

# Meeting the Needs of Today's Learners



An *Inside Higher Ed* webcast  
Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2022  
2 p.m. Eastern

# Presenters



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# Today's Learners

- Of the 15.9 million undergraduates enrolled in fall 2020:
  - About a third enrolled at community colleges
  - 38% were enrolled part time
  - 58% women
  - 25% were 25 or older; nearly 40% were at least 22 years old
  - 48% white, 20% Hispanic, 12% Black, 7% Asian



# Demographics Aren't Everything

Why is mindset-based segmentation important?



**Prince Charles**

Male  
Born in 1948  
Raised in the UK  
Married Twice  
Lives in a castle  
Wealthy and Famous



**Ozzy Osbourne**

Male  
Born in 1948  
Raised in the UK  
Married Twice  
Lives in a castle  
Wealthy and Famous

*“Serving all students: A study of learner mindsets” (Accenture)*

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# Understanding Learner Mindsets

## FINDING 1

### Six distinct segments of learners

16%

#### Campus Enthusiasts

Residential students actively participating on campus—inside and outside the classroom—who plan to start their first job after graduation.

31%

#### Junior Specialists

Focused learners pursuing a credential to secure their first job in a specific field.

23%

#### Evolving Professionals

Successful, early-stage workers seeking to expand their industry knowledge while satisfying their intellectual curiosity.



7%

#### Wayfinding Intellectuals

Full-time, intellectually curious student seeking to explore a broad array of disciplines and to conduct research, with strong interest in staying within academia.

9%

#### Trajectory Transformers

Full-time workers who are skeptical about the value of education and seek short, focused programs for building specific skills and to change careers.

14%

#### Mid-Career Climbers

Full-time workers looking to advance in their careers by obtaining a credential in a specific skill-based area valued by their employer.

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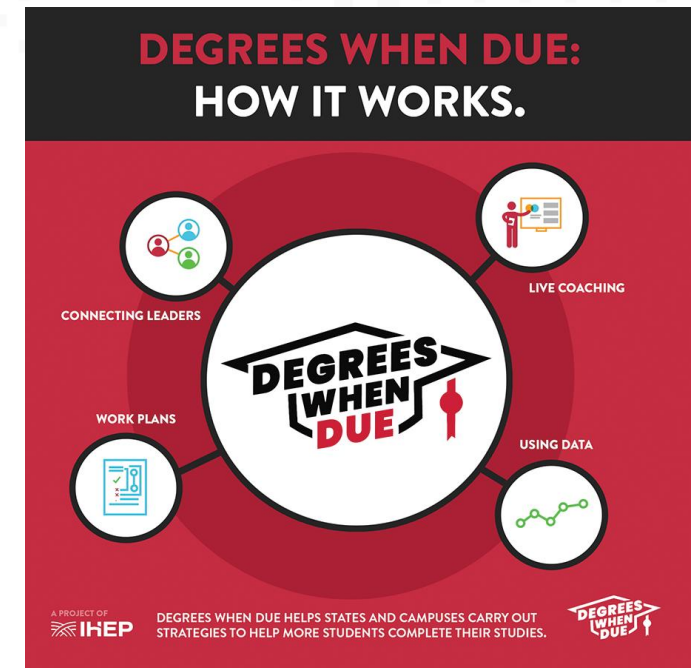
# Possible Approaches to Serving 'Today's Students'

- Recruiting different kinds of students (and looking in different places for them) is obviously part of the equation – but focus of today's discussion is on meeting the needs of different learners.
- To serve new populations, institutions may need to address:
  - Their mix of academic programs and credentials
  - What services they offer, how and when
  - How they make education affordable



# Returning Learners and Adults

- 36 million U.S. residents have “some college, no degree”
  - 3 million “near completers”
  - Disproportionately people of color and from low-income backgrounds
- Reasons students stopped out:
  - Financial difficulties
  - Inability to attend college while working and supporting families
  - Feeling institutions were not supportive of them and their circumstances.
- Policies—outdated graduation requirements, financial holds on degrees—get in the way.



# First-Generation Learners



“Clearly, there is still work to be done to eliminate the stigma surrounding first-gen students. Institutions need to make sure they feel comfortable and supported enough to admit when there’s something they don’t know, and to ask for help when they need it. Normalizing the unknown is key to facilitating the success of first-gen students.”

*--Nick Ladany, president, Oglethorpe University  
(and former first-gen student)*



# Waubonsee's Focus on Latino and Adult Learners

Illinois community college targeting two main areas:

- Waubonsee's admissions officers and academic advisers will train to become student success coaches – will have to do the “tough work” of reorienting their approach for a new sort of student.
- Working with Council for Adult and Experiential Learning to develop a model that counts adult learners' prior work experience as college credits.



# The Role of Online Learning



# A Different Syllabus for Today's Learners

These are my beliefs:

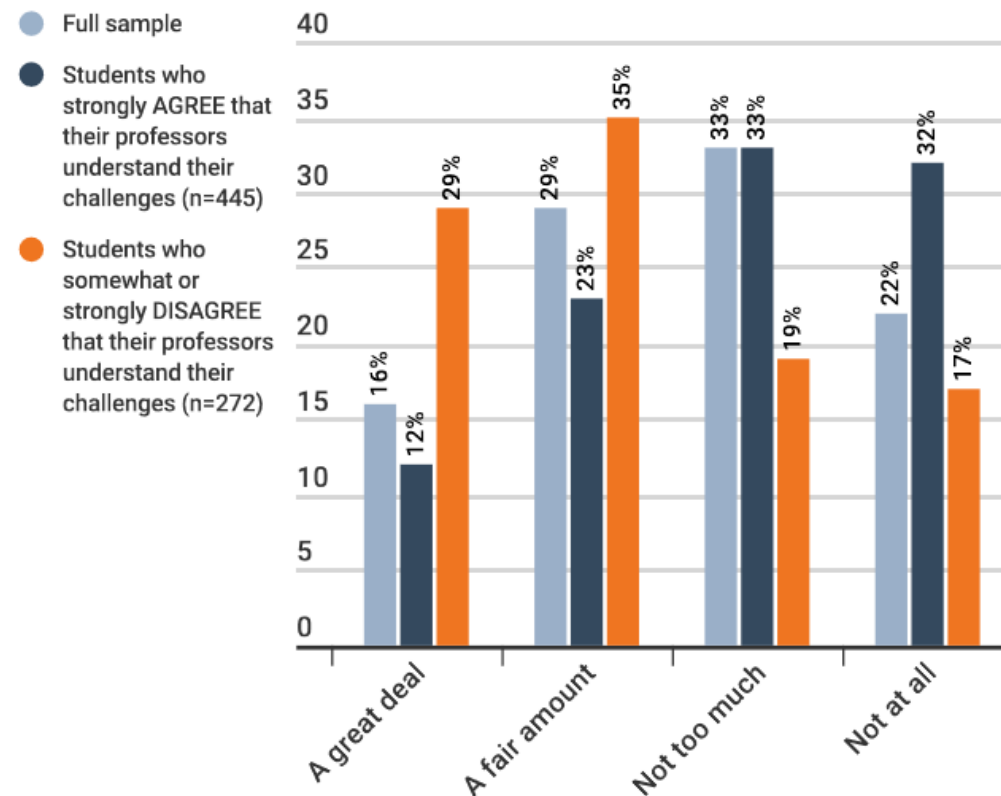
- Anyone can be a scientist.
- ALL students are capable of greatness.
- You are worthy of my best efforts as a teacher.
- I authentically care about your success, and I also care about your well-being.
- If you engage in the learning exercises in the course, you will pass the class and achieve a high level of content and skills mastery.

*Syllabus from Laurel Hartley, biology professor at U of Colorado-Denver, after participating in Student Experience Project workshop*

# 'Fitting In' and the Faculty Role

## Students Feeling Like They Don't Fit In

How much college students have struggled with fitting in at college in the past four months—and how feeling as if professors understand them might make a difference



Thanks

**D2L**