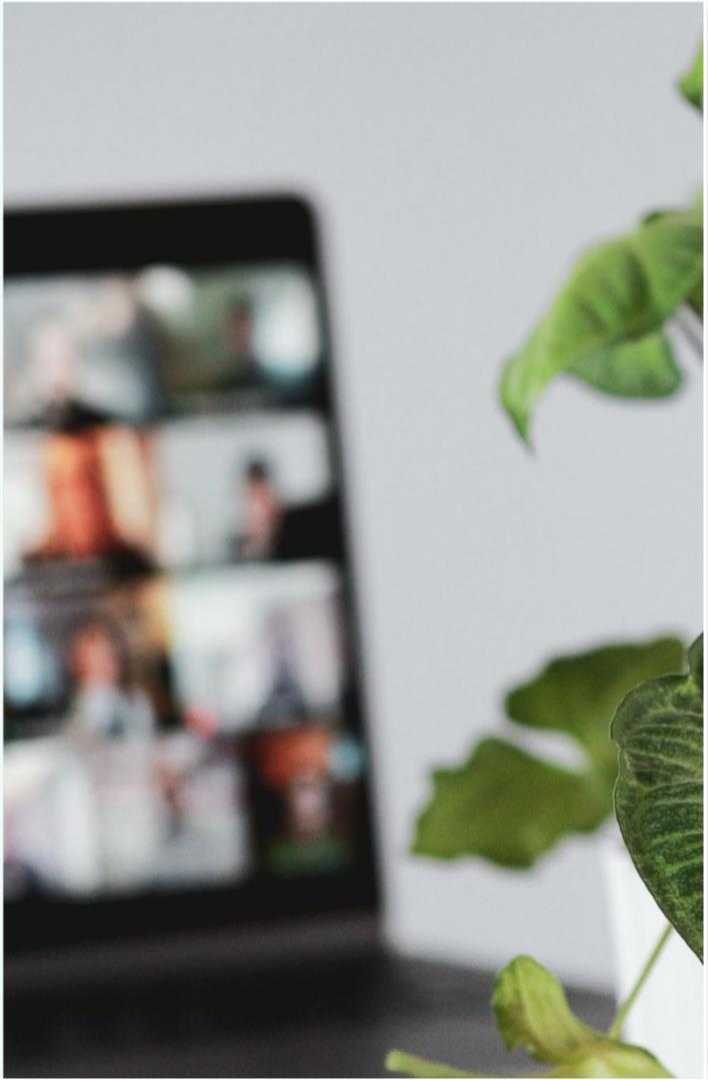
The Intersection of Assessment and Holistic Student Experiences

FAMU Assessment Day
Amelia Parnell, Ph.D.

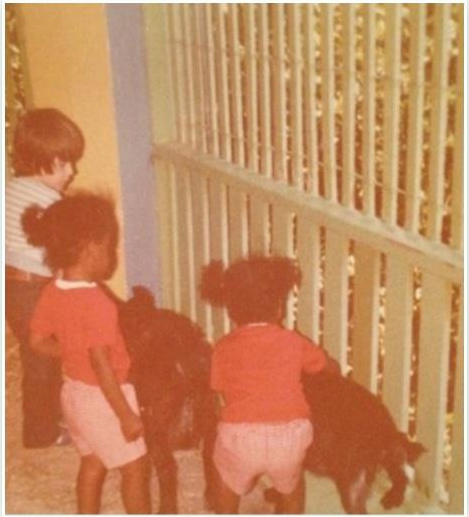


Agenda

- About Amelia & NASPA
- What's Going On?
- 3 Strategies for Embedding Assessment in Our Work
- Additional Priorities & Considerations
- Resources Throughout
- Questions

About Amelia

Optimist | Researcher | Connector | Friend

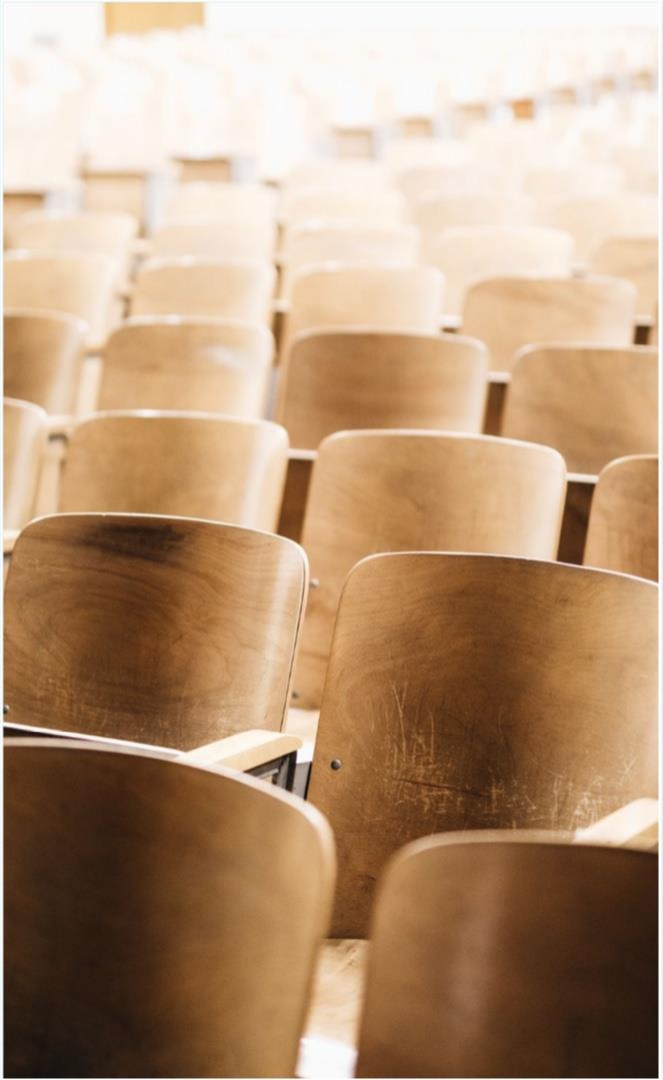


About NASPA

- 100-year-old association that provides professional development, advocacy, and research for over 14,000 members
- Focused on common functional areas within student affairs (housing, advising, conduct, assessment) as well as broader higher education themes (access, persistence, and degree completion)

What's Going On?

Current Trends in Higher Education and Assessment



The Current State of Higher Education: 5 Big Questions

- How stable will institutions' financial position be over the next 2-3 years?
- How will institutions balance free speech and safety?
- Will COVID-19 result in permanent shifts in residential campus operations?
- How will requirements to measure and report students' performance change?
- Will we need new talking points for debates about the value of a college experience?

Resource Suggestion: Postsecondary Value Commission Report

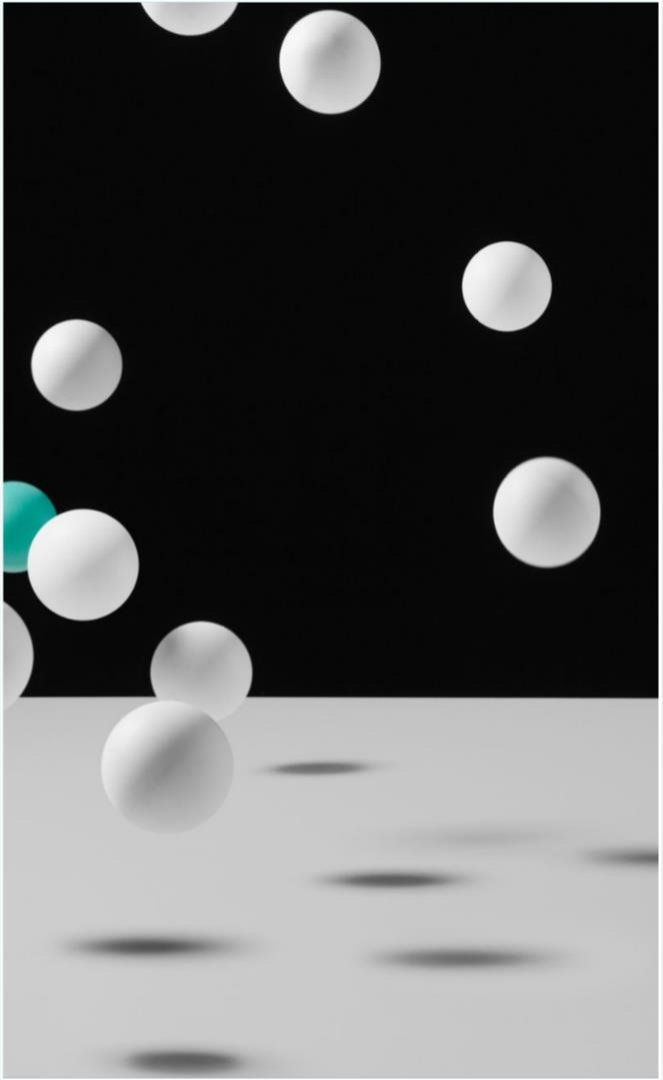
Equitable Value: Promoting Economic Mobility and Social Justice through Postsecondary Education

Features:

- A shared definition of college value that can inform policy and practice
- A measurement framework for how individual colleges and universities create equitable value for students
- An action agenda to encourage changes in policy and practice leading to more equitable value

Website: postsecondaryvalue.org

Current Trends in Assessment



Trend 1: We have many assessment needs!

- **Student Learning**
  - Discipline-based courses
  - Co-curricular learning
  - Prior learning assessment
- **Finance and Operations**
  - **Resource Allocations** (balancing micro and macro solutions)
  - **Technology** (capacity to leverage multiple systems efficiently)
  - **Strategic Communication** (effectiveness of messaging)
- **Human Resources**
  - **Salary and Compensation** (pay scales, market alignment)
  - **Work/Life Integration** (evolution and evaluation of work schedules and locations)
  - **Stress Testing** (stay interviews, exit interviews, contingency planning)

Trend 2: In many instances, we need more people!

- **Limited IR Capacity**

  AIR Jobs Board - 89 open positions

  As of 11/11/21

  Average IR office has a staff FTE of 3.9

  The range is from 6.3 FTE at the average public 4-year institution to 2.8 FTE at the average private 4-year institution

- **Varying Levels of Expertise**

  Generalists

  Example: student affairs assessment

  Specialists

  Example: finance and operations, accreditation

Trend 3: Assessment-related training is in high demand!

- **Local, Regional, and National Networks**
  - FAMU Assessment Day
  - Assessment Institute
  - National Organizations
- **Varying Topics**
  - Data literacy and analysis
  - Privacy and governance
  - Equity-focused methodologies
  - Strategic planning

What Can We Do?

3 Strategies for Embedding Assessment in Our Work

3 Strategies for Embedding Assessment in Our Work

Set Clear Goals for Student Success

Let's show how college can be a transformational experience.

Commit to Collaboration

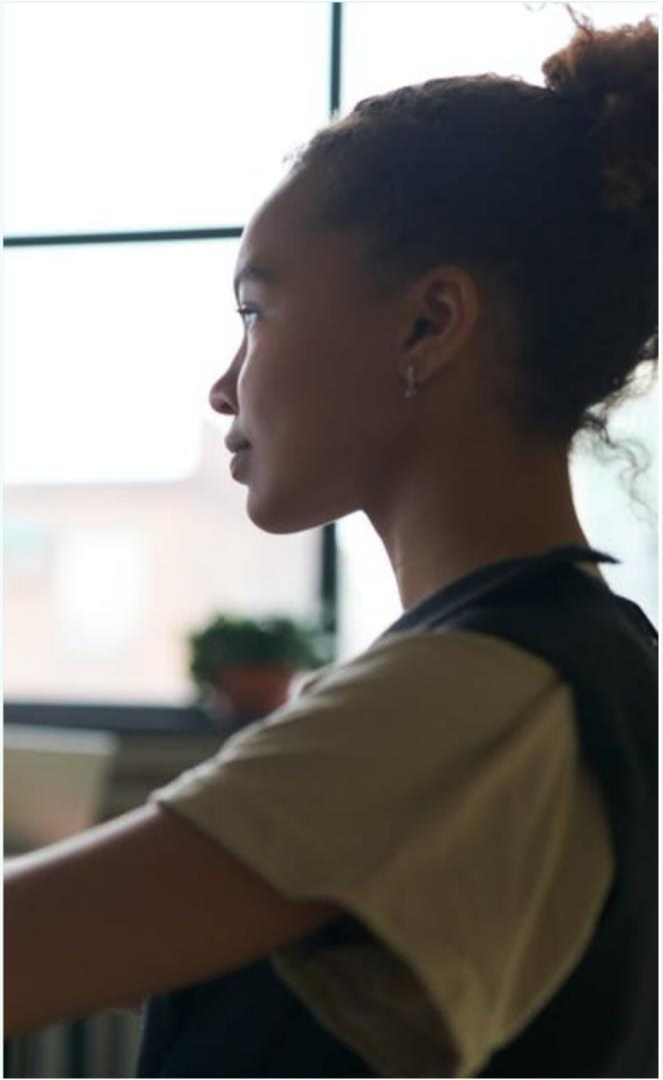
Let's work together to ensure that learning happens everywhere.

Understand Your Data Identity

Let's discuss and share our individual data-related strengths.

Strategy #1

Set Clear Goals



Student Success Is Everywhere at Our Institutions

Positions

Student Success Coach

Director of Student Success

Programs

Campus-Wide Student Success Initiatives

Student Success Summit

Departments

Office of Student Success

Student Success Center

Metrics

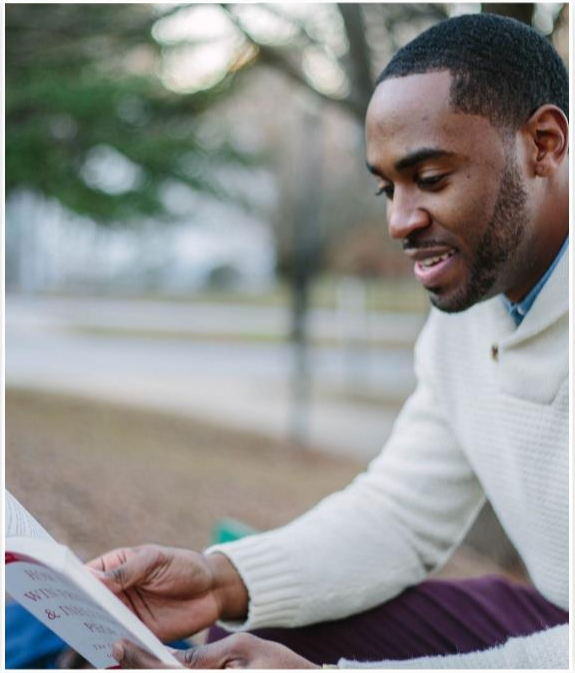
Student Success Goals, Objectives, and Indicators

Mission

Strategic dedication and commitment to student success

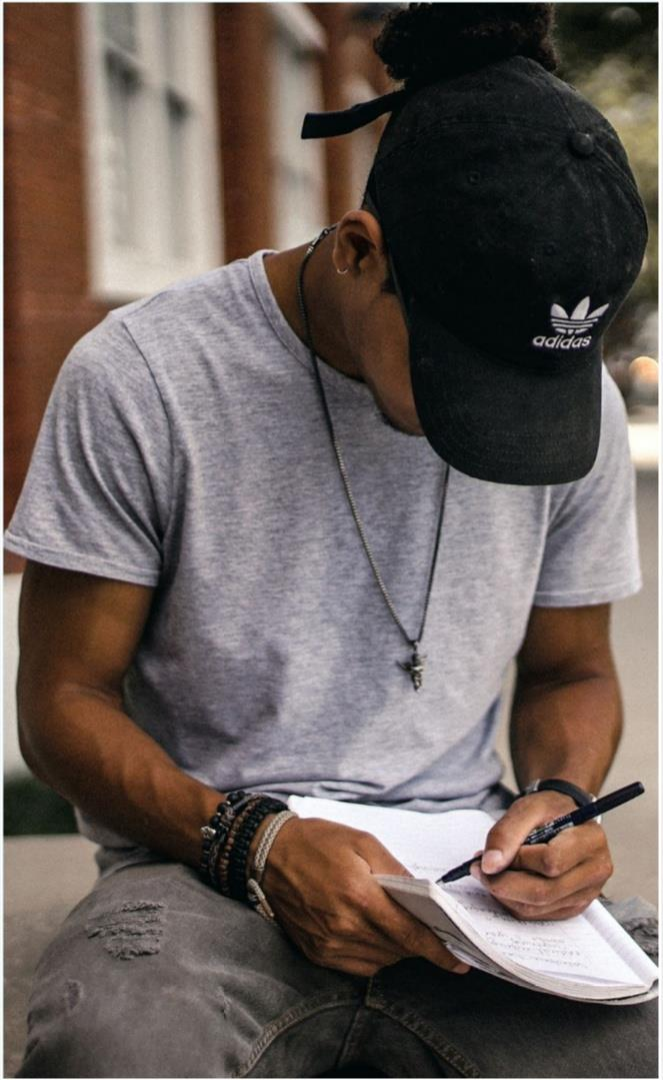
How Are We Currently Defining Student Success?

Retention



Persistence

Graduation

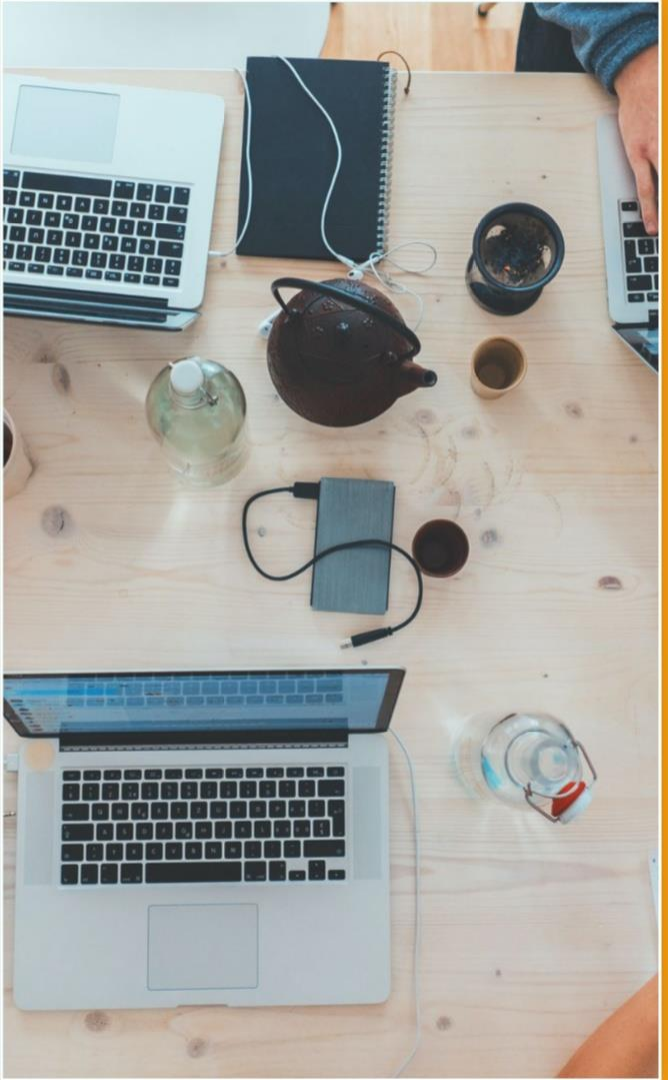


Let's Expand Our Descriptions of Student Success - A Successful Student:

- Understands how to balance competing individual and community priorities
- Knows how to manage resources for which they have and share responsibility
- Realizes their unique contributions and can leverage abilities to improve their conditions

Strategy #2

Commit to Collaboration



Cross-Functional Collaboration Is Happening!

60%

Institutional researchers reported involvement in assessing the impact of interventions

59%

Student affairs professionals reported involvement in developing the institution-wide data strategy

30%

Information technology professionals reported involvement in managing the early-alert system

Source: Institutions' Use of Data and Analytics for Student Success (NASPA, 2018). N=314.

81%

of professionals said they anticipate **working more closely with academic affairs**.

66%

of professionals said they anticipate **working more closely with the diversity office**.

Source: Survey on the Future of Student Affairs (NASPA, 2021). N=975.

Learning Happens Everywhere

- Comprehensive learner records contain data from co-curricular transcripts, badges, e-Portfolios and other digital instruments
- Institutions are using data from these records to show the impact of engaging in out-of-classroom activities on students' performance
- AACRAO, NASPA, and NILOA partnered to help 100+ institutions create comprehensive learner records

"The success of institutions in the Comprehensive Learner Record project demonstrates the increased awareness that **learning occurs in many ways, locations and times.**

The intentionality around that learning is increased when faculty are involved in a process to review learning outcomes within a course, program, degree, student experience or other learning mechanisms."

Comprehensive Student Record Project Report (2017)

Strategy #3

Understand Your Data Identity

The Data Identity Framework

A Six-Component Guide to Helping You Find Your Data-Related Strengths

The Data Identity Framework

Curiosity & Inquiry

Ability to Formulate and Ask Clear Questions

Research & Analysis

Ability to Select and Use Appropriate Methodologies

Communication & Consultation

Ability to Clearly Discuss Findings with Multiple Audiences

Campus Context

Knowledge of Current Issues and Trends within the Institution

Industry Context

Knowledge of Current Issues and Trends in Higher Education

Strategy & Planning

Ability to Select and Execute a Course of Action

Source: You Are a Data Person (Parnell, 2021).

Understanding the Framework: 4 Principles

- Each component is a valuable part of one's data identity. Therefore, the components are not provided in a sequential or ranking order.
- Within each component, some professionals will have much more experience and knowledge while others have less.
- All 6 components are valuable to engaging in collaborative work on a campus.
- The level and frequency at which professionals engage in activities related to each component will vary.

Source: You Are a Data Person (Parnell, 2021).

Data Identity Framework Sub-Components

Curiosity and Inquiry

Issue Clarity

Question Formation

Historical Context

Stakeholder Impact

Research and Analysis

Methodology

Technical Expertise

Data Integration

Computation

Communication and Consultation

Delivery Type

Audience

Interpretation

Follow-Up

Source: You Are a Data Person (Parnell, 2021).

Data Identity Framework Sub-Components

Campus Context

Student Information

Programs and Initiatives

Strategic Plan

Campus Mission

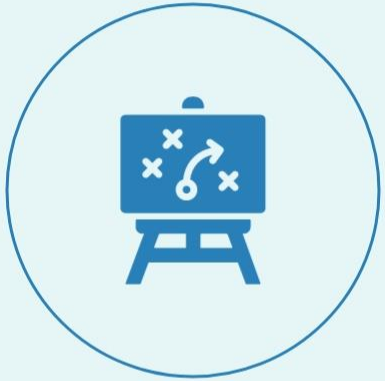
Industry Context

News and Events

Sector Knowledge

Functional Knowledge

Student Trends



Strategy and Planning

Role Alignment

Project Management

Resource Allocation

Progress Monitoring

Source: You Are a Data Person (Parnell, 2021).

Example Personas (3 of 15)

The Curator

Research and Analysis + Communication and Consultation

The Connector

Curiosity and Inquiry + Campus Context

The Mission Monitor

Strategy and Planning + Campus Context

Source: You Are a Data Person (Parnell, 2021).

Looking Ahead: Additional Priorities

“Right now, and I think moving forward in the next five years, there will still be a lot of emphasis on big data. There will be a more heightened sense of the different analytical tools and resources that folks can get access to so they can figure out how to better serve their institutional mission and their students’ needs.

Whole programs of study are being redesigned and I think some of that redesign is going to be based on how people are looking at student needs based on their use of analytics.”

Eboni Zamani-Gallaher, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Source: You Are a Data Person (Parnell, 2021).

Additional Priorities

- Strategic Communication
- Campus Policy and Advocacy
- Prior Learning Assessment and Competency-Based Education
- State and Federal Compliance

50%

of students say they do not always read emails from their institution or academic department

40%

of students say they do not always read emails from their advisors

Source: EAB Daily Briefing. 70 administrators came together to audit emails. Here's what they found. (2020).

34%

of professionals said they are **not at all prepared or a little prepared to leverage technology to foster community engagement online**.

20%

of professionals said they are **not at all prepared or a little prepared to address legal and compliance issues**.

Source: Survey on the Future of Student Affairs (NASPA, 2021). N=975.

Resource Suggestion: NASPA Research Report [Wesley and Dunlap, July 2021]

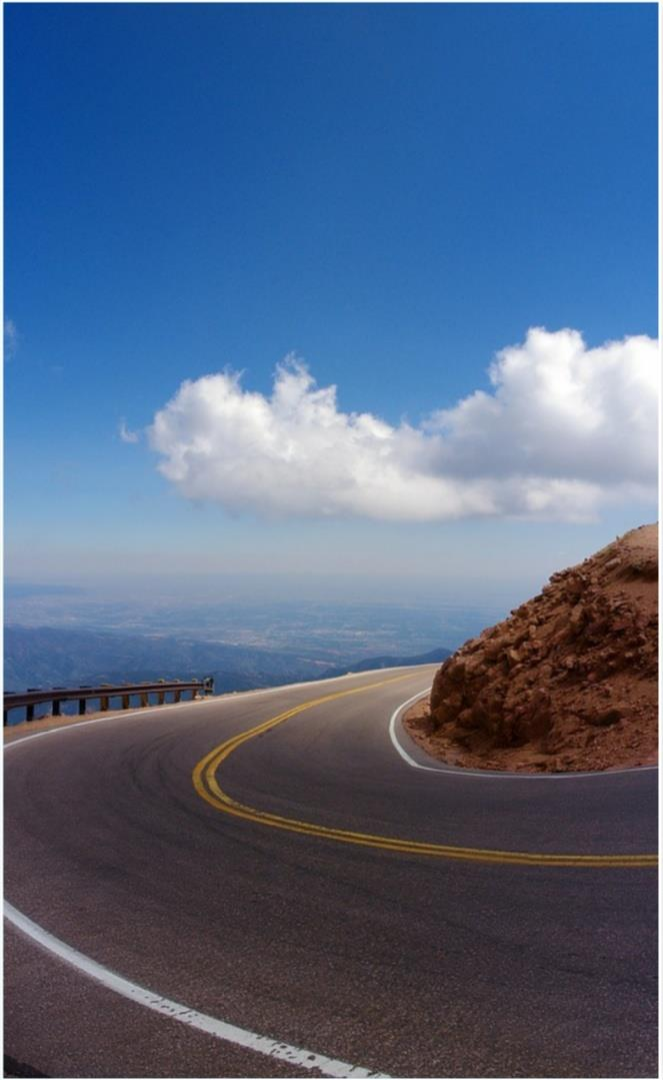
Moving from Words to Action: The Influence of Racial Justice Statements on Campus Equity Efforts

Features:

- Content analysis of racial justice statements made by 300 institutions in spring and summer 2020
- NASPA/NADOHE joint survey of vice presidents and chief diversity officers regarding statement-making logistics
- Review of institutions' reported short- and long-term actions
- Discussion of areas for change

Available on the NASPA Website

Additional Considerations



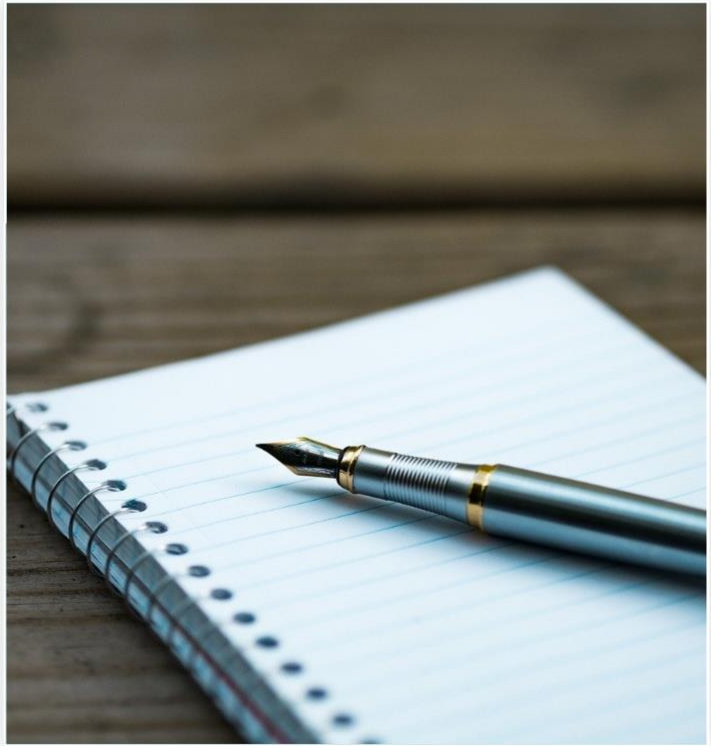
Additional Considerations

- Change Management
- Politics and Competition
- Crisis Management
- Resource Constraints

Friendly Reminder

Assess needs and processes in addition to outcomes.

Resources



- **Report: Spotlighting Virtual Innovation - Award-Winning Strategies for Leveraging Technology to Support Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond**

  virtualsuccess.naspa.org

- **Achieving the Dream Toolkit: Holistic Student Supports Redesign**

  See Chapter 8 - Data Distribution Strategy Worksheet

- **Book: (2021) Square Pegs and Round Holes: Alternative Approaches to Diverse College Student Development Theory**

  Bonner, Banda, Smith, and marbley

- **Report: (2020) The PLA Boost: Results from a 72-Institution Targeted Study of Prior Learning Assessment and Adult Student Outcomes**

  Klein-Collins, Taylor, Bishop, Bransberger, Lane, and Leibrandt

Groups to Follow

Postsecondary Data Collaborative

Hosted by Institute for Higher Education Policy

Twitter: @PostSecData

The Node Newsletter

Twitter: @NodeForIR

Sign Up: tinyurl/NodeForIRSignUp

Credential As You Go

Focused on nationally-recognized incremental credentials

Website: credentialasyougo.org

Today's Students Coalition

Website: todaysstudentscoalition.org

Twitter: @TS_Coalition

“Create a team of people who motivate you. I created an analytics community of practice that is inclusive of staff, faculty, as well students. I compose a monthly newsletter featuring various topics on analytics and I include related free events taking place in the area.

I also try to not just highlight the technical aspects of reporting, as the whole point of the community is to build some excitement around data and analytics.”

Caroline Maulana, University of South Carolina

Source: You Are a Data Person (Parnell, 2021).

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