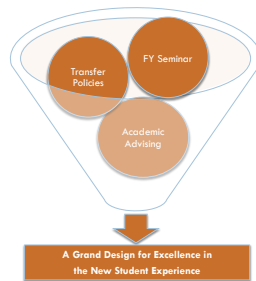 - A plan that must then be implemented!
- Moves the focus beyond retention

Why is a self study of the first year and/or transfer experience needed?

Because most campuses programs and policies but not a **comprehensive design/plan**

Transfer Policies

FY Seminar

Academic Advising

A Grand Design for Excellence in the New Student Experience

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The BIG Take Away

A Program is <u>NOT</u> a Plan . . .

How does FoE work?

Foundations of Excellence®

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The Intellectual Framework

Philosophy
Improvement
Organization
Roles & Purposes
Learning
Foundational Dimensions
Diversity
Faculty/ Campus Culture
All Students
Transitions

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The FoE Task Force: Composition and Roles

Assessment Professionals
Others who interact with students
Faculty
FoE Task Force
Student Affairs
Student Affairs
Students

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FoE Task Force (cont'd)

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Liaisons

Steering Committee

9 Dimension Committees

Tools Provided through FoEtec®

14

- The Current Practices Inventory (CPI)

- FoE Faculty/Staff & Student Surveys

- Performance Indicators specific to each Dimension

- Online access for all task force members to self-study components

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Linking with Accreditation Efforts

15

The Higher Learning Commission

Why was the study necessary?

- Focus on Excellence

- Growing emphasis on accountability

- Public calls for productivity amidst rising higher education costs

- National Completion Agenda

- Calls for correlation between retention and work

  - Retention as a by product of an excellent new student experience

THE STUDIES

Method

- March and April of 2010 staff of Gardner Institute electronically surveyed 144 institutional participants in the Foundations of Excellence program (FoE)
  - Survey asked questions about year of self study, year of implementation of action plan, level of implementation, and efficacy beliefs about the plan

- 12 email messages never received so total survey population was 132

- 103 institutions responded to survey (78% response rate)
  - Survey results were replicated across the 3 site locations of what institution since each campus participated in the program

- Fall to Fall one-year retention rates were pulled from the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS) and matched to institutional survey results
  - Most recent available retention rate was as of fall 2008 (fall 2007 cohort)
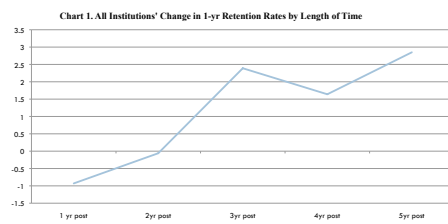 - Retention rates gathered for institutions who had taken part in FoE self-study in fall 2008 or earlier

Method

- 91 Institutions had viable one-year retention rates report for fall 2008 or earlier
  - 83 of 91 institutions fell into the analysis based on the year of their self study (self-study conducted prior to 2008-09)
  - 71 of 91 institutions fell into the analysis based on the year of their implementation (implemented action plan at some level in 2008-09 or earlier)
  - 8 institutions reported conducting the self study and implementation both in 2008-09 and thus were in the implementation analysis (71) but not the self-study analysis (81)
- Repeated measures (within-subjects) ANOVA utilized to examine time series differences in one-year retention rates
  - Retention rate differences between self-study year and subsequent years
  - Retention rate differences between year prior to implementation of action plan, year of implementation, and subsequent years
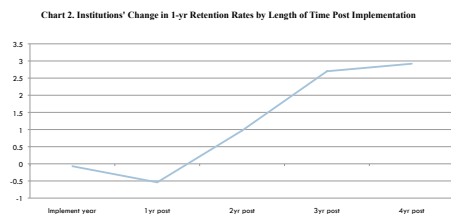

Overall Rates Post Self-study

	1-year post self study	2-years post self study	3-years post self study	4-years post self study	5-years post self study
Change in Rate	-0.93	-0.06	2.39**	1.64	2.85
N * p< .10, ** p< .05	83	66	43	19	19

Chart 1. All Institutions' Change in 1-yr Retention Rates by Length of Time

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Overall Rates Post Implementation

Implement Action Plan	Variable	Pre-implement to Implement	Pre to 1-year post implement	Pre to 2-year post implement	Pre to 3-year post implement	Pre to 4-year post implement
	Change in Rate	-0.07	-0.54	0.97	2.70	2.92
* p< .10, ** p< .05	N	71	54	39	20	13

Chart 2. Institutions' Change in 1-yr Retention Rates by Length of Time Post Implementation
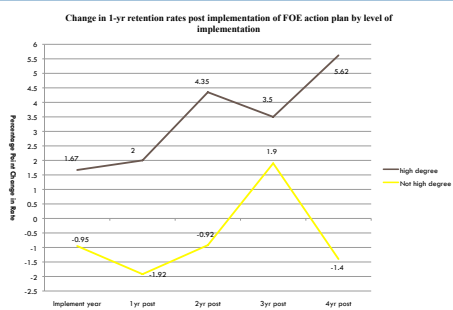
Level of Implementation

Implement Action Plan	Variable	1-year post self study	2-years post self study	3-years post self study	4-years post self study	5-years post self study
Not at all	Change in Rate	-8.20*	-0.50	0.00		
	N	5	2	1		
Limited Degree	Change in Rate	-0.28*	-0.25	1.11	1.50	1.25
	N	14	12	9	4	4
Medium Degree	Change in Rate	-1.53*	-1.80	0.93	-3.20	-2.40
	N	32	26	13	5	5
High Degree	Change in Rate	1.04*	1.43	4.66	4.57	5.86
	N	25	21	15	7	7

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$

Level of Implementation

Implement Action Plan	Variable	Pre-implement to Implement	Pre to 1-year post implement	Pre to 2-year post implement	Pre to 3-year post implement	Pre to 4-year post implement
Limited Degree	Change in Rate	0.00	-0.70*	1.50*	2.00	-0.50
	N	12	10	8	4	2
Medium Degree	Change in Rate	-1.28	-2.40*	-2.06*	1.84	-2.00
	N	35	25	17	6	3
High Degree	Change in Rate	1.67	2.00*	4.35*	3.50	5.62
	N	24	19	14	10	8

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$

Level of Implementation

Change in 1-yr retention rates post implementation of FOE action plan by level of implementation

Follow Up Studies

- Examination of full and part-time retention rates at two-year institutions
  - 30 of 31 institutions match self-study criteria
  - 25 of 31 institutions match implementation criteria

- Examination of full-time retention rates at private institutions
  - 22 of 22 institutions match self-study criteria
  - 19 of 22 institutions match implementation criteria
  - Conducted a year later so now could see 6 years post self study and 5 years post implementation

- Revenue Analysis
  - 111 institutions data from 2007 through 2009
  - Examine retention revenue gain/loss separately from overall enrollment revenue gain/loss
  - Change in enrollment multiplied by tuition and fee revenue per student, retention gain/loss of students multiplied by tuition and fee revenue
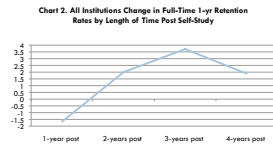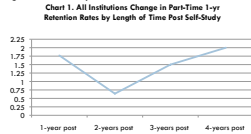
Two Year Institutions

- Saw gains in both part time and full-time retention rates post self study

Chart 1. All Institutions Change in Part-Time 1-yr Retention Rates by Length of Time Post Self-Study

Chart 2. All Institutions Change in Full-Time 1-yr Retention Rates by Length of Time Post Self-Study

Two Year Institutions

- Results by implementation are mixed, low implementers and high implementers saw gains in part and full-time retention rates, but medium implementers decreased

- However, given the lack of sample size (cell sizes < 5, often < 2 past the 1 year post implementation mark) it is difficult to draw firm conclusions

- All institutions that participated in both FoE and Achieving the Dream had success
  - All had implemented FoE action plan to at least a medium level
  - Gains were made in both part time and full time rates post implementation
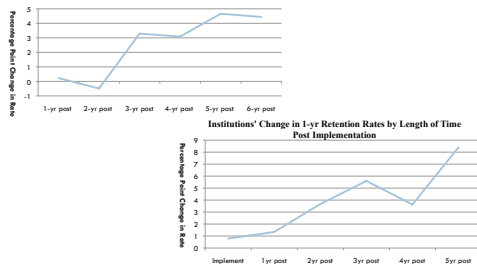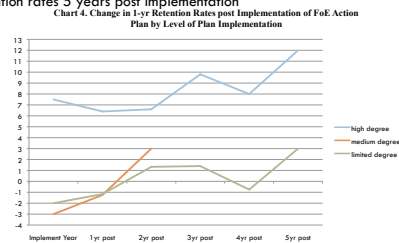 - Must be considered with caution as it only consists of 4 schools

Private Institutions

- Results similar to overall analysis, but even larger gains,

Institutions' Change in 1-yr Retention Rates by Length of Time Post Self-Study
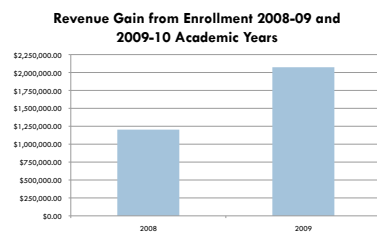

Institutions' Change in 1-yr Retention Rates by Length of Time Post Implementation

Private Institutions

- High Implementers see a 12 percentage point (17.5%) gain in full-time retention rates 5 years post implementation

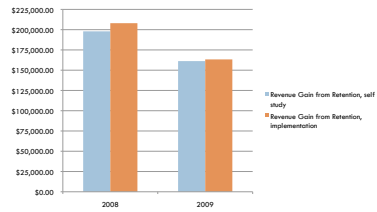**Chart 4. Change in 1-yr Retention Rates post Implementation of FoE Action Plan by Level of Plan Implementation**

Revenue Analysis

- Overall the institutions saw revenue gains from increased enrollment in 2008 and 2009

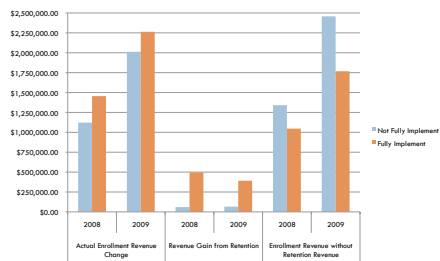**Revenue Gain from Enrollment 2008-09 and 2009-10 Academic Years**

Revenue Analysis

- Retention gains contributed to the revenue gains with institutions who implemented their FoE action plans seeing slightly larger gains

Revenue Analysis

- Institutions that fully implemented saw revenue growth from retention gains, while institutions that did not fully implement had to enroll more students to offset the lack of revenue growth from retention

Revenue Analysis

$$ROI = \frac{(Gain\ from\ Investment - Cost\ of\ Investment)}{Cost\ of\ Investment}$$

Revenue Analysis

- 151 Institutions in 5 Cohorts Between 2003-04 and 2008-09
- Average FoE Fee Paid by Institutions = $18,119
- Average Retention Revenue 2008 = $496,321
- ROI = $496,321 - $18,119 / $18,119
- ROI = $26.39
- For every $1 invested, average ROI is $26.39
- Over a 2500% return on the investment

Conclusion

- Analysis indicates that implementation of FoE action plans is significantly positively related to increases in first-year retention rates across different institution types

- Institutions on average saw a more than 2500% return on their investment for one year of revenue

- Mitigating factors in the relationship between FoE and retention consist of time and resources to allow for a full implementation of action plan

The BIG Take Aways

A Program is NOT a Plan . . .

You have to IMPLEMENT the Plan . . .

PROMISING PRACTICES: WHAT THE INSTITUTIONS DID

What Did They Do?

It Depends . . .

Actions Most Commonly Implemented
By the Most Successful Institutions

Implemented or revised a specific first-year program	16
Revised advising program (includes requirements and # of advisors)	7
Curriculum changes (includes general education, core and FYS courses)	7
Improved, reinstated or required pre-enrollment orientation	5
Added to faculty development (includes TA/adjunct training)	5
Revised a policy or procedure (e.g., placement, enrollment, scheduling)	5

Actions Most Commonly Implemented
By the Most Successful Institutions

Instituted FYE committee/ council	3
Created a one-stop office for student success services	3
Implemented an early alert system	3
Hired a Director for FY programs (faculty and/or student services)	3
Used research/data and program assessment more effectively	3

Common Themes

The Plan!
(Context Matters)

Common Themes

Implement The Plan!

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

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