What You and Your Institution Can Do to Promote Change and Student Success

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Session Overview

❖ **Introduction: Session Participants and Purposes**
❖ **Context for Conversation: Why Student Success?**
❖ **Research about What Matters: Project DEEP**
 • **Research Methods**
 • **Results**
❖ **Implications for Institutional Policies, Practices, and Assessment**

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Concerns about Quality in Higher Education

• *"Colleges and universities, for all the benefits they bring, accomplish far less for their students than they should."*

• *"Has the quality of teaching improved? More important, are students learning more than they did in 1950?....The honest answer to these questions is that we do not know."*

• *"The moment has surely come for America's colleges to take a more candid look at their weaknesses and think more boldly about setting higher educational standards for themselves."*

Bok, D. (2006). *Our Underachieving Colleges: A Candid Look at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should Be Learning More.* 3

What We Know About Undergraduate Experiences from NSSE:

1. **Full-time students spend an average of 13 hrs per week studying (Hrs. recommended by faculty = 20-25)**
2. **45% of all college seniors took at least one course at another institution prior to enrolling at their current school – "swirling"**
3. **45% first-years and 30% seniors *never* discussed ideas with faculty outside class**
4. **Faculty spend 42% of class time lecturing (FSSE)**

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Some Conclusions….

✓ *The times require reflective, student-centered educators, expert in their disciplines but also knowledgeable and skilled in areas required by these challenges*

✓ *Educators must be familiar with research, policies and practices linked to student success*

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What do we need to know???

? **What matters most to student success?**

? **What does research tell us about effective campus practice?**

? **What should institutions do to promote student success?**

? **How do we change what we do to make a difference?**

? **How do we assess our effectiveness?**

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Defining Student Success in College

Academic achievement; engagement in educationally purposeful activities; satisfaction; acquisition of desired knowledge, skills and competencies; persistence; attainment of educational objectives; and post-college performance

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What Matters to Student Success

Pre-college Characteristics Associated with Student Success:

- Academic preparation
- Ability
- Family support
- Financial wherewithal

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Factors That Threaten Persistence and Graduation from College

- ❖ **academically underprepared for college-level work**
- ❖ **first-generation college student**
- ❖ **gap between high school and college**
- ❖ **30+ hours working per week**
- ❖ **part-time enrollment**
- ❖ **single parent**
- ❖ **financially independent**
- ❖ **children at home**

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What *Really* Matters in College: Student Engagement

The greatest impact appears to stem from students' total level of campus engagement, particularly when academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular involvements are mutually reinforcing...

Pascarella & Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, **2005, p. 647**

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What *Really* Matters in College: Student Engagement

Because individual effort and involvement are the critical determinants of college impact, institutions should focus on the ways they can shape their academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings to encourage student engagement.

Pascarella & Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, **2005, p. 602**

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Two Components of Student Engagement

1. What **students** do -- time and energy devoted to educationally purposeful activities

2. What **institutions** do -- using effective educational practices to induce students to do the right things

Lessons from Research on College Impact

Effective Educational Practices for Fostering Engagement:
- ❖ **Academic Challenge**
- ❖ **Active and Collaborative Learning**
- ❖ **Student-Faculty Interaction**
- ❖ **Enriching Educational Experiences**
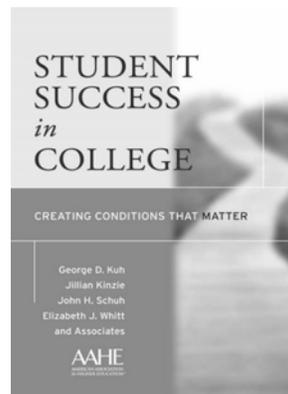- ❖ **Supportive Campus Environments**

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Promise of Student Engagement

"If faculty and administrators use principles of good practice to arrange the curriculum and other aspects of the college experience, students would… write more papers, read more books, meet with faculty and peers, and use information technology appropriately, all of which would result in greater gains in such areas as critical thinking, problem solving, effective communication, and responsible citizenship."

Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt & Associates, *Student Success in College*, 2005

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What does an educationally effective college look like at the turn of the 21st century?

STUDENT SUCCESS in COLLEGE

CREATING CONDITIONS THAT MATTER

George D. Kuh
Jillian Kinzie
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Elizabeth J. Whitt
and Associates

AAHE

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Project DEEP

To discover, document, and describe what strong performing institutions do to achieve their notable level of effectiveness.

deep
Documenting
Effective
Educational
Practice

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Project DEEP Schools*

*Higher-than predicted NSSE scores and graduation rates

Doctoral Extensives
  University of Kansas
  University of Michigan

Doctoral Intensives
George Mason University
Miami University (Ohio)
University of Texas El Paso

Master's Granting
  Fayetteville State University
  Gonzaga University
  Longwood University

Liberal Arts
  California State, Monterey Bay
  Macalester College
  Sweet Briar College
  The Evergreen State College
  Sewanee: University of the South
  Ursinus College
  Wabash College
  Wheaton College (MA)
  Wofford College

Baccalaureate General
  Alverno College
  University of Maine at Farmington
  Winston-Salem State University

DEEP Results:
Conditions to Promote Student Success

1. **"Living" Mission and "Lived" Educational Philosophy**
2. **Unshakeable Focus on Student Learning**
3. **Environments Adapted for Educational Enrichment**
4. **Clearly Marked Pathways to Student Success**
5. **Improvement-Oriented Ethos**
6. **Shared Responsibility for Educational Quality**

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Lessons from Project DEEP

1. *"Living" Mission and "Lived" Educational Philosophy*

❖ **Missions, values, and aspirations are transparent and understandable.**

❖ **Sustained widespread understanding and endorsement of educational purposes.**

❖ **Complementary policies and practices tailored to the school's mission and students' needs and abilities.**

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"Living" Mission

Macalester College students, faculty and staff understand and articulate the College's core values of academic excellence, service, multiculturalism and internationalism. These values are enacted in the curriculum and co-curriculum.

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"Living" Mission

"Sea change" at KU to emphasize undergraduate instruction

❖ **Experienced instructors teach lower division and introductory courses**

❖ **Faculty members from each academic unit serve as "Faculty Ambassadors" to the Center for Teaching Excellence**

❖ **Course enrollments kept low in many undergraduate courses; 80% have 30 or fewer students; 93% 50 or fewer students.**

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Lessons from Project DEEP

2. *Unshakeable Focus on Student Learning*

❖ **Student learning and personal development are high priorities.**

❖ **Extensive use of engaging pedagogies**

❖ **Faculty and administrators challenge students with high standards: "Work with the students we have," in contrast to focusing only on the best and the brightest**

❖ **Make time for students**

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Ample applied learning opportunities

CSUMB requires all students to complete a lower and upper-level service learning experience. The capstone experience requires students to connect their project to community needs and reflect on "how will you act on what you know?"

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Learning opportunities consistent with student characteristics

Fayetteville State University's philosophy of "talent development" is long-standing and pervasive: "We will meet you where you are, but we will tell you where we want you to go."

– **University College: Comprehensive network of advising, support services, tutoring, early warning systems.**

– **"Everyone has a role . . . Secretaries see themselves as extensions of advising."**

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Reinforce academic engagement outside the classroom

Wofford College's learning community courses connect first-year students, student preceptors, and faculty using weekly "pizza discussions" in the residence halls, off-campus excursions, and dinner discussions in the faculty dining room.

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Lessons from Project DEEP

3. Environments Adapted for Educational Enrichment

- ❖ **DEEP schools make wherever they are "a good place for a college!"**
- ❖ **Connected to the local community in mutually beneficial, educationally purposeful ways.**
- ❖ **Buildings, classrooms, and other physical structures are adapted to "human scale."**
- ❖ **Psychological size fosters engagement with peers, faculty and staff.**

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Linking campus and community

George Mason's Century Club: Business, professional, and government organizations promote partnerships between the University and the metro area business community. Members volunteer to work with faculty and students in job and internship fairs, resume and interviewing workshops, and networking opportunities.

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Physical space promotes collaboration

Wofford's Milliken Building -- its science center -- was designed with plenty of "fishbowls" and other areas for group work space. "Homework lounges," adjacent to faculty offices, also promote interactive learning.

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U of Kansas Digital Environments: Technology-enriched learning

Faculty make large lecture classes engaging via PowerPoint, Blackboard software, and other technology including slides and videos, and "interactive lecturing," which incorporates various opportunities for students to participate.

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Lessons from Project DEEP

4. Clearly Marked Pathways to Student Success

- ❖ **Mutually reinforcing student expectations and behavior, institutional expectations, and institutional reward systems.**
- ❖ **Redundant early warning systems and safety nets**
- ❖ **Clear messages to students about the resources and services available to help them succeed and clear expectations for their use.**

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Socialization to academic expectations

At Wheaton, new students read a common book and essays by faculty that respond to the reading. Assigned readings, faculty responses, and the website combine to introduce incoming students to preferred ways to grapple with intellectual issues.

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Socialization to academic expectations

Winston Salem State University's First Year College houses most sources of academic support for new students in one location. This is a physical manifestation of the focus of the FYC: bring institutional resources together in a systematic and coordinated way to address the needs of new students.

– Required: new student seminars taught by faculty who also serve as new student advisors and mentors.

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Intentional acculturation

Rituals and traditions connect students to each other and the institution

KU's "Traditions Night." 3,000 + students gather in the football stadium to rehearse the Rock Chalk Chant, listen to stories about the Jayhawk, learn the "I'm a Jayhawk" school song, and hear stories intended to instill students' commitment to graduation

Intentional acculturation

At Longwood, peer mentors -- "students helping other students" -- are catalysts to promote student achievement and learning and introduce students' to volunteer and other educational opportunities through the Longwood Seminar, residence halls leadership roles, and the strong co-curricular program.

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Redundant early warning systems: "Tag Teaming"

❖Wheaton first-year student advising team includes faculty, student preceptors, librarians and administrative staff.

❖At Ursinus, Miami, and Wheaton representatives from both academic affairs and student affairs serve as academic advisors

Lessons from Project DEEP

5. *Improvement oriented ethos*
❖Self-correcting orientation
❖"Positive restlessness"
❖Continually question, "are we performing as well as we can?"
❖Decision-making informed by data
❖ "We know who we are and what we aspire to."

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Fayetteville State University

– **Concern about first-to-second year retention rates**
– **Chancellor launches Freshman Year Initiative**
– **Vision of holistic student development engaged all FSU community members**

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Improvement-oriented ethos

Evergreen State College: "We talk about what needs to be fixed all the time. This is very much a part of our culture."

– **Much of Evergreen's academic program is reinvented on an annual basis.**
– **"Disappearing task forces."**

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Macalester College

"It's 9:00 a.m. We're about to begin our first meeting of the day. This is our second visit to Macalester and we're seeking feedback about the College's Interim Report. Sitting in the provost's comfortable meeting area, our pens are poised to record what we need to do to enhance the next draft of this report. The provost pulls out his own legal pad and pen and sits across from us expectantly. Turning the tables, he says: 'This was a fine report. Now would you tell us how we can do things better here at Macalester?'"

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Applying Karl Weick's Concept of Small Wins to Organizational Change

It seems useful to consider the possibility that social problems [organizational change projects] seldom get solved [are undertaken] because people define these problems in ways that overwhelm their ability to do anything about them

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Small Wins

A small win is a concrete, complete, implemented outcome of moderate importance. By itself a small win may seem unimportant. A series of wins at small but significant tasks, however, reveals a pattern that may attract allies, deter opponents, and lower resistance to subsequent proposals.

(Weick, K. E. [1984]. Small wins. American Psychologist, 39, 1, 40-49.)

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Pull More Levers

Thus instead of singular, large, specially designed and campuswide programs to achieve a particular institutional goal, efforts might more profitably focus on ways to embed the pursuit of that goal in all institutional activities...rather than seeking large levers to pull in order to promote change on a large scale, it may well be more effective to pull more levers more often.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1991). How college affects students. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (p. 655)

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Lessons from Project DEEP

6. *Shared responsibility for educational quality*

- ❖ Leaders articulate and use core operating principles in decision making
- ❖ Supportive educators are everywhere
- ❖ Student and academic affairs collaboration
- ❖ Student ownership
- ❖ A caring, supportive community

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Peer teaching and support

Significant proportion of UTEP students are tutors. Formal peer teaching role tied to first-year seminars; Tutoring Learning Center gets lots of business; peer leadership institute. Becoming a tutor is serious business – tutors are well-trained, have rigorous requirements.

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Academic-Student affairs partnerships

At Alverno, student affairs staff members described themselves as "partners in learning in developing a community of learners" and have identified desired cocurricular outcomes that complement the College's Eight Ability outcomes. A staff member noted, "We see ourselves as an extension of the classroom."

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"The Power of One"

Every DEEP school has people who add a special dimension to the student experience. They make people around them better as they routinely energize all with whom they interact – students, faculty, staff and others.

"Miss Rita" at Wofford College 46

Reflective Moment

- • **What is 1 thing you're taking away from these examples? Why?**

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Creating Conditions that Matter

First and Foremost, Focus <u>Everyone's</u> Attention On Student Success

- ➤ Make student success everyone's business
  - ✓ Mission matters
  - ✓ So does institutional leadership

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Creating Conditions that Matter

Specify The Path To Student Success

- Draw an accurate map; 'distribute' it widely and follow it consistently
- Implement a comprehensive network of early warning systems and safety nets
- Front load resources to smooth the transition, increase coherence
- If something works, consider requiring it

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Potential "High Impact" Activities

- First-year seminars and experiences
- Common intellectual experiences
- Learning communities
- Writing-intensive courses
- Collaborative assignments
- "Science as science is done"
- Diversity/global learning
- Service learning/community service
- Internships
- Capstone experiences/projects

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Creating Conditions that Matter

Create and Sustain Partnerships for Learning

- Tighten philosophical & operational linkages between academic and student affairs.
- Focus programs, policies, and practices on enriching educational opportunities and creating seamless learning environments.
- Include students as partners
- Form partnerships with the local community
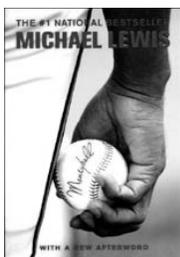
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Creating Conditions that Matter

Create Spaces For Learning

- Make every student residence a learning community
- Build and renovate spaces to reflect commitment to student engagement
- Recognize and exploit the educational advantages of your setting

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Creating Conditions that Matter

Put Money Where It Will Make A Difference In Student Engagement

"…in professional baseball it still matters less how much you have than how well you spend it"

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Creating Conditions that Matter

Put Money Where It Will Make A Difference In Student Engagement

- Invest in student learning and activities that contribute to student success
- Align reward system with institutional mission, values, and priorities
- Sunset redundant and ineffective programs

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Invest in Student Learning

University of Maine at Farmington's (UMF) Student Work Initiative employs students in meaningful work in student services, laboratories, and field-research. Such experiences provide opportunities to apply what they are learning to practical, real-life situations.

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Endowments of Selected Private DEEP Institutions and Their Undergraduate Enrollment

Alverno College:
$24,070,833
2176 Students

Ursinus College:
$109,575,757
1571 students

Gonzaga University:
$112,124,466
4171 students

Wabash College:
$336,698,871
877 students

Macalester College:
$515,743,000
1869 students

Source: *US News America's Best Colleges 2007*   56

Endowments of Selected Public DEEP Institutions and Their Undergraduate Enrollment

TESC:	**UMF:**
2,395,656	$9,391,000
4171 students	2452 students
Fayetteville State:	**George Mason:**
$8,465,541	$40,812,720
5029 students	18,091 students

Source: *US News America's Best Colleges 2007*

Creating Conditions that Matter

Use Data to Inform Decisions

- **Conduct ongoing outcomes assessment and use the results.**
- **Do more of what you know works for student success; do less of what you know doesn't [or can't demonstrate does**
- **Review and revise time commitments and priorities**

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The University of Kansas

Kansas University provost: "Data drive most of the things we do."

Gen Ed Assessment Interviews, conducted by faculty to assess impact of Gen Ed courses, provide annual opportunity for faculty to "sit across" from 120 graduating seniors and learn how to improve the experiences of students in their major fields. Three-person teams (one faculty member from each student's major and two faculty members from outside the major area) conduct these interviews; more than a third of the faculty has participated. Results of this assessment, including major-specific results, are available to academic units.

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Miami University

An ambitious benchmarking exercise calls for each department and program to evaluate its own practices, make comparisons to six strong departments at other universities, and implement the best practices found elsewhere. More than 100 plans for improvement were developed as a result of the benchmarking exercise, and many more recommendations are expected.

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Creating Conditions that Matter

- **Not sufficient to simply "have" extended orientation, writing center, early warning system, etc.: A significant proportion of students must take advantage of programs**
- **Programs must be of high quality, employ best practices, meet needs of your students & attend to campus culture**
- **Must have evidence to demonstrate effectiveness and pinpoint how to improve**

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Institutional Assessment

? **What proven student success programs and practices exist on your campus?**

? **What proportion of students are affected by the program?**

? **How many are required of students?**

? **What is the quality of the program?**

? **How do you know it's effective?**

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Table 1. Inventory of Programs for Student Success					
	On Our Campus	Required	% Student Involved	Quality	Evidence of Effectiveness
Orientation	✔	✔	100%	+	Surveys, NODA award
Extended Orientation	✔		20%	?	Instit data persistence
First-Year Seminar					
Learning Communities	✔		50% - FY	=	Adapted best practices
Early Warning Systems					
Advising Career Center	✔		60% - FY	-	Advising Standards
Student Faculty Contact					
Multicultural Programs	✔		?	=	Surveys
Internships, Experiential Lrng	✔		50%	+	Alum surveys
Co-curricular Activities	✔		80% - SR	+	?
Undergraduate Research	✔		15%	=	?
Writing Center	✔		20% - FY	-	FY Writing Prof Feedback
Math-Science Center	✔		?	-	
Academic Support Center					
Service-Learning	✔		25% - FY	=	?
Capstone	✔	✔	100%	+	Major Field Test

Institutional Assessment

➤ **Make sure faculty and staff understand *what* is being measured and *why***

➤ **Explain what the data *do* and *do not* represent**

➤ **Collect enough data to disaggregate at meaningful levels**

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Assessing Conditions to Enhance Educational Effectiveness
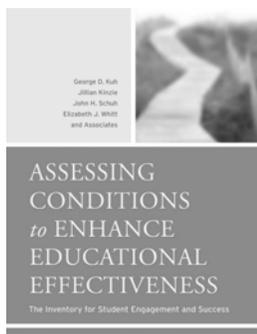
- **Next-step resource to help institutions assess extent to which DEEP conditions exist**
- ***The Inventory for Student Engagement and Success* (ISES), a self-guided framework for conducting comprehensive & systematic analysis, features diagnostic queries that focus on the 6 conditions common to DEEP schools, and the 5 NSSE clusters of effective educational practice**

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How might you use ISES?

- **Campus self-study: Assemble a team to assess the conditions for student success institution-wide**
- **Focused study: Identify a NSSE cluster or DEEP condition in which your campus is under-performing and conduct a focused ISES probe around this topic**
- **Unit or function study: Tailor study around a topic such as admissions and student recruitment, curriculum review, student affairs, campus planning and faculty development**

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Why stay the course??

The good-to-great-transformations never happened in one fell swoop. There was no single defining action, no grand program, no one killer innovation, no solitary lucky break, no miracle moment. Sustainable transformations follow a predictable pattern of buildup and breakthrough… (Collins, 2001, p. 186)

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Questions and Discussion

- **To what extent are DEEP practices used and encouraged on your campus?**
- **What barriers exist to their use?**
- **What are 1-2 steps you can take to cultivate educational practices and campus conditions that promote student success?**
- ***What might you do differently in your own practice based on DEEP findings?***

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DEEP Practice Briefs

Download the series!

DEEP Practice Briefs - Promoting Student Success Series – 16 Papers available: www.nsse.iub.edu

- **Kuh, G.D. (2005). What campus leaders can do. Occasional Paper No. 1.**
- **Kuh, G.D. & Kinzie, J. (2005). What the media and the general public need to know. Occasional Paper No. 2.**
- **Chickering, A.W. & Kuh, G.D. (2005). Creating conditions so every student can learn. Occasional Paper No. 3.**
- **Kezar, A. J. (2005). The importance of shared leadership and collaboration. Occasional Paper No. 4.**

STUDENT SUCCESS *in* COLLEGE

DEEP Practice Briefs
Promoting Student Success

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Discussion and Comments

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