

The New Normal and What Trustees Need to Know to Lead Their Colleges

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CCLC Trustees Conference

May 5, 2018



1. Changed the political landscape

- Republicans now control White House, both Houses of Congress, 33 Governorships, 32 Legislatures
- Focus on cost, accountability and outcomes
- For-profit college camel is back under the tent
- Repeal or weakening of regulations and protections, like Gainful Employment
- Emphasis on workforce, jobs, and career and technical education, rebuilding the Middle Class
- Are we moving from nomenclature of community colleges to “vocational colleges”?

2. Financial challenges and constraints

- 20-year decline in state support
- Is Illinois the new Bellwether?
- 32 states have adopted performance-based funding (Grapevine Report)
- College Promise has expanded to over 200-plus programs nationwide, with activities in over 44 states, including 17 statewide programs currently either on-line, awaiting approval or under construction

3. Declining enrollment

- 9.6 percent decline in enrollment at public community colleges – from 6.3 million in 2013 to 5.7 million in 2016 (AACCC)
- Shrinking HS graduate population will make increasing educational attainment goals harder to achieve
- Market share competition will increase significantly among the higher education and for-profit sector
- Dual enrollment, better alignment of standards, guided pathways, partnerships and a focus on college readiness are more important than ever

4. Financial aid

- Federal Student Loan debt has surpassed \$1.3 trillion – generational transfer of loan debt might result in generational inequity that will affect our sector
- Total Federal, State and non-governmental sources constitute \$252 billion annually
- Federal share represents 63 percent of the total; states only 12 percent.
- Because the Feds are the “majority shareholder” increased scrutiny and calls for better outcomes are inevitable – accreditation, earnings, ROI, etc.

5. Completion and student success

- Completion is the most powerful solution we have for effecting real and sustained progress
- 35 million Americans have some college but no credential (Mark Milliron, Civitas Learning)
- Only 20 percent of certificate and degree seekers graduate with the credential (AACCC)
- The conversation about persistence and completion should be driven by “distance traveled” – measurable gains in student outcomes and competencies

6. Degrees of relevance

- New focus on access to an affordable baccalaureate degree, and increasingly, to a technical and/or applied baccalaureate degree being demanded by industry aligns with the new political focus to empower the middle class
- ACCT believes that the decision to offer a four-year degree at a community college is appropriately delegated within the authority of the college board, through its mission and policy-setting role guiding the operations of the colleges and its role in addressing the needs of its community (2006)
- Caution Needed - scale degree programs to real labor market needs and not flood the market or increase duplicity and increase cost

7. Employment and earnings

- If the recent elections taught us anything is that we must redouble aligning what we do to real jobs and prospects for increased earnings
- Millions of working people feel disconnected from our economy and social and political institutions – they no longer believe that that they and their children will be better off than earlier generations
- Important ROI and economic analysis efforts by EMSI and other companies are helping colleges better align offerings, certificates and degrees to their local labor markets and employer needs

8. Business model

- Completion and persistence should be given highest priority to maximize returns on investment
- Focus is shifting to public/private partnerships and supplanting traditional income streams
- Adopt an entrepreneurial mindset and assess risk capital and incent risk-taking
- Doing more with less is not sustainable – try doing less with more by focusing on core strengths and niche market of the institution
- Fundraising model needs retuning – CCs capture only 1.5 percent of total philanthropic giving to HE

9. Technology

- Need more efficient uses of technology and less reliance on brick and mortar classrooms and physical infrastructure
- Impact of MOOCs and distance learning on program and services delivery
- Universities are awarding credit for open-source learning creating opportunities for CCs to admit students with 6-12 credit hours “under their belts”
- Businesses are ramping up their own occupational badges, certificates, and stackable credentials – we might be left behind
- Predictive Analytics and data-informed decisions increasingly will drive technological applications

10. Leadership

- Need to seed the pipeline and preparatory pathways to the Presidency with a great deal more intentionality
- “Networked Leadership” must become the hallmark of the future, as well familiarity with analytics, recombinant resource development, co-creation and strategic partnerships
- Need more regularized trustee selection criteria, onboarding and in-service education
- Focus on presidential onboarding and outboarding WITH trustees
- Look for entrepreneurial leaders and provide sufficient support to incent and manage change