ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS TODAY TO GET THE RIGHT CANDIDATES TOMORROW

Aligning Strategic Priorities and Executive Hiring Criteria

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Session Overview

• Introduction to Aspen and Our Focus on Student Success

• Defining Purpose: Discussion of Statewide Goals

• Diagnosing Needs: Analysis of College and Regional Strengths and Challenges

• Presenting Research: What We Know About Qualities of Exceptional Presidents

• Break for Lunch

• Building Consensus: Defining Sought-After Qualities of Regional Presidents

• Closing: What’s Next?
INTRODUCTION

Aspen’s Focus on Student Success
Who We Are

The Aspen Institute’s College Excellence Program aims to advance higher education practices, policies, and leadership in ways that help institutions of higher education make the choices that matter most to improving student outcomes in four areas:

Completion

Equity

Labor Market

Learning
Our Work

Eight major initiatives, including:

- Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence
- Frontier Set
- Presidential Fellowship
- American Talent Initiative
- Tackling Transfer
Themes characterizing the institutions that achieve exceptional outcomes for students

1. Strong Leadership and Organizational Culture
2. Guided Pathways to Continuing Education and Well-Paying Jobs
3. Intentional Focus on Improving Teaching and Learning
4. Strategic Data Use to Improve Practice and Close Equity Gaps
5. Partnerships and Structures Aligned to Defined Student Outcomes
President Sandy Shugart aligns highly effective change management processes to sustainable college-wide focal points – called “Big Ideas” – that reflect shared visions of what most needs to be done to advance student success.

**Result:** Sustained, dramatic improvements in completion rates.
Outcomes of Prize Finalist Colleges

Exceptional improvements over time in completion

Increase in the number of credentials awarded at Valencia College, 2002-2011
AA, AS/AAS Degrees and Certificates/Diplomas Awarded

84% increase over 6 years
46% increase over 6 years
66% increase over 6 years
Lake Area Technical Institute

President Deb Shepherd built a culture and processes by which the college designs and consistently updates programs based on industry need and job expectations, always ensuring hands-on instruction that engages students and simulates the work environment.

Result: 76% graduation rate and remarkably strong employment rates for graduates.
Outcomes of Prize Finalist Colleges

Completion/transfer rates that far surpass the national average

- National Average: 39%
- Valencia College (FL) 2011 Winner: 53%
- Lake Area Technical Institute (SD) 2017 Winner: 74%
Outcomes of Prize Finalist Colleges

Far greater equity in outcomes than the national average

Three-year completion and/or transfer rates for underrepresented minority students compared to the national average

- National Average: 34%
- Finalist Average: 44%
- Top 3 on This Metric:
  - Brazosport College (TX)
  - Santa Barbara City College (CA)
  - Santa Fe College (FL)
Outcomes of Prize Finalist Colleges

Exceptional transfer and bachelor’s completion outcomes

Rate of first-time in college students who successfully transferred to a four-year college in six years, and the rate of bachelor’s degree completion for those students who transferred

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Average</th>
<th>Santa Fe College (FL)</th>
<th>Santa Barbara City College (CA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transfer-Out Rate</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Completion Rate</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>50% higher than avg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer-Out Rate</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>24% higher than avg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Completion Rate</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>67% higher than avg.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Santa Fe College (FL): 55% Transfer-Out Rate, 50% higher than average, 67% Bachelor’s Completion Rate, 24% higher than average.

Santa Barbara City College (CA): 67% Transfer-Out Rate, 67% higher than average, 54% Bachelor’s Completion Rate, 29% higher than average.
Outcomes of Prize Finalist Colleges

Exceptional labor market outcomes for graduates

Average salaries of recent graduates compared to the average for others in the region (top short-term and long-term performers)

Lake Area Technical Institute (SD)
One Year After Completion
Regional average for New Hires: $22,808
$28,908 (27% above avg.)

San Jacinto College (TX)
Five Years After Completion
Regional average for All Workers: $69,027
$88,577 (28% above avg.)
DEFINING PURPOSE

Discussion of State-Wide Goals

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
COLLEGE EXCELLENCE PROGRAM
What are the state’s strategic goals related to student access and success?

1. **College Readiness:** Prepare more high school graduates, GED graduates, and adults to enter college prepared for college-level work.

2. **Student Success:** Graduate more people with the knowledge and skills to achieve their life and career goals.

3. **Affordability and Sustainability:** Maximize access to higher education for students from all economic backgrounds.

4. **Innovation and Economic Growth:** Create environments that emphasize innovation and prepare students for successful careers in a fast changing world.

5. **Equity:** Eliminate achievement disparities among different ethnic/racial, economic and gender groups.
DIAGNOSING NEEDS

Analysis of College Strengths and Challenges

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
COLLEGE EXCELLENCE PROGRAM
Take 30 minutes to discuss the following questions with your college team.

1. What is working? What are the college’s top positive student access and success outcomes and what is the college doing that might explain this?

2. What is not working as well? What are the college’s areas for improving student access and success outcomes and what is the college doing that might explain this?

3. Where has change been the most difficult at the college over the past 3-5 years and why? What challenges do you think lie ahead?

4. What does the college need to do internally to maintain and build on its strengths? What does it need to do to overcome weaknesses in student outcomes? What is the role for external partnerships to assist in improving student access and success?

5. Create a list (on chart paper) with your college’s 3-5 top strengths (mix of internal and external) and 3-5 most pressing challenges.
Move into your regional groups to continue the discussion for the next 45 minutes.

- Each group assigns a facilitator, a recorder, and a timekeeper.
- Use the provided discussion guide to keep the group on track.

- By 12:00pm, each group should have two completed flip charts: 3-5 top regional strengths and 3-5 top regional challenges.
PRESENTING RESEARCH

What We Know About Qualities of Exceptional Leaders

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
COLLEGE EXCELLENCE PROGRAM
Our Work: *Crisis and Opportunity*

In partnership with Achieving the Dream, Aspen explored three core questions:

- What are the qualities of excellent community college presidents?
- What qualities do trustees value in hiring?
- What skills do education and professional development programs emphasize?
Our Work: Hiring Exceptional Community College Presidents

Ten qualities of exceptional presidents
The Ten Qualities of Exceptional Presidents

- Committed to Student Success
- Takes Strategic Risks
- Builds Strong Teams
- Establishes Urgency
- Plans Lasting Internal Change
- Results-Oriented
- Communicates Effectively
- Financial and Operational Ability
- Entrepreneurial Fundraiser
- Develops Effective External Partnerships
The Ten Qualities of Exceptional Presidents

1. Committed to Student Success
2. Takes Strategic Risks
3. Builds Strong Teams
4. Establishes Urgency
5. Plans Lasting Internal Change
6. Results-Oriented
7. Communicates Effectively
8. Finances/Operations
9. Entrepreneurial Fundraiser
10. External Partnerships

1. What qualities on this list would you expect to see most frequently in the applicant pool? Why?
2. What qualities would you expect to be least common? Why?
3. What strategies could be used to attract candidates with rarer qualities?
Hiring an Exceptional President

**Tool #1**
Align Priorities to Hiring Criteria

**Tool #2**
Recruit Candidates

**Tool #3**
Announce Job

**Tool #4**
Writing Exercise

**Tool #5**
Interview Questions

**Tool #6**
Evaluation Rubric

**Tool #7**
Assessment Aggregation

**Set Strategic Priorities & Hiring Criteria**

**Assess Candidates**

**Confirm the Choice**
LUNCH
12:30-1:15
BUILDING CONSENSUS

Defining Sought-After Qualities of Regional Presidents

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
COLLEGE EXCELLENCE PROGRAM
What are the top regional strengths?
What are the top regional challenges?
Take 30 minutes to discuss the following questions in your table groups.

Given the system-wide goals and the strengths and challenges of your region’s institutions…

• Which of the Aspen qualities would you value most in a regional president? Which Aspen qualities are least important?
• What qualities would you value most that are not present in the Aspen qualities?
• From the two lists, what are your table’s top 5-10 qualities?
Whole Group Discussion: Prioritizing Qualities
CLOSING

What’s Next?
Hiring an Exceptional President: Use Cases

Set Strategic Priorities & Hiring Criteria
Rhode Island Harper College

Recruit Candidates
California Community College System

Assess Candidates
Harper College
Grand Rapids Community College

Confirm the Choice
California Community College System
What are the state’s strategic goals related to student access and success?

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Student Success is the Focus

Completion

Equity

Labor Market

Learning
THANK YOU

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