

Maintaining Pathways to Success: Partnerships, Transitions, Hand-offs

2013 Degree Partnership Summit

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Why create degree partnership programs?

“Developing/Strengthening a culture of transfer may offset the mobility of traditional-age students” (source: Adelman, 2005).

“Greater Expectations,” a 2002 report from the Association of American Colleges and Universities pointed to new enrollment patterns – especially multi-institutional attendance – as one of the key pressures higher education will face in the 21st century.

“The 2/4 community college–baccalaureate transfer function is one of the most important state policy issues in higher education because its success (or failure) is central to many dimensions of state higher education performance, including access, equity, affordability, cost effectiveness, degree productivity, and quality” (source: IHEP, 2002).

Why create degree partnership programs?

“Students who began in public 2-year institutions who had co-enrolled had higher rates of bachelor’s degree attainments and persistence at 4-year institutions than their counterparts who did not co-enroll.” (pg. 19)

Peter, K. and Carroll, C. D. (2005). “The road less traveled? Students who enroll in multiple institutions.” National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education. NCES 2005-157.

Defining Swirl

- Term coined in 1990 by officials of the Maricopa County Community College system in Arizona
- Argued that the term “transfer” implies linear movement between institutions and should be replaced by the idea that students “swirl between and among community colleges and four-year institutions” (de los Santos & Wright, 1990, p. 32)
- Taking classes from multiple institutions on the way to the baccalaureate
- May include community colleges, public universities, and private colleges
- May also include taking courses from different institutions in the same term

Swirl: The Data

- 58% of bachelor's degree recipients attended two or more colleges.
- Swirl is not isolated to community college students (43% of community college students transfer and 28% of four-year students transfer).
- 73% of all undergraduates are non-traditional students.
- The number of students attending part-time is declining slightly: in 1975, 45.4% of students attended a college or university part-time; in 2000, this number dropped to 44.4%.
- More than 20% of undergraduates have attended 3 or more institutions (source: Thurmond, Taylor, Foster, & Williams, 2008)

Different Types of Swirl

Alexander McCormick:

1. **Trial Enrollment:** Students take a few courses to experiment with the possibility of transfer (experimenting).
2. **Supplemental Enrollment:** Students accelerate their progress by taking additional courses, perhaps at a local community colleges during summer break (accelerating).
3. **Special Program Enrollment:** Students enroll in institutions that have opportunities not offered by their home school (unique courses or programs).
4. **Rebounding Enrollment:** Students alternate enrollment at two institutions; especially common among reverse transfer students (alternating).

Different Types of Swirl

5. **Concurrent Enrollment:** Students are simultaneously enrolled at two institutions (double-dipping).
6. **Consolidated Enrollment:** Students take courses at a variety of institutions to complete one institution's degree program (collections of courses).
7. **Serial Transfer:** On the way to finding the institution of best fit (seeking the final destination).
8. **Independent Enrollment:** Students take courses unrelated to their degree program at different institutions for personal or professional benefit (unrelated personal or professional interest).

Literature

Barriers to Successful Transfer

- Policy and procedural concerns, curricular misalignment, and financial challenges in the transfer process
- Social and environmental barriers for students prevent integration into campus life
- Transfer students feel alienation and isolation during transfer
- Inadequate preparation and support programs for transfer students

Literature

College Students Adjustment and Transition Theory

- Integration has three distinct stages, separation, transition, and incorporation (Tinto)
- Students cope with change in three phases (moving in, moving through, or moving out).
 - Adjustment is based on: situation, self, support, and coping strategies (Schlossberg)
- Student Involvement Theory – Energy into the educational an setting (Astin)

Degree Partnership Programs

The Two-Year/Four-Year Continuum

Degree Partnership

Co-Admission with Co-Enrollment

Co-Admission and Shared Services

Co-Admission: meeting requirements at two-year

Block Transfer Agreements or Degrees

Program Articulation

Course Articulation

Impact on Student Experience

Impact on Institution

Re-Defining the Campus Culture: Best Practices for Transfer Students

Degree Partnership Programs/Models

- The ultimate in best practices for transfer students.
- Transfer student nirvana

Degree Partnership Purpose and Goals

- Joint admission / concurrent enrollment
- Improve student access, success and 4-year degree completion
- Expand student options for college-level curriculum and services
- Improve academic program articulation
- Gain efficiency and effectiveness in program delivery

Foundation in Student Success

- Expanded access to student services
- Enhanced student engagement
- Reduced transfer transition issues
- Improved retention of under-represented populations

DPP Stories

A study conducted by

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Participant Demographic

- Six students enrolled in the LBCC-OSU program
- 4 Women, 2 men
- 3 traditional age, 3 older
- 1 student of color
- 2 first generation, 1 fourth generation beaver
- 5 full-time, 1 part-time
- 4 lived on campus
- Liberal Arts, Business, Forestry, Science, Ag Science
- Diverse enrollment patterns
- Diverse campus involvement
- GPA's 2.80 – 4.00

DPP Student Experience

Lived Experience Themes

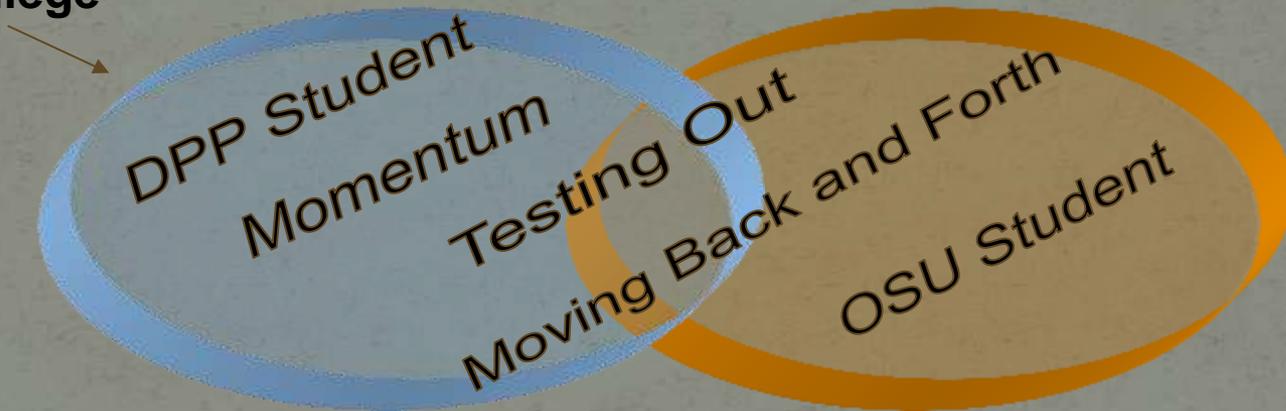
Blending and Swirling: The Student Experience

1. Identifying as DPP student
2. Gaining (re-gaining) momentum at the CC
3. Testing out the University
4. Moving thoughtfully between two institutions
5. Settling into the University

Blending and Swirling:

The DPP Student Experience

Community
College



Degree Partner
University

DPP Student Experience

DPP Student Transition and Adjustment Highlights

- Students utilize academic opportunities and services at the CC to prepare for the university environment
- Students utilize opportunities at the university to integrate socially
- Student enrollment patterns between the two schools allow student to transition slowly to the university
- Students invest social and academic energy at both schools
- Students do not report abrupt transitions, feelings of alienation, and school separation anxiety
- Students do not report decreased academic performance at the university

DPP Student Experience

Degree Partnership Students Voice Similar Needs

- Lack of self-confidence and positive self-perceptions regarding readiness for university experience
 - Desire to gain or re-gain confidence, competency, and momentum for their university experience
- Desire the diverse, small, and supportive environment of CC
- Concerned about affordability of college
- A clear path, identity and connection to OSU

DPP Student Experience

Degree Partnership Students Utilized Two Educational Settings

- Students have positive experiences in smaller CC Classes
- Students value CC faculty attention
- Students describe CC faculty as preparing them for university environment
- Students utilize community education classes and centers throughout their student experience
- Students have a positive view of CC and its role within community and society
- Students value university identity and comprehensive services

DDP Student Experience

Students Experience Administrative and Social Difficulties

- Not easy to meet other DPP students and mentors
- Transportation between schools can be challenging
- Difficulty with financial aid and scholarships
- No centralized services or information for DPP students
- Not all University faculty, advisors and students know about DPP
 - Must explain degree partnership to university personnel

Implications

Changing the Transition and Adjustment Student Experience

- Early integration into the university, even before attending classes
- Transition to university is spread out over time and at a slower pace
 - Lessons transition shock – ease into university
- Social transition can be separated from the academic transition
- The number of academic and social integration opportunities are increased and diverse
- Articulation difficulty reduced
- More information about DPP students is needed

Implications

Improving Access to Higher Education for Students Who...

- Lack confidence for the university experience
- Lack financial resources
- Seek a supportive and diverse learning environment before entering the university
- Need an alternative to departure from the university
- Need a clearer path to the university
- Want to state their University identity and intention from the beginning

Implications

DPP Provides an Opportunity to Utilize the Strengths of the Community College

- CC environment built social and academic confidence in study participants before attending the university
- CC small classes and CC faculty were valued by DPP students
- Cohorts formed at the CC support DPP students at the university

Findings From the Stories

- Students utilize academic opportunities and services at the CC to prepare for the university environment
- Students utilize opportunities at the university to integrate socially
- Student enrollment patterns between the two schools allow students to transition slowly to the university
- Students invest social and academic energy at both schools
- Small cohorts of DPP students are formed at CC
- Students do not report abrupt transitions, feelings of alienation, and school separation anxiety
- Students do not report decreased academic performance at the university
- Student value retaining or having the ability to identify themselves as a university student

Recommendations

- Increase visibility of OSU Degree Partnership Programs at the CC and University
- Create a DPP marketing strategy and identity that fits the diversity of DPP students
- Create web or paper resources to explain DPP logistics to students
- Create or designate an individual or office to create support services for DPP students
 - Offer assistance with financial aid, admission, orientation, and support
 - Create programs that help DPP students build relationships with other DPP students

Recommendations

- Educate campus personnel and faculty about DPP students
- Build stronger relationships between advisors and faculty at partnership schools
- Create more intentional ways for students to begin their early social integration at the university (l.e. Res. Halls and clubs for DPP)
- Suggest DPP to students who are having difficulty at the university
- Further Study

Additional Resources

McCormick, A.C. (2003). Swirling and double-dipping: New patterns of student attendance and their implications for higher education. In J.E. King, E.L. Anderson, and M.E. Corrigan, eds. *Changing Student Attendance Patterns: Challenges For Policy and Practice*, *New Directions for Higher Education*, No. 121, San Francisco, CA.: Jossey-Bass.

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