Prior Learning Assessment
With a Purpose

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My Background

- Composition and Rhetoric Faculty
- Computers and Composition
- Faculty Training
- Online courseware
- Director of Technology
- ED of Higher Education Consortium
- President of Charter Oak State College:
  - A public, online, adult focused, assessment-based College
  - Proponent of Competency-based Learning

*Technology keeps disrupting everything*
What Does Disruption Mean?

- **Clayton Christensen**—*The Innovator’s Dilemma*
  
  *New or underserved markets*
  
  *Needs met by new providers and/or new processes*

- It’s been a process:
  - Distance Education: Learning is an activity not a location
  - Competency-based learning: Disaggregate Instruction from Assessment
  - *Coming soon*: Adaptable learning platforms providing individualized learning

- Higher Education’s ROI is being reassessed:
  - from a parent’s perspective
  - from an employer’s perspective
  - from an employee’s perspective
  - from accreditor/state/DC perspectives
Change Occurs

- We Are In A Time Of Disruptive Change

- We (Higher Education) are capable of Change and have made it in the past

- You are capable of change and it will be required
Charter Oak and PLA

- Founded in 1973 on the idea that learning could be assessed for college credit.
- Created a set of outcomes for degrees and concentrations
- Offered no courses * Had no residency requirement
- Accept credits from any Regionally Accredited Institution
- Accept ACE recommendations for Credit
- Created a portfolio-for-credit process
- Did reviews of non-collegiate instruction for credit (CCAP)
- Cross index assessed credit against courses for a portable transcript
Pressures...Solution

- **Improve Outcomes**
  - Measure student learning **progress** (real time interventions)
  - Measure students learning **outcomes** (outcomes of instruction)
  - Measure student learning **effects** (outcomes of a degree)

- **Lower costs:** Requires new business models (E.g OER)

- **Create a new Supply Chain**
  - We supply a product, but the production process takes time
  - Our product is purchased by employers, but they don’t define their needs (they refuse to buy through a sales contract)

- **Create Mass Customization**
  - Students choose learning modalities that meet their needs and wallet
  - Financial aid supports those choices

**SOLUTION:** Create networks of partners to support those choices
Options for Action

- Find an existing model and use it
- If there is no model: Trial and error (e.g. scientific method)
  - Fail fast
- Waiting doesn’t help because decision makers can never know everything they need to know
  
  …So act, learn, adjust, and repeat
- Reinforce (measure if possible) successful change
- Celebrate successful change…out loud
Resist Inertia

- We’ve Never Done It That Way…
- We’re Different…
- We Can’t Do That…
- Our Faculty Wouldn’t…
- It Isn’t Secure…
- Princeton doesn’t…
Lead From Where You Are

- Influence leadership
  - Do the work
  - Provide ideas
  - Build partnerships

- Positional leadership
  - Top of the food chain
  - Power to decide
  - Depend on your influence leaders
Leadership Principles

- Effective leadership involves the creative destruction of your current processes
- Collaborate rather than compete
- Focus on bottlenecks, barriers, and limits
- Lower costs, raise service levels, and expand scale

*How?*

- Disaggregate the task into its parts
  - Do the parts at which you are excellent
  - Identify those who perform the other parts well
  - Assemble the best parts into a new, collaborative whole
Conclusion

Thank you Ohio

I welcome your feedback--

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