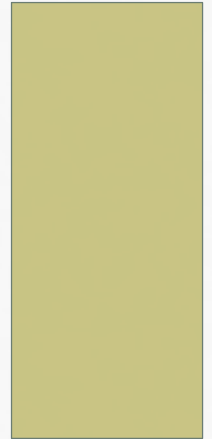


**HIGHER EDUCATION
TODAY:
PRACTICES FOR SURVIVAL**

KAREN ERICKSON, ANNE HISKES, TRACY DINESEN



GOALS FOR THIS SESSION

As a result of the session participants will be able to:

- (1) gain new perspectives on the complexity of critical and urgent issues in higher education today;**
- (2) relate the efforts of their home institutions to more comprehensive ideas for effective practices to meet the hard challenges of today; and**
- (3) create and construct a dialogue on how their institutions can “own” the future.**

PLANNED AGENDA

- **Overview of Larger Questions**
- **Examples from institutions**
- **Interactive Collaboration**
- **Discussion/Planning**
- **Recap**

NECESSITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION TODAY?

- **Gen Z questions its value and relevance to entrepreneurial initiative and job markets**
- **A polarizing rather than equalizing force (prohibitive cost and problematic access make colleges for elites only)**
- **Location, location - urban-serving institutions serve perceived critical needs in higher education**
- **Decreasing enrollment, institutional mergers, campus closings**

TOOLKIT FOR CITIZENSHIP?

- **A functional society – educating for economic and social well-being**
- **America's role in the world – educating for globalization**
- **America within – educating for civic engagement and responsibility**
- **Citizen-leaders – educating for the public good in cultural, aesthetic, moral, and community values**

RELEVANCE OF DISCIPLINES?

- **Current compelling issues, e.g., health care and the environment**
- **Integrative, project-based curricula; downplay disciplines, departments; ways to organize knowledge**
- **Passions and interests of students – topical, timely, thought-touch, e.g., game studio, digital literacy and media arts, mind-body development, innovation, entrepreneurial initiative, and inclusive, essential dialogue.**

RELEVANCE OF DISCIPLINES?

- **Curricular background for the future requires multidisciplinary competence and knowledge - drone engineer; robot tender; comprehensive health care manager; data visualizer; innovation designer; video game critic; encryption tech; Web-enabled device programmer.**
- **Disappearing majors/emerging, creative minors**

ORGANIZED TO MEET TRANSFORMATION FOR THE FUTURE?

- **Strategic change – institutional identity, student base, paths to sustainability**
- **Organizational change – governance; the “endowed system,” e.g., tenure, qualifications of faculty; degrees and credit hours; “old habits in new bottles**
- **Structural change – diversify of teaching/learning spaces; classroom architecture; modes of delivery crucial**
- **Obstacles to change – resilience v. adaptation; new v. established faculty/administration**



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CULTIVATING 21ST CENTURY RELEVANCE AT GVSU

Answer: The Design Thinking Initiative

- **Human-centered design**
- **Solves complex “real-world” problems**
- **Uses multidisciplinary teams**
- **Iterate – empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test**

DESIRED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Intercultural Communication**
- **Data collection and systems analysis**
- **Innovative and collaborative problem-solving**
- **Critical and integrative thinking**
- **Presentation and story-telling skills using multi-media**

IMPLEMENTATION

- **Retain a DT practitioner to train faculty**
- **Establish faculty learning communities across colleges**
- **Create a for-credit DT certificate open to students in any program**
- **With community partners establish a not-for-credit DT Academy for students**

CRITIQUE OF THE DT INITIATIVE

- **Labor intensive teaching - difficult to scale up**
- **Faculty preparation - does it meet accreditation qualification standards?**
- **Is the action-oriented DT framework an effective framework for deep learning?**
- **Community business leaders are enthusiastic!**

SIMPSON COLLEGE



CULTIVATING 21ST CENTURY RELEVANCE AT SIMPSON

Answer 1: Simpson Promise

- Focus on Access to Education and Affordability
- Driven by Mission
- Experiential and Integrative Learning as key educational components
- Additional Leadership Development for Students



CULTIVATING 21ST CENTURY RELEVANCE AT SIMPSON

Answer 2: Curriculum and Experiential Learning

(1) Creation of Interdisciplinary Programs:

- Social Justice, Arts Management, Interactive Media, Rural Studies Institute, Honor's Program focused on integrative curriculum etc.

(2) Increase participation in experiential learning:

- Currently 85% participation with a goal of 95% by 2019.

CULTIVATING 21ST CENTURY RELEVANCE AT SIMPSON

Answer 3: Flexibility in modality

- Offering increased number of hybrid and web courses**
- Offering exclusively online programs and low residency programs**
- Expands audience for our education and acknowledges changing realities of our students**

GOALS OF THESE PROGRAMS

- **Visible commitment to access:**
 - Increase number of high need students
 - Increase diversity of campus population
 - Increase number of first-generation students
- Offer curricula focused on integrative learning, helping students understand and live in the intersections of disciplines
- Expand experiential and integrative learning opportunities

INTERACTIVE COLLABORATION

HIGHER EDUCATION IN RETROSPECT

- Derek Bok, *Our Underachieving Colleges*
- Derek Bok, *Universities in the Marketplace: the Commercialization of Higher Education*
- Ernest L. Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*
- Jonathan Cole, Elinor Barber, Stephen Graubard, eds., *The Research University in a Time of Discontent*
- Bartlett Giamatti, *A Free and Ordered Space: the Real World of the University*
- Annette Kolodny, *Failing the Future: A Dean Looks at Higher Education*
- Page Smith, *Killing the Spirit: Higher Education in America*

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