Liberal Education & America’s Promise

Excellence for Everyone as a Nation Goes to College

Equity-Driven Guided Learning Pathways for Student Success

Research and Planning Group Conference
April 7, 2016
Where do we go from here?

What will it take?

Collective Action?

ACCOUNTABILITY

How do we move the needle to make real progress?
Guiding Questions

• How do we build a shared commitment to provide ALL college students with the high-quality learning they need to succeed and thrive in an era of global interconnection and rapid societal and economic change?

• How do we promote a clear, contemporary framework for high-quality learning and students' demonstrated achievement?
Guiding Questions

• How can we accelerate broad-scale systemic innovation to advance educational practices that engage diversity and challenge inequities in order to make excellence inclusive?

• How can we help students to integrate and apply their knowledge and skills to complex, unscripted problems and new settings?
About AAC&U

• The leading national association concerned with the quality of student learning in college

• More than 1,300 institutional members – half public/half private, two year, four-year, research universities, state systems, liberal arts, international

• A network of over 30,000 faculty members, academic leaders, presidents and others working for educational reform

• A meeting ground for all parts of higher education – about our shared responsibilities to students and society
Mission

To make liberal education and inclusive excellence the foundation for institutional purpose and educational practice in higher education.

(Approved by the Board of Directors, 2012)
Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP)

LEAP is a national initiative that champions the importance of a twenty-first-century liberal education—for individual students and for a nation dependent on economic creativity and democratic vitality.
The LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes

Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
– Focused on engagement with big questions, enduring and contemporary

Intellectual and Practical Skills
– Practiced extensively across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

Personal and Social Responsibility
– Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

Integrative and Applied Learning
– Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems
Essential Learning Outcomes

- Inquiry and Analysis
- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Written and Oral Communication
- Quantitative Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Teamwork and Problem Solving
- Civic Knowledge and Engagement—local and global
- Intercultural Competence
- Ethical Reasoning
- Lifelong Learning
- Across general and specialized studies
Falling Short?

College Learning and Career Success

Key findings from survey among 400 employers and 613 college students conducted in November and December 2014

For

The Association of American Colleges and Universities by

Hart Research Associates
Methodology

- Online survey among 400 executives at private-sector and nonprofit organizations that have 25 or more employees
  - Each reports that 25% or more of their new hires hold an associate degree from a two-year college or a bachelor’s degree from a four-year college

- Online survey among 613 college students, all within a year of obtaining a degree or, in the case of two-year students, transferring to a four-year college
  - Sample includes 304 students at four-year public colleges, 151 students at four-year private colleges, and 158 students at two-year colleges
Learning Outcomes that at Least Four in Five Employers Rate as Very Important

Proportions of employers rating each skill/knowledge area as very important for recent college graduates to have*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill/Knowledge Area</th>
<th>Employer Rating</th>
<th>Student Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral communication</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working effectively with others in teams</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written communication</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical judgment and decision-making</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical/analytical thinking</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying knowledge/skills to real world</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*8, 9, 10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale, 10 = very important
Learning Outcomes that More than Half of Employers Rate as Very Important

Proportions of employers rating each skill/knowledge area as very important for recent college graduates to have*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill/Knowledge Area</th>
<th>% Employers Rating Very Important</th>
<th>% Students Rating Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing/solving complex problems</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locating, organizing, evaluating information</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being innovative/creative</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying current on technologies</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with numbers/statistics</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing/solving problems with people from different backgrounds</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*8, 9, 10 ratings on zero-to-10 scale, 10 = very important
Employers give college graduates lower scores for preparedness across learning outcomes than current students give themselves.

Proportions who believe they/recent college graduates are well prepared in each area*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Employers</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working effectively with others in teams</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying current on technologies</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical judgment and decisionmaking</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locating, organizing, evaluating information</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral communication</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with numbers/statistics</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written communication</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical/analytical thinking</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being innovative/creative</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*8-10 ratings on zero-to-ten scale (continued)
Employers give college graduates lower scores for preparedness across learning outcomes than current students give themselves.

Proportions who believe they/recent college graduates are well prepared in each area*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Employers</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing/solving complex problems</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying knowledge/skills to real world</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of/experience with diverse cultures/communities in the US</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying current on developments in science</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with people from different backgrounds</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying current on global developments/trends</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficient in other language</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of/experience with diverse cultures outside the US</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*8-10 ratings on zero-to-ten scale
How do you translate a commitment to equity and inclusive excellence into campus practice?
AAC&U Publications
Making Excellence Inclusive

“Through the vision and practice of inclusive excellence, AAC&U calls for higher education to address diversity, inclusion, and equity as critical to the wellbeing of democratic culture.

Making excellence inclusive is thus an active process through which colleges and universities achieve excellence in learning, teaching, student development, institutional functioning, and engagement in local and global communities.”
Making Excellence Inclusive

Diversity

Equity-Minded

Equity

Inclusion

Students

Institutional Climate

Paradigm Shift

Asset-Based

Culturally Competent & Inclusive Pedagogy

Clarity in goals, language, & measures

Disaggregated Data

Quality learning

Growth Assessments

Guided Learning Pathways
“Being equity-minded thus involves being conscious of the ways that higher education—through its practices, policies, expectations, and unspoken rules—places responsibility for student success on the very groups that have experienced marginalization, rather than on individuals and institutions whose responsibility it is to remedy that marginalization.”
Bringing Equity and Quality Learning Together: Institutional Priorities for Tracking and Advancing Underserved Students’ Success

Key findings from a survey among 325 Chief Academic Officers or designated representatives at AAC&U member institutions, conducted July 15 to October 13, 2015, by Hart Research Associates for the Association of American Colleges and Universities
Educational leaders at institutions with common learning outcomes do not report that students have a greater understanding of these goals in 2015 than they did in 2008.

What is your sense of how many of your students understand your institution’s intended learning outcomes for undergraduate learning?*

*Among members at institutions that have a common set of learning outcomes for all undergraduate students

• Committing to frank, hard dialogues about the climate for underserved students on your campus, with the goal of effecting a paradigm shift in language and actions

• Investing in culturally competent practices that lead to the success of underserved students

• Setting and monitoring equity-minded goals—and devoting aligned resources to achieve them
The majority have or are developing programs to build faculty capacity to use culturally competent teaching/program strategies and/or to be more successful with minority, low-income, and/or first-generation college students.

Does your institution have a program to build faculty, instructor, and/or staff capacity to use culturally competent teaching/program strategies and/or to be more successful with minority, low-income, and/or first-generation college students?

- 42% Have program to be more successful with minority, low-income, first-generation college students
- 35% Do not have but are planning to develop program
- 23% Do not have and do not have plans to develop
More institutions are setting equity goals on retention/on-time graduation by race/ethnicity than by other areas and groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My institution has set goals to close gaps in the following areas:</th>
<th>Race/ethnicity</th>
<th>Socioeconomic status</th>
<th>Parents’ education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retention and/or on-time graduation</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of student learning outcomes</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in high-impact learning practices</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority have or are developing equity goals to build new opportunities for high-impact learning for first-generation students, low-income students, and/or students of color.

Does your institution have specific, explicit equity goals that are aimed at building new opportunities for high-impact learning for first-generation students, low-income students, and/or students of color?

- Have equity goals: 33%
- Do not have but are planning to develop equity goals: 37%
- Do not have and do not have plans to develop: 30%

• Providing support to help students develop guided plans to achieve ELOs, prepare and complete Signature Work, and connect college with careers

• Identifying HIPs best suited to your students and your institution’s quality framework
AAC&U’s Equity-Driven Guided Learning Pathways

• With Equity and Belonging Paramount Values, Institutions Meld High Touch and High Tech to Support and Monitor Student Engagement and Progress, Giving Special Attention to Frequent or Systemic Barriers and Challenges

• Faculty Define and Programs Address Essential Learning Outcomes – Across Systems and Within Institutions

• Sequence Programs, Courses and Well-Designed Assignments to Foster Essential Learning Outcomes
AAC&U’s Equity-Driven Guided Learning Pathways

- All Students Participate Frequently in High Impact or Active Learning Practices, From First to Final Year

- Every Student Completes Applied Learning Projects—Connected to Program and Student Goal

- Students’ Own Work—including Their Applied Learning Projects—Provides the Primary Evidence of their Progress Toward Degree Level Learning and Educational Achievement
LEAP Challenge

Thematic Course Clusters
Three or more courses across multiple disciplines, including the major field. A student examines questions important to him/her and to society.

Thematic Course 1

Thematic Course 2

Thematic Course 3

Signature Work
A student’s best work, which can take many forms (e.g., capstone; internship; field work; research; community-based research).

E-portfolio shows student’s problem-based learning and proficiencies over time.

For students in two-year degree programs, this work is Signature Work. For students in four-year degree programs, it is preparation for Signature Work. Transfer students may take the second-year inquiry seminar at the original institution or following transfer.
Signature Work

Signature Work projects are related to a question or problem that is important to the student and important to society. Signature Work allows students to connect liberal and general learning with the world beyond college.
Few institutions describe their general education programs as coherent or having structured pathways.

Proportions saying each describes* their institution’s general education program

Coherent sequence of courses and/or educational experiences

2008
44%
35%

Structured pathways that progressively develop proficiencies in key areas

N/A
29%

* 4 + 5 ratings on a five-point scale, 5 = describes the program very well
Nearly all AAC&U member institutions offer significant applied learning projects for at least some students; fewer than one in four require all students to participate.

Some campuses are exploring ways to engage students in more problem-based learning. For instance, institutions are providing opportunities to students to do significant learning projects that are integrative and/or applied and that take a semester of study or longer. These projects may be conducted within capstone courses, research projects, or in field-based activities or internships.

Which describes your campus’s current approach to significant learning projects like these?

- Offered option for all students: 11%
- Offered option for some students: 10%
- Required for all students: 23%
- Required for some students: 50%
- Not a current option: 6%
“High-Impact Practices” that Help Students Achieve the Outcomes

★ First-Year Seminars and Experiences
★ Common Intellectual Experiences
★ Learning Communities
★ Writing-Intensive Courses
★ Collaborative Assignments & Projects
★ Undergraduate Research
★ Diversity/Global Learning
★ Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
★ Internships
★ Capstone Courses and Projects
Institutions track data on persistence, graduation, high-impact practices (HIs), and learning outcomes; many fewer disaggregate data on HIs and learning outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Institution tracks these data</th>
<th>Institution disaggregates these data by race/ethnicity, SES, and/or parents’ education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduation rates</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention rates</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in high-impact practices</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit/course completion milestones</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of learning outcomes</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment in remedial courses</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of remedial courses</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More institutions are tracking and disaggregating data on race/ethnicity than on other categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution tracks</th>
<th>Institution disaggregates by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation rates</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<td>Enrollment in remedial courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completion of remedial courses</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Ensuring that ELOs are addressed and HIPs are incorporated across all programs

• Making student achievement—including underserved student achievement—visible and valued
Intentionality of HIPs

- Selection
- Design
- Access

Learning Outcomes

- Defined
- Evidence
- Assessment
- Data Disaggregated
- Integrated

HIPs

Equity
How do you translate a commitment to equity and inclusive excellence into campus practice?
Committing to Equity and Inclusive Excellence: Campus-Based Strategies for Student Success

• A two-year project launched with support from USA Funds.

• The project builds on AAC&U's Centennial focus on equity and inclusive excellence.

• The project is designed to expand the current research on equity in student achievement and to identify promising evidence-based interventions for improving student learning and success.
Campus Participants

• Anne Arundel Community College (MD)
• California State University – Northridge (CA)
• Carthage College (WI)*
• California State University – Sacramento (CA)
• Clark Atlanta University (GA)
• Dominican University (IL)
• Florida International University (FL)
• Governor's State University (IL)
• Lansing Community College (MI)
• Morgan State University (MD)
• North Carolina A&T State University (NC)
• Pomona College (CA)
• Wilbur Wright College (IL)

Carthage College is supported by Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates.
Project Objectives

- Campuses develop defined campus action plans and institutional tracking models to measure:
  - to increase access to and participation in high-impact practices (HIPs)
  - to increased completion, retention, and graduation rates for low-income, first-generation, adult learners and/or minority students
  - to increase achievement of learning outcomes for underserved students using direct assessment measures, including AAC&U’s VALUE Rubrics
  - to increase student awareness and understanding of the value of guided learning pathways that incorporate HIPs for workforce preparation and engaged citizenship (i.e. completion with a purpose)
Project Objectives

➢ Use findings from AAC&U’s 2015 Centennial member survey to identify and understand common issues, themes, and interventions related to addressing equity in student learning and success

➢ Raise awareness of institutional inequities and identify areas ripe for improvement through
  - AAC&U’s *Committing to Equity and Inclusive Excellence: A Campus Guide for Self-Study and Planning*
  - A campus inventory of student success and learning data
Shared responsibility?

What will it take?  Collective Action?

Where do we go from here?

ACCOUNTABILITY

How do we move the needle to make real progress?
Thank you!

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