THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION
We see a future of many possibilities, which likely will reflect the following trends continuing:

- Return on Investment. For accreditors, Federal government, and our consumers an output focus will continue to grow in importance.
- **Life-long education.** Education will be seen less as a distinct phase of life and more embedded as part of one's career. Universities will need to be provide options on-demand and flexible in an ever-growing variety of formats.
- **Cost containment**.   There will be less Federal, state, and corporate support for funding higher education, and families' capacity to absorb further cost increases will be limited.
- **Online**.   Increasing growth in on-line education will occur at the expense of traditional classroom models. The marketplace will face disruptions as some new models fail, but market share will be held by those who can demonstrate quality, low costs, and customer service.
- **Employment**.   Growth will continue for IT and health care with automation reducing demand in manufacturing, back office, and retail. New graduates will find it more difficult to find entry-level jobs and may be more likely to start, or join, start-ups and non-profits.
- **Technology**.   Higher Education deferred IT burden is high, and as technology advances significant investments will be necessary to catch up. As such, we will see Higher Education view disruptions to require incremental steps and not significant leaps.
- **Brick vs. Click**. Higher education consumers will still look for the physical presence, and some will find the classroom experience essential to their academic success. Balanced institutions, including a mixed platform of online and traditional classroom, will be best positioned to hire and retain top academic talent, develop new courses, and serve the widest range of potential students.

WHAT A FUTURE PARK MAY LOOK LIKE
Twenty years from now Park University may look as follows:

- We will move students to graduation and a career quicker and at a lower relative cost. This will require a stronger relationship with employers where we help funnel and sort potential employees from our graduates, and help our graduates acquire new skills to position them for further advancement. We will model these business partnerships off the skills honed with the US military.
- Students will fall into two categories. Those that want life experiences (traditional students) and those that just want to learn (on-line and working adults). Both groups will need, and receive, more support and mentoring than today's students. Technology will lead students to want to do more outside our footprint and on their schedule, but at the same time they will crave an authentic educational experience with high faculty contact.
- Park will provide "merit badges" or professional credentials in addition to full degrees. Some of these merit badges or credentials will be earned based on prior learning proved by testing. Accrediting agencies will stitch these badges into degrees, student will attend whatever is low cost, convenient, and is recommended based on the quality of the programs.
- The future Park will employ a far more diverse workforce with more full-time faculty but less tenured faculty.
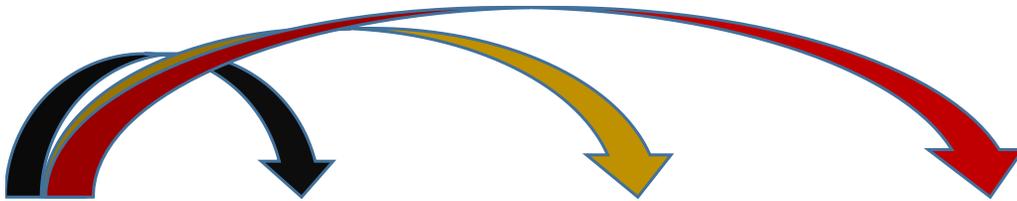
WHAT DOES PARK START DOING NOW

Given the future of Higher Education is not locked in, management feels the right starting point is to have the right prioritization questions to evaluate future initiatives or investments; will it:

- Help Park become more flexible, nimble, and innovative?
- Generate academics focused on outputs and delivering education on demand?
- Provide stronger integration with corporate staffing, development, and assessment?
- Reinforce our brand?
- Make Parkville a place families want to send their children?

The future Park University will need to (1) **increase academic quality**, (2) **integrate job placement and career advancement into all we do**, (3) **convert some programs to a passbook model** to start testing now, (4) define clearly **what makes us special to our students**, (5) **shift to an output focus**, and (6) rapidly **expand prior learning assessment** for all students to shorten the college experience for those that are interested. This list is in no particular order.

WHAT ISSUES SHOULD WE ADDRESS OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

	TWO YEARS	FIVE YEARS	TEN YEARS
Enrollment	- Enrollment Stable	- Enrollment Growth	- Enrollment Growth
Deficit	- Flagship deficit down to $5 million	- Flagship deficit down to $3 million	- Flagship self-funds
Academic	- Target existing programs for growth	- Look to add STEM - Online BSN Three year BA degrees	- 100% stackable degrees
Partnership	- Partnership with Army Provost - Corporate Boot Camp - New career development tools	- New career development tools K-12 Partnerships Home School	- Career advising in place for first 15 years of graduates careers - Partnering with 10 Fortune 100 companies in job placement and career development.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

As tuition increases for higher education continue families will remain interested in the question "what does our child receive for the investment required for their educational degree?" In the 1970s a college degree was viewed as a guarantee to a job; today employers are looking for specific degrees and demonstrated skill development. As a result accreditors, Federal government, and our consumers will have an output focus that will continue to grow in importance.

ARTICLE - "Return on Investment and Why It Matters for Higher Education", Chris Maples, The Huffington Post, 07/21/2013
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/chris-maples/return-on-investment-roi-_b_3626205.html

Oregon Tech has received quite a few accolades for early and mid-career salaries of our graduates and the Return on Investment (ROI) of our degrees. Largely as a result of the recent economic downturn, coupled with growing student debt, there also have been quite a few recent commentaries and discussions about the ROI for various academic degrees, both outside of academia and within academia. ROI is often deemed by proponents to be critical in the current economic environment for students to know so they can determine what degrees will allow them to obtain higher-paying jobs to maximize their ROI as soon as possible after completing a degree or certificate. By contrast, ROI is often discredited by critics as a short-sighted measure of degree worth (or value) that ignores the importance of a broader educational experience, and that critical-thinking skills and a broad college experience are more important than simply being able to find a high-paying job after college.

Many of these discussions on the relative importance of ROI when considering an undergraduate degree program are laced with underlying assumptions about the utility of ROI with regard to evaluating the value of a post-secondary degree. Simply put, ROI is more important to students and families when it comes to deciding what college to attend for an undergraduate degree than it has been in many years. ROI matters. But not to the exclusion of the range of understanding and perspective that form integral parts of a broader educational experience. After all, creativity is enhanced with experience, perspective, and the ability to think in different ways. However, rising tuition and increased student debt, coupled with the recent recession, have moved the focus of families and students alike away from the overall student experience and increasingly toward immediate degree relevance and perceived value.

I view higher education ROI as more complex than simply looking at salaries and ignoring the value of acquiring a broad educational experience and critical-thinking skills. I also view higher education ROI as more focused than experience, perspective, and critical-thinking skills, many of which can be obtained without the benefit of post-secondary education. And because of this view, ROI really is in the mind(s) of whoever is purchasing that post-secondary education. For most of us in higher education, that conjures up visions of students and parents. In actuality, the investors in post-secondary education are far more varied than ever. Various foundations, through grants and scholarships, have their own requirements and expectations. State and local governments are invested in higher education, especially if the post-secondary institution receives state or local tax support. The federal government is deeply vested in higher education, especially for veterans and other students who receive some form of direct federal support for their post-secondary education, but also because of the non-profit status and tax breaks afforded donors who give to support students. Finally, individual university foundations, many of which tout the successes of students and alumni that they support to leverage additional resources from additional alumni, parents, and friends of the college/university. Each of these stakeholders in higher education will have their own distinctive definition of ROI, and each exerts a different effect on the course of higher education depending on the level of their investment, influence, or persuasion.

Given this range of complexity for ROI, and the variety of components within ROI for any given person, group, university, or other stakeholder, I'm reminded of then-Supreme Court Associate Justice Potter Stewart's well-known response to defining pornography in Jacobellis v. Ohio, in which he stated,

I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description, and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it, and the motion picture involved in this case is not that.

In academics, ROI will be different for different constituents. For some, it will be critically important to have a realized income as soon as possible after graduation with as little expense as possible needed to obtain a degree. For others, it will be the connections made with classmates and their families, irrespective of the expense.

That said, there are two common themes inherent in the personal ROI for any student at any university: (1) more professions than ever require some higher education just to get a foot in the door, much less to succeed within the organization; and (2) if universities are doing their jobs correctly, they provide environments where students learn to embrace failure as a learning experience and to not make the same mistakes in the so-called real world of post-college employment. Making mistakes and learning from them is the critical-thinking component of higher education, which is not the exclusive venue of any particular discipline or related disciplines.

Simply put, ROI really is in the eye of the beholder. All of the stakeholders involved want what they view as a good investment. Consequently, a simple measure of so-called ROI is only as good as the underlying assumptions and data used. In much the same way that the students at Oregon Tech are different from the students at other post-secondary institutions, the ROI that our students value will be different from the ROI valued by students at other types of schools. And the ROI that the state wants may be different from the ROI that a philanthropist, or the federal government, wants.

I have heard in many venues that students vote with their feet. If true, and I believe it is more true than many universities want to admit, then universities have to understand the underlying assumptions and data to match their ROI strengths (whether it is connections, employment success, professional or academic niches, etc.) to their current and future student bodies. Those universities that match the ROI expectations of their student bodies will flourish into the future, and those that do not will become increasingly marginalized over time.

LIFE-LONG EDUCATION

As a culture, we need to stop thinking of education as a "one and done" deal. Currently, you go to school, you earn a degree, your education is complete. This is true at both the undergraduate and graduate level – education is a discrete time period, and then time in the workforce is considered a separate time period. (There are exceptions for some professions that require continuing education to maintain licensure.)

Article – "MOOCs 2.0 and the Future of Higher Education", Todd Zipper, July 7, 2016
http://www.uncompromisingedu.com/2016/07/07/moocs-2-0-and-the-future-of-education/

When Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) first appeared on the education scene in 2011, the hype was vigorous and instant. The concept of anyone being able to take courses from elite universities, taught by some of the best professors in the world, for free, was going to revolutionize education. Some even spoke seriously about the death of the traditional college degree.

As with so many new ideas, once the novelty wore off, reality set in. The college degree is still alive and well, and MOOCs have been under scrutiny for their completion rates.

What MOOCs did achieve, however, is giving legitimacy to online learning. By pioneering MOOCs, some of the biggest names in higher ed lent the powerful weight of their brand to online learning and indicated that they believed it was a valid modality.

The elephant in the room is that these schools haven't figured out the business model of MOOCs. While Coursera and EdX are giving away some credits, most MOOCs remain free and non-credit granting. So how, then, will MOOCs impact the future of education? Welcome to the world of MOOC 2.0.

MOOCs by the Numbers

First, how popular are MOOCs, really? As it turns out, their popularity is significant and growing. In 2015, more than 35 million students signed up for at least one MOOC, and approximately 4,200 courses are offered worldwide. But while MOOCs are popular, they are not necessarily effective as a teaching tool; in 2014, the average completion rate was only 7 percent.

Other Alternative Credentials

One impact MOOCs have had, beyond simply educating students, is sparking innovations in education. Online education was, of course, the original disrupter. But MOOCs took that one step further. While MOOCs did not directly lead to the development of innovations such as competency-based education, badges, nanodegrees, or corporate partnerships, they did accelerate the innovation process.

What MOOCs Mean for Education

The real conundrum MOOCs face moving forward is balancing accreditation and credibility. MOOCs currently leverage the power of some heavy hitting brands in the education space as the primary selling point; people love thinking they've taken a class from an Ivy League school. But if these courses are just as good as the credit-granting courses, does that mean that the schools will eventually cease to exist? Why go to Harvard if you can

just get the same education for free online? And, of course, for those companies that offer MOOCs, such as Coursera, how can they earn money? Coursera is really an aggregator of content from elite schools – the value comes from the brands they represent, not the courses they themselves produce. StraighterLine, which, according to Scott Jaschik, is a "MOOC-like substance," started with great promise but didn't get the traction that MOOCs themselves did, even though it offered some credit-bearing courses (if you count approval from ACE as credit) and has a modest cost. The lackluster performance is likely because consumers are interested in the brand recognition that comes from the elite institutions offering MOOCs, versus being interested in MOOCs as a modality, unaffiliated with a strong higher education brand.

The balance, I think, will come in reframing how we think about education. As a culture, we need to stop thinking of education as a "one and done" deal. Currently, you go to school, you earn a degree, your education is complete. This is true at both the undergraduate and graduate level – education is a discrete time period, and then time in the workforce is considered a separate time period. (There are exceptions for some professions that require continuing education to maintain licensure.)

To me, this kind of thinking is not only outdated, it is ineffective. The older I get, the more I realize there is always, always more to learn. And in our increasingly connected, fast-moving world, those skills that will be needed in a couple of years are not even being taught today. Ten years ago, for example, when I hired people to build websites, they didn't even think about mobile designs. "Website" meant "on a desktop." Now, when I hire for that same job, I need people who can design websites that work across devices, from phones to tablets to desktops.

But these skills will not necessarily require a four-year degree. Targeted, focused programs that teach specific things (for example, coding languages, digital marketing, or data analysis) can be done in less time than a long degree. Learning House's coding bootcamp, The Software Guild, for example, can be completed in 12 weeks (if attending full time) or 9 months (if attending part time and online). Alternative credentials, such as MOOCs, can help fill the skills gap and improve students' abilities to be lifelong learners.

Flexibility, too, is an important part of the MOOC experience. While the amount of knowledge in the world grows, the ability to build your own degree will help students create specific courses of study that can help them pursue their career goals. Alternative credentials, including MOOCs, will be an important part of this flexible college experience.

Not only will students enjoy flexibility, but corporations will as well. Increasingly, partnerships between industry and higher education are offering benefits to both. Companies get a happier, more educated workforce, and institutions get access to more students. MOOCs are a low-commitment, low-cost way for institutions to offer specific courses to industry partners. For example, all Walmart employees might have access to a basic supply chain MOOC. Those who succeed might then be considered for a management training program.

Internationally, I think MOOCs will have a more significant impact than in the United States. America's higher education system is unique in the number of colleges it has and the options students can choose from. That kind of flexibility is not as prevalent internationally, and that's where MOOCs can bring a benefit to those student populations.

While I recognize the benefits MOOCs and alternative credentials can bring, however, they will never replace the traditional degree. Delivery of that degree may change, but ultimately, a rigorous, intense course of study will always remain the gold standard for education. What MOOCs and alternative credentials can do, however,

is enhance the education experience and ensure that, as a society, we are continuing to push the bounds of knowledge. RETURN TO PAGE 1

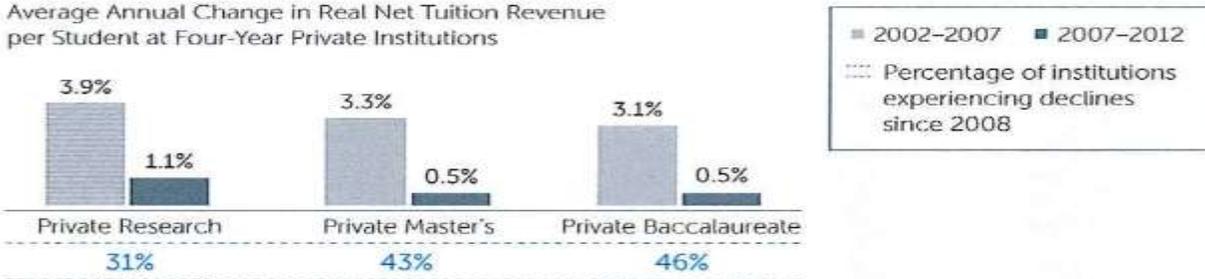Selected pages from Educational Advisory Board Report "Breaking the Trade-Off Between Cost and Quality"

The End of Across-the-Board Growth

The cost of education has outpaced the public's willingness to pay. Federal and state governments are looking for ways to reduce or slow the growth of public investment in higher education, while families are demanding lower tuition prices.

Paradoxically, while the public sees higher education as more expensive than ever, many universities are struggling with flat or declining revenues. State support and tuition revenue are no longer growing at pre-recession rates. In fact, at a significant share of institutions, revenues per student are declining due to state cutbacks and growing financial aid costs.

Revenue Slowing for Most, Declining for Some

Average Annual Change in Real Net Tuition Revenue per Student at Four-Year Private Institutions

- 2002–2007   ■ 2007–2012
- ░ Percentage of institutions experiencing declines since 2008

	Private Research	Private Master's	Private Baccalaureate
2002–2007	3.9%	3.3%	3.1%
2007–2012	1.1%	0.5%	0.5%
% experiencing declines	31%	43%	46%

Average Annual Change in Real Tuition, Fees, and State Support per Student at Four-Year Public Institutions

	Public Research	Public Master's	Public Baccalaureate
2002–2007	4.7%	5.2%	6.9%
2007–2012	0.7%	(0.2%)	0.1%
% experiencing declines	12%	18%	25%

Increasingly, university leaders are concerned that long-term downward pressures on revenues combined with continued upward pressures on costs mean that the current financial model is unsustainable.

I am confident in the sustainability of my institution's financial model over the next 10 years
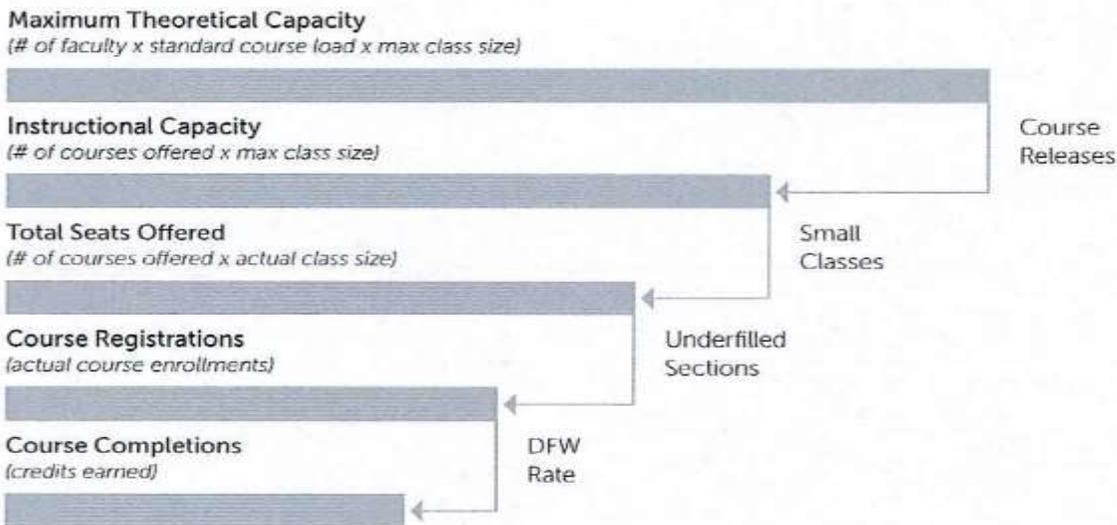
> **50%** Presidents   **41%** Chief Business Officers

Unused Capacity and Wasted Resources

A proliferation of low-demand courses and programs makes it impossible to appropriately match academic resources to student demand, generating higher costs and excess capacity across the university. Even as all universities experience bottlenecks in certain critical areas (for example, certain kinds of classroom space, seats in high-demand courses, capacity in certain programs), they have underused capacity trapped in other areas. This unused capacity represents a significant investment of resources that are doing little to support academic excellence.

Factors That Limit Instructional Capacity

Maximum Theoretical Capacity
(# of faculty x standard course load x max class size)

Instructional Capacity
(# of courses offered x max class size)

Course Releases

Total Seats Offered
(# of courses offered x actual class size)

Small Classes

Course Registrations
(actual course enrollments)

Underfilled Sections

Course Completions
(credits earned)

DFW Rate

Of course, universities will always have some amount of unused capacity. The highly specialized nature of academic programs, variability of student demand, relatively fixed nature of academic resources, and need to preserve certain mission-critical but low-demand courses or programs mean that universities will never come anywhere close to perfect efficiency, nor should that be the goal. But identifying and quantifying underutilized resources can help identify opportunities to reinvest some of those resources into higher impact activities.

The Four Barriers to Optimal Resource Allocation

While many institutions have performed some of these analyses, few if any have comprehensively addressed all areas of opportunity across all academic units. Four major barriers stand in the way:

1 Incomplete, Inaccurate Data

A lack of department-level data on the cost and quality implications of resource-allocation decisions.

Standard university data systems were designed to meet the needs of external stakeholders such as state and federal government agencies, accrediting bodies, or accounting standards. Within these systems it can be very difficult to link costs to the specific outcomes they generate, making it impossible to evaluate which investments create the most benefit for the institution.

2 Ad Hoc Allocation Processes

Resource allocation processes that depend more on historical precedent and institutional politics than anticipated outcomes.

Most institutions use a primarily incremental budget model based on the premise that each discipline should receive its "fair share" of resources. Similarly, department-level decisions are often driven more by the need to keep specific individuals happy than by a desire to reward performance or enable growth.

3 Lack of Unit-level Incentives

Incentive systems that penalize departments for improving efficiency or fail to reward them for improving quality.

Departments and individual faculty often fail to see the benefits of improved efficiency. If they use fewer resources, they know that they will receive fewer resources in the future. In many cases, they are rewarded for inefficiency because it provides them with a buffer in case cuts come in the future.

4 Few Reallocation Options

Limits to reallocating highly specialized resources across departments or schools.

Academic departments are built around unique resources (faculty experts, specialized facilities, unique technologies) that cannot easily be repurposed if they are no longer in demand. Many inefficiencies simply cannot be resolved in the short term.

While many faculty fear that such a data-informed process reduces academic decisions to rigid equations and takes power away from faculty, institutions that have pursued these approaches thoughtfully have found that they actually put faculty at the center of the decision-making process, enabling an open and honest discussion of institutional priorities and necessary trade-offs.

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ONLINE ARTICLE – "Babson Study: Distance Education Enrollment Growth Continues", Online Learning Consortium, February 2016
http://onlinelearningconsortium.org/news_item/babson-study-distance-education-enrollment-growth-continues-2/

Multi-year trend shows growth in online enrollments continues to outpace overall higher ed enrollments.

(Wellesley, MA) – The 2015 Survey of Online Learning conducted by the Babson Survey Research Group in partnership with the Online Learning Consortium (OLC), Pearson, WCET, StudyPortals, and Tyton Partners, reveals the number of higher education students taking at least one distance education course in 2015 is up 3.9% over the previous year. Growth, however, was uneven; private non-profit institutions grew by 11.3% while private for-profit institutions saw their distance enrollments decline by 2.8%. These and other findings were published today in a report titled, "Online Report Card: Tracking Online Education in the United States."

"The study's findings highlight a thirteenth consecutive year of growth in the number of students taking courses at a distance" said study co-author I. Elaine Allen, co-director of the Babson Survey Research Group.

"Institutions with distance offerings remain as positive as ever, but there has been a retreat among leaders at institutions that do not have any distance offerings," added co-author Jeff Seaman.

Growth has continued, despite muted support by faculty. The study reveals only 29.1% of academic leaders say their faculty accept the "value and legitimacy of online education." The proportion of chief academic leaders reporting online learning is critical to their long-term strategy dropped to 63.3% in the most recent results.

"While enrollments in higher education institutions decreased overall, enrollments in online programs continued to increase. We have seen strong growth in online professional degree programs as learners are increasingly focused on employability and career advancement. As more institutions turn to professional degree programs to meet this new demand, we expect to see accelerated growth in online learning continue over the next 3-5 years," said Todd Hitchcock, senior vice president, Online Learning Services, Pearson.

"The trend of increasing distance education enrollments in the face of declining overall higher ed enrollments suggests an important shift in the American higher education landscape, with contemporary learners leaning in to online options," said Kathleen S. Ives, CEO and Executive Director, Online Learning Consortium. "The majority of academic leaders recognize this and understand online learning is critical to their institution's long-term strategy."

Key report findings include:
•A year-to-year 3.9% increase in the number of distance education students, up from the 3.7% rate recorded last year.
•More than one in four students (28%) now take at least one distance education course (a total of 5,828,826 students, a year-to-year increase of 217,275).
•The total of 5.8 million fall 2014 distance education students is composed of 2.85 million taking all of their courses at a distance and 2.97 million taking some, but not all, distance courses.
•Public institutions command the largest portion of distance education students, with 72.7% of all undergraduate and 38.7% of all graduate-level distance students.
•The proportion of chief academic leaders that say online learning is critical to their long-term strategy fell from 70.8% last year to 63.3% this year.

•The percent of academic leaders rating the learning outcomes in online education as the same or superior to those in face-to-face instruction is now at 71.4%.

•Only 29.1% of academic leaders report that their faculty accept the "value and legitimacy of online education." Among schools with the largest distance enrollments, 60.1% report faculty acceptance while only 11.6% of the schools with no distance enrollments do so.

"Clearly many private, non-profit institutions are aggressively investing in distance education, " said Russell Poulin, WCET's Director of Policy & Analysis. "Between 2012 and 2014, students taking all their courses at a distance grew by 33% for non-profits. They were only a few hundred students away from passing the for-profit sector for having the second most number of enrollments. Public colleges still lead the way, by far. "

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TECHNOLOGY

Technology is just a tool. Like a pencil. Or a calculator. Or the Large Hadron Collider. We must envision how technology can make our present slightly better for a vast majority of our current students. This is an incrementalist approach focused on the biggest bang for the buck. How can we help the sixty percent of high school graduates who need some remedial coursework upon entering college or the thirty-seven million Americans with some college credit but no formal degree? Provide better access to high-quality just-in-time advising, academic intervention, and multifaceted and multimodal tutoring may indeed help such students.

ARTICLE – "The Future of The Future of Higher Education," Dan Butin, November 9, 2015

https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/higher-ed-beta/future-future-higher-education

Another commission on the future of higher education has just been formed. I thus sometimes wonder whether we would all be better off and save everyone a lot of time and money and headaches if we instead embraced what should be the standard-issue for any academic administrator in this age of disruption: the Magic 8-Ball.

Should I launch that new graduate program in a competency-based format for added-value? Will MOOCs undermine my traditional undergraduate enrollments? Do I truly need to understand what micro-credentialing really is?

Just shake and you have an answer: "Without a doubt." "Outlook not so good." "Reply hazy, try again."

I am not being snide. Honestly. It's just that my experience makes me doubtful that we actually know how to envision our real future in higher education. I sat on one such commission a few years back for AAC&U as it developed a vision for general education; I now sit on another commission for MIT that is analyzing the policy implications of online learning for higher education.

In both cases there are really smart people doing really important work. In both cases, though, I am doubtful that we are talking about the future of higher education.

Here's the problem. Such "futuring" of higher education usually runs in one of two diametrically opposite ways. Neither of which really work.

One way is to take the "next big thing" and expand the existing structure of higher education from the inside out. This is what the University of Florida tried to do by using online education to scale their bricks-and-mortar enterprise by simply cut-and-pasting the traditional model onto an online platform. That initiative closed last month after two years of minimal enrollment.

The other way is to take the "next big thing" and embed it within the existing structure from the outside in. That's what Minerva, a for-profit start-up, is trying to do as it takes the seemingly profound idea of a truly "virtual" education to offer a college degree through a student's globe-hopping experience. My prediction: it won't last past its second graduating class.

The fundamental problem is that in both cases the vision is all about the "next big thing" and almost never about higher education. It is as if technology is the answer, irrespective of what the question is.

Don't get me wrong. Higher education is changing dramatically, from the "new student majority" of demographic shifts to the changing nature of faculty work and contingent faculty to the disinvestment of public higher education and the debtification of an entire generation of low- and middle-income students. But these are not problems that have been caused by or will be solved by technology. These changes have been thirty-plus years in the making.

The key is to remember that technology is just a tool. Like a pencil. Or a calculator. Or the Large Hadron Collider. All of these tools help us do something, whether it is to write down an idea, calculate some large numbers, or smash some really small particles into one another. The tool helps us to accomplish our goals; the Large Hadron Collider, it is almost too obvious to state, is useless if our goal is to write down an idea.

So how do we begin to envision a more realistic future for the future of higher education? Let me suggest two implications to the realization that technology is a tool and that it is our goals in higher education, and not technology, which must drive our vision of the future.

The first is to envision how technology can make our present slightly better for a vast majority of our current students. This is an incrementalist approach focused on the biggest bang for the buck. Having a few students hop around the globe getting their undergraduate degree may be novel and cutting-edge, but it won't help the sixty percent of high school graduates who need some remedial coursework upon entering college or the thirty-seven million Americans with some college credit but no formal degree. But having better access, for example, to high-quality just-in-time advising, academic intervention, and multifaceted and multimodal tutoring may indeed help such students.

Realizing what tools can and can't do raises the more profound and critical point of the purposes of higher education. I have consistently suggested that we must embrace the limits of digital learning technologies – i.e., their ability to primarily support the teaching and learning of singular, solvable, and stable problems – in order to understand their powerful opportunities for higher education.

Higher education has historically balanced the tensions between being both a public and a private good, but it is our vision of the former that has always seemed to underlie the latter. As DuBois wrote in The Soul of Black Folks, "The true college will ever have one goal—not to earn meat, but to know the end and aim of that life which meat nourishes." Indeed, what we have always claimed is that higher education was about fostering students' capacities for becoming engaged and thoughtful citizens in a complex and contested pluralistic society; what I have quipped as an apprenticeship into democracy rather than an apprenticeship into Wikipedia.

Well, we can now actually maybe do that.

And so the second way to envision the future of higher education is truly transformational by accepting that digital learning technologies may be better at transmitting information, thus allowing us to do our job of helping students transform knowledge. This would require a fundamental rethinking of what faculty do, of what students learn and how they document such learning, and what goals we want them to accomplish through such learning.

Sure, virtual labs with adaptive tutoring modules and online forums and superstar professors lecturing to millions of MOOC participants may be part of the answer. But so will good old fashion dialogue and debate around a small table or community projects that have real-world significance.

The question should thus not be one of either/or, but of how to combine these two models of education in a meaningful way. Maybe then the answer to the future of higher education will truly be "without a doubt."

BRICK VS. CLICK

ARTICLE – "Employers and students still prefer brick-and-mortar—not online—education", Aisha Asif, Hechinger Report, September 2013

http://hechingered.org/content/employers-and-students-still-prefer-brick-and-mortar-not-online-education_6384/

Virtual learning is on the rise as more students enroll in online courses at both online and physical universities. The enthusiasm for online learning, including the increasing interest in MOOCs—free massive open online courses—has led some to question the future brick-and-mortar institutions.

But employers still like to see traditional, in-person educational experiences on the resumes of job candidates, according to a new survey.

The poll released by Public Agenda, an independent nonprofit research group, shows that 56 percent of employers prefer a job applicant with a degree from an average school where they attended physical classrooms rather than one from a more elite university where they took only online coursework. Only 17 percent prefer a degree from the latter.

Public Agenda surveyed more than 600 human resources staff at employers in four cities – Los Angeles, Detroit, Philadelphia and the El Paso-Las Cruces metropolitan area.

Proponents of online courses say the classes can be more accessible, sometimes cheaper and that they allow for personalization – a buzzword that refers to the ability to learn at your own pace and style. In addition, online coursework may provide more data about students that can point them in the direction of improving their performance. But 49 percent of employers thought students in online-only programs learned less compared to 45 percent who thought they learned about the same, suggesting many remain skeptical of the quality of such learning.

"Right now clearly our findings suggest [employers] are quite happy with the traditional model, maybe not for everybody, but overall that's the safer bet for them," said the lead researcher on the poll, Carolin Hagelskamp.

Employers interviewed in focus groups were more partial towards older job applicants who had online degrees, however, because they found applicants with prior work experience and the ability to juggle family obligations and school more impressive. They were split fifty-fifty about whether young people could get a high-quality education online because of the greater discipline it requires.

Community college students had mixed feelings about online courses. Hagelskamp said this demographic was particularly highlighted in the study because community colleges in particular have been undergoing innovations in how they deliver education. Forty-one percent of community college students surveyed said they would rather take fewer courses online, while 39 percent thought they were taking the right amount of online classes. (Although the sample size of community college students was only 215, Hagelskamp said it was weighted to be nationally representative.) Public Agenda will be conducting similar research on other demographics of college-goers in the future.

Nancy Zimpher, chancellor of the State University of New York (SUNY), which includes 29 community colleges in its system, said SUNY's move to launch more online degree programs in the last 10 to 15 years is allowing them to accommodate the needs of students who do not wish to attend classes in person.

"We're thinking about that market who for a whole host of reasons can't come to campus, but needs to be educated," Zimpher said at the *New York Times* Schools for Tomorrow conference last week. "We've got to do a lot better job of figuring out how to package an online experience that speaks to that market."

Hagelskamp's research suggests colleges must try even harder to give their students an online education experience worth their while.

"What stuck out to me was this feeling around community college students, there was almost a little bit of frustration around these courses," Hagelskamp said. She said many students believe online courses require more discipline and quite a few said they're harder to pass. Nearly half said they're not learning as much as they would in a traditional setting.

"That combination shows there's a lot of unhappiness with those courses," she said. "So that raises a bit of a flag as we're moving forward with online education."

ENROLLMENT

Park University has faced an extended period of enrollment decline. This has been reflected in weakening in enrollment on military bases, including both civilian (which reflects a tuition increase moving civilians from VA to standard rates that appears to be the primary driver) and military (where other institutions have increased online offerings couple with local and regional institutions providing classroom experience near to campus). Our flagship campus has seen enrollment declines, with drivers including:

- Saudi students no longer being funded by their government (Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission (SACM). This has resulted in a drop from approximately 250 four years ago to 0 next year. This reflects a lack of investment and attention by Park coupled with reduced oil prices impacting social programs in Saudi Arabia.
- Deferred maintenance issues not addressed at the Parkville campus.
- Stagnate growth of athletic programs.
- Conversion to BSN required drop in nursing enrollment to meet accreditation requirements. This will reverse over the next three years.

Park's short-term tactical roadmap targeted 12 initiatives to increase enrollment across our entire network. These investments are focused on maximizing existing capacity. We view growth of 2% or less to fall within a stable enrollment platform and designed to leverage our low-hanging fruit of basic enrollment strategies not deployed by Park in recent years. As we look past that effort management will focus on targeted growth that fully fills beds and classrooms, but likely not to require significant infrastructure investment at the Parkville campus.

Likely sustainable future growth will require capturing a larger share of the military, taking lessons learned from our relationship with the military to other large corporations, and other items discussed in this section.

DEFICIT

The Parkville campus generates approximately a $7 million deficit a year. While a portion of that cost reflects network overhead, a primary goal should be to have Parkville stand on its own two feet. If we can fill our 100 empty beds, add 200 additional commuter students, and generate $20 million in endowment growth we will be close to break-even at the Parkville campus. Further, extending our satellite campuses to include Lenexa will give us the capacity to support and draw new students that can leverage our existing Parkville faculty. The lease costs for Lenexa will be offset by a smaller, and updated, downtown Kansas City campus. As a result we will be able to keep our expenses in our Kansas City network close to the same as today but will add a high-growth area to our map.

All these efforts will take time, but Parkville has natural strengths against local competition on cost if we create a campus equally attractive.

ACADEMIC

Future program growth should be targeted to address long-term market needs. Such programs will need to lend themselves to easy conversion to online offerings given the direction of the marketplace. For example, some engineering programs lend themselves to online, others require expensive labs that do not. Additionally, conversion to online will require increased ease or relevance to online learners. Then restructuring academic programs to be constructed of stackable credentials, for example, would be one way to enhance all programs.

As we move forward management will need to look at programs to exit, not just to add. A process will need to be developed to drive that effort in a manner faculty will accept.

PARTNERSHIPS

Our future success with the U.S. military will require we embed our academics more seamlessly with their internal testing and training. This will allow us to get personnel to graduation faster, more often, and at less cost than our competition. Moreover, this will allow us better insight into how they define educational success and what they really need as a result of the education we provide. Being the initial partner with the Army Provost can give us a 3-5 year competitive advantage over our peers, and each student we acquire cuts into their capacity to fund the required investment to catch up.

Our largest competitor for undergraduate military students is American Military University (AMU). AMU has 50,000 military students to our 9,000. AMU is totally online, has no tuition price advantage, and offers programs that are not as strong from an academic quality perspective. What AMU does do is fold in the cost of books, has a stronger web recruiting presences, and displays its ability to provide prior learning credits (which is not any stronger than what Park currently does, but for which Park does not do an effective job sharing with applicants our strength in this area).

Our next step will be to extend our relationship with our graduates as they look for jobs and define targeted future education needs for additional career growth. This will require we use this new relationship with the Army as a model for other large and complex businesses. To be successful on this path we will need classes without the need to purchase books (we can embed the book sections as needed in class resources) and invest in career services. Our investment of attention to these steps will make us more attractive as an online option and reduce the overall cost of attendance for all our students.

Critical to our future success is understanding that education does not end with graduation. A Park University that helps our graduates over their full career identify good career matches and points at which additional learning will drive future advancement will be a Park University better positioned to recruit, drive student success, and enhance our graduate's relationship with Park that might enhance fund-raising and word-of-mouth. This strategy aligns with the outcome-focus that is growing in importance with consumers, the Federal government, and our accreditation agency.