USING THE STUDENT’S JOURNEY TO TRANSFORM INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AT BCC

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Participants in this session will leave with a basic understanding of Joseph Campbell’s storytelling device The Hero’s Journey and how it can be related to The Student’s Journey and institutional assessment.

2. Participants will leave with strategies for connecting institutional outcomes with decision-makers and stakeholders.
PROLOGUE
IR’S ROLE IN INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

Center for Institutional Effectiveness

Strategic Planning

Assessment

Institutional Research
Changing Our Perspective

- We often break up students’ experiences into silos
  - Admissions
  - Registration
  - Course Completion
  - Graduation
  - Transfer

- We must instead step back and look at their experience as a continuum and as a story
  - Admissions → Registration → Course Completion → Graduation → Transfer
**Connecting With Our Audience**

- Best way to convey information has always been **storytelling**
- **STORIES STICK!**
  - They are **captivating**
  - They pull on **human emotions**
  - They teach **lessons**
- Anecdotal Evidence
  - Powerful, but overused
  - Extrapolation is a big problem
  - 1 person ≠ All
THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES

- Joseph Campbell outlined The Hero’s Journey
  - A universal pattern of adventure and change
- 12-step framework for storytelling
- Underlies popular works of mythology, literature and film
  - Star Wars
  - The Lord of the Rings
  - The Lion King
  - A Christmas Carol
  - The Odyssey
Chapter I

The Hero’s Journey
The Ordinary World
• Where we meet the hero
• Two trademarks of the Ordinary World
  – Surface-level sheen
  – Unseen bedrock of turmoil

The Call to Adventure
• Rouses hero-in-waiting out of ignorant (and possibly blissful) slumber
• Awakens him/her to the possibility of more

The Refusal of the Call
• A temporary lapse back into normal life (intentional or unintentional)
• Returns to familiar occupations, but something is missing now
Meeting the Mentor
- Guides the hero and keeps him/her on track
- Gives the hero what's needed to succeed
- **Cannot** complete mission for the hero though, only an adviser

Crossing the Threshold
- First step into the unexplored – into darkness, danger and the unknown
- First taste of **Special World**

Tests, Allies and Enemies
- Hero faces early challenges
- Minor trials that teach the hero
- Hero begins to test his/her strength

*Wax on, wax off*
The Approach
- Training is over – hero joins main conflict of the story
- Significant shift brings hero face-to-face with destiny

The Ordeal
- Biggest challenge yet for the hero
- Final test in the Special World to prove the hero has changed

The Reward
- A triumphant hero seizes the ultimate prize
- The hero has been transformed and experiences a *symbolic* rebirth
The Road Back
- The hero has completed the task in the Special World
- Must journey back to Ordinary World and face last conflict

The Resurrection
- Hero uses lessons learned in Special World to correct fatal flaw in Ordinary World
- Hero has fully matured

The Return with the Elixir
- Hero can live in peace in a changed Ordinary World
- Does not selfishly keep prize, shares it as the boon to society
Chapter II
The Student’s Journey
ORDINARY WORLD: IDENTIFYING IMBALANCES

• Who were our student heroes before college?
• Identify reasons for enrollment
• Data Points:
  • Demographics
  • Financial information
  • High school information
  • Early perceptions

46% of Students had a known race of Non-White

64% of students were under the age of 20 in Sept. 2010
**The Call to Adventure: Destiny Beckons**

- How do students learn about Bergen?
- Identify external and internal forces
- How to use the information:
  - Identify best paths to college
  - Identify individual needs of students
  - Longitudinal effect of certain Calls

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**The 2008 Financial Crisis led to a spike in enrollment**

An increase of **14%** in 3 years (2007 - 2010)

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**Stock Market**

**Enrollment**
The Refusal of the Call: A Failed Attempt at Returning to Normalcy

• What makes our students delay enrollment or hesitate?
• Identify barriers to enrollment
• External/Internal forces that could derail journey:
  • Family/Work obligations
  • Financial issues
  • Unsure of value of college

44% of students over the age of 20 had no prior higher education experience
Meeting the Mentor: A Light in the Dark

"I was welcomed by my English professor, and it was the start of a new life. She opened my mind to realize the potential I had in me."

-Fall 2010 Cohort Graduate

-15% of respondents mentioned someone by name who helped them through college

- When is the intervention of the mentor the most helpful?
- Any person(s) could serve as mentor
- Mentor’s role early on:
  - Registering for classes
  - Filling out complicated forms and applications
  - Getting hero more involved
**Crossing the Threshold: Entering College**

- How do we ensure students buy-in to the college experience?
- Put early interventions in place with the ability to track stats
- Gauging how they begin college:
  - Developmental education
  - Financial Need
  - Attendance Status

![Statistical Graphics]

- 39% Needed Remedial English
- 49% Needed Remedial Math
- 57% Needed Any Remedial
Tests, Allies, and Enemies/The Approach: Facing Early Challenges

- What are the early challenges faced by the student heroes?
- Early victories build skills and confidence for later challenges
- Where do students get stuck?
  - Finishing developmental
  - Gateway courses
  - Completing credits
**The Ordeal/The Reward:**

**The Ultimate Struggle for the Ultimate Prize**

- What constitutes the final push towards completing?
- Personal growth coincides with academic success
- What constitutes a success?
  - Graduation
  - Transferring
  - Credit Completion

![Graph showing graduation rate over time](image)
THE ROAD BACK/RESURRECTION:
LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

- What can continually contacting alumni tell us about BCC?
- Earning a diploma/leaving BCC is not the end of the journey
- How do we track students after they leave BCC?
  - Exit Surveys
  - Graduate Follow-Up Surveys
  - Employer Surveys
RETURN WITH THE ELIXIR: THE BOON TO SOCIETY

• How do you measure a college’s impact on society?
• The Reward is not just for the hero, it is for the betterment of society
• Longitudinal data points:
  • Return on investment, advanced degrees, job promotion

![Graph showing the impact of every $1 spent on BCC by BCC Students, Bergen Taxpayers, and Bergen County.](image)
Chapter III
Institutional Researchers as Storytellers
ENTERING OUR SPECIAL WORLD

- Commitment to a holistic approach to student data
- Repackaging data to make it more visually stimulating
- Supplementing existing data with additional information
Sharing Institutional Effectiveness

In Fall 2015, there were 1,658 students who had between 30 to 40 credits...

45% obtained an Associate Degree or Certificate from BCC by August 2017

13% transferred to another college by Fall 2017 without an Associate Degree or Certificate from BCC

17% enrolled at BCC in the Fall 2017

16% left with less than 50 credits

10% left with 50 or more credits

80%* transferred to another college after graduation from BCC

*Transfer Program Graduates

93% achieved primary objective at BCC

89%* employed at time of survey administration

*Career Program Graduates

Our 2016 graduates told us their story. It goes like this...

We love stories. Share yours next!

Top Transfer Colleges

- Montclair State University
- Fairleigh Dickinson University
- William Paterson University
- Rutgers University
- Ramapo College of New Jersey

May 2018
SHARING PROGRAM AND AES UNIT EFFECTIVENESS

Criminal Justice Department
DEGREES
THROUGH THE YEARS

The Criminal Justice Department was one of the first departments at Bergen Community College and has been awarding degrees since the College’s inception.

The first degree awarded by the Criminal Justice Department is an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree in Police Science. It is awarded to a student from Maywood, Nj.

The A.A.S. degree in Police Science reaches the height of its popularity graduating a total of 93 students in 1978.

1971
1972
1973
1974
1975
1976
1977
1978

Number of Degrees Awarded by Year

11
13
19
53
61
66
92
93

1979
1980
1981
1982
1983

68
66
27
24

THE CERULLO LEARNING ASSISTANCE CENTER
HOW CAN TUTORING HELP YOU?

RETENTION
GPA
GRADUATION

Students who receive tutoring are more likely to enroll again at BCC
Students who receive tutoring have higher GPAs
Students who receive tutoring are more likely to graduate from BCC

Each year, the Two-Time National Award-Winning Cerullo Learning Assistance Center
→ Sees over 7,000 students
→ Holds over 40,000 sessions
→ Assists with over 200 classes

LET ONE OF THE OVER 125 PEER AND PROFESSIONAL TUTORS HELP YOU ON YOUR ACADEMIC JOURNEY
DATA TO THE PEOPLE

• Joining the conversation
  • Learning Assessment Committee Meetings
  • Brown Bag Lunches
  • Days of Development
  • Tutoring Center Presentations

• Support in closing data gaps
  • Updated e-mails
  • Tutoring attendance?
CHAPTER IV

LEARNING ACTIVITY AND GROUP DISCUSSION
Tracking the Student’s Journey

• Where are your institution's data gaps?

• For which stage is your institution collecting the most data?

• How are you using data to support institutional assessment?

• How do you engage your college community?

• Where do you suggest we go next?
Chapter V

Next Steps
Fostering Collaboration and Filling in Gaps

• Launching New Student Survey this fall
  • Fill noticeable gap in data at beginning of journey

• Continuing to work with other departments
  • Cleaning data
  • Making data more accessible
  • Disaggregating by key variables

• Redoing the Center for Institutional Effectiveness website
  • Becoming more visible

• Incorporating data into the assessment conversation
  • Partnering with the Assessment Liaisons
EPILOGUE

THANK YOU!
QUESTIONS???

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO CONTACT US!

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**Image Sourcing**

- Farm Silo - http://www.clker.com/clipart-3111.html
- Storytelling Image - https://www.mindfulreturn.com/storytelling/
- Dante’s Inferno – Dante Alighieri,Musa, Mark. ((1971) *Dante’s Inferno*Bloomington, Indiana University Press
- Puzzle Piece - http://clipart-library.com/clipart/rTLo4XM9c.htm