



Enrollment or Enrolment: Implementing SEM in Canada

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Webinar Outline

- *Establish a common understanding of SEM*
- *Identify similarities & differences between U.S. & Canadian SEM practices*
- *Touch on a number of key SEM areas*
- *Identify emerging SEM issues in Canada*

A bit about SEM...

What is SEM?

Enrollment management is an organizational concept and a systematic set of activities designed to enable educational institutions to exert more influence over their student enrollments and to achieve and maintain optimum enrolment, where optimum is defined within the academic context of the institution.

Organized by strategic planning and supported by institutional research, enrollment management activities concern student college choice, transition to college, student attrition and retention, and student outcomes.

These processes are studied to guide institutional practices in the areas of new student recruitment and financial aid, student support services, curriculum development and other academic areas that affect enrollments, student persistence and student outcomes from college.

-Dolence (1994); Hossler (1990)

What SEM is Not

- *A quick fix*
- *Solely an organizational structure*
- *An enhanced admission & marketing operation*
- *An administrative function separate from the academic mission of the institution*

The Purposes of SEM are Achieved by...

- *Establishing clear goals for the number & types of students needed to fulfil the institutional mission*
- *Promoting student academic success by improving access, transition, retention, & graduation*
- *Promoting institutional success by enabling effective strategic & financial planning*

The Purposes of SEM are Achieved by...

- *Creating a data-rich environment to inform decisions & evaluate strategies*
- *Improving process, organizational & financial efficiency & outcomes*
- *Establishing top quality student-centred service*
- *Strengthening communications & collaboration among departments across the campus to support the enrolment program*

-Bontrager (2004)

SEM in Canada vs. the U.S.

...some things are the same
AND some things are
different...



Values/History

- **Different cultures, history & systems of education**
- **Social justice vs. business orientation**
- **Historical immigration patterns**
- **Privacy issues**
- **Equity/affirmative action**

Educational Systems

- **Provincial control in Canada; state & federal control in U.S.**

- **Number & size of institutions**
 - *Canada has fewer institutions (230 colleges & universities vs. 3,500+), more homogeneity*
 - *Vary in size, not quality*
 - *Private, religious & for-profit institutions*
 - *College systems differ across the country*

- **Tiering of institutions – obvious in U.S., beginning to emerge in Canada**

Changing Environment

- **Tuition dependency, rising fees & increased student debt loads...growing concern with educational costs & financial aid**
- **Increasing competition for students**
- **Changing demographics, increased diversity and uneven population growth across geographic regions**
- **Focus on student success & retention as well as recruitment**

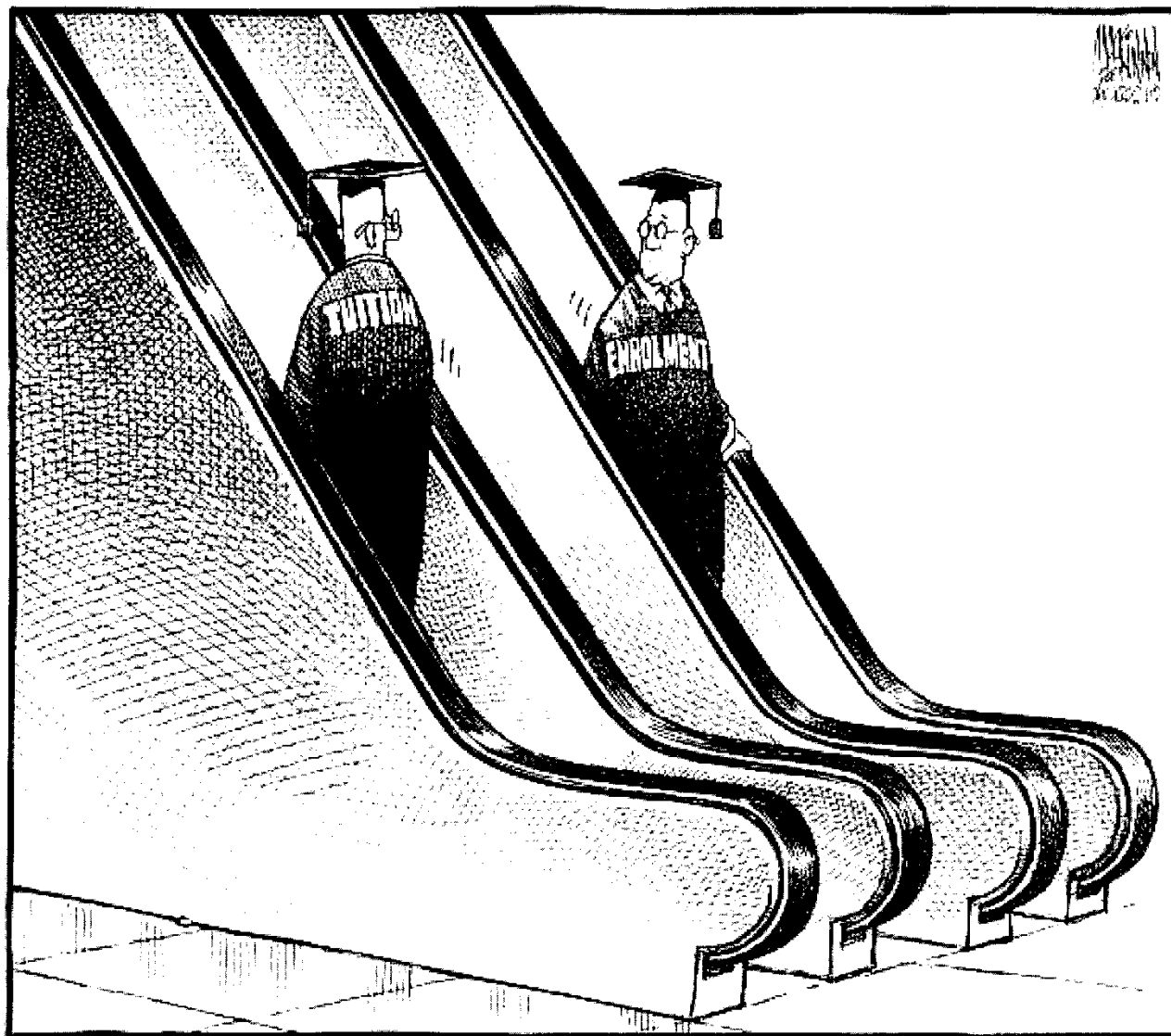
Changing Environment (cont'd.)

- Increasing number of part-time students & students working longer hours
- Increase in on-line learning (Athabasca University, Royal Roads, eCampus Alberta which saw a 45% increase in 2007 over 2006)
- Pressure for public accountability
 - *KPI's and surveys often used as a ranking tool instead of an assessment measure*

Emergence of SEM in Canada

- **Slower emergence of SEM in Canada**
 - *Timing of enrolment decline & emergence of competition*
 - *Driven by funding cuts, lack of revenue, heavier reliance on tuition*

- **Many Canadian institutions have now adopted SEM in name, practice or both**



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Key SEM Issues



“Without data you’re just another person with an opinion.”

- Unknown

Data

- **What puts the “S” in “SEM”; basis of SEM plan**
 - *Transactional data*
 - *Recruitment & retention analysis*
 - *Course & classroom scheduling*
 - *Assessment of strategies, services & outcomes*

- **Canada: no federal education office, no common data set, until recently (CMSF, Educational Policy Institute) little research**

- **U.S.: IPEDs, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education**

Data (cont'd.)

- **Recent critique by OECD & Canada Council on Learning**
 - *Canada collects less education data than other countries*
 - *Data collected isn't timely*
 - *Missing info on participation, enrolment, retention & graduation rates*

Marketing

- To gather broad, initial interest in institution
- “Suspect” direct mail used extensively in U.S.
- Not possible to purchase suspect names in Canada due to privacy laws, but increased focus on capturing & managing inquiries
 - *Plan events to capture names (grades 9-11)*
 - *Request for info cards/on-line requests*
 - *Student e-mails/phone calls*

Marketing (cont'd.)

- Little use of geodemographic profiling in Canada
- Greater use of mass media advertising in U.S. (larger population makes it less expensive)
 - *Greater use now in Canada*
- Branding, positioning initiatives widespread

Recruitment

- To attract the “right” students into specific programs
- Move from “liaison” to “recruitment”
- Historic collegial approach...too many students for too many years
- Shifting regional demographics & variability across Canada
 - *Atlantic Canada: demographic decreases coupled with large number of institutions*
 - *BC: had more demand for seats; university-colleges created as high school population declined*
 - *Alberta: changing high school demographic, in-migration, hot economy*
 - *Ontario: projected demand for new university in Toronto GTA*

Recruitment (cont'd.)

- College search process a “bigger deal” in U.S.
 - *Starts in Grades 9 & 10 or earlier*

- Most Canadian students ($\frac{3}{4}$) attend their local university
 - *Little student mobility between provinces*
 - *Those not traveling far for college twice as likely to be 1st generation*

- Student life not a large factor in recruitment

- Use of current students & alumni limited

Example 1: Targeted Recruitment of Underrepresented Groups

- Declining enrolment → try to find students who haven't traditionally enrolled (low-income, Aboriginal students, first-generation, rural, international)

- Specialized academic programs
 - *U Manitoba: Aboriginal Business*
 - *UBC: Aboriginal forestry & fisheries*
 - *Confederation College: Indigenous Leadership & Community Development*
 - *Lakehead: Aboriginal Education*

- Summer camps, transition programs

Targeted Recruitment of Underrepresented Groups (cont'd.)

- **Community-based activities/partnerships/mentorships**
 - *School boards, churches, First Nations*
- **Boosting campus visits**
- **Marketing in other languages, in community & ethnic-based publications**
- **Targeted web microsites**

Example 2: International Student Recruitment

- More than 2/3 of Canadian universities actively market educational products & services internationally
- 3/4 of Canadian universities now have education & training programs outside Canada
- But U.S. is still the biggest name in the industry

Admissions

- **Differing strategies, processes & policies to maximize yield**

- **Basis of admission**
 - *Primarily high school marks in Canada (Grade 12, now some Grade 11)*
 - *U.S.: array of indicators (3-year high school average, class ranking, SAT/ACT scores, essays, interviews, AP courses)*
 - *Intentional segmentation of “the class” in U.S.: legacy, athletics, demographic, ethnicity*

Admissions (cont'd.)

- **Admission cycle/timing of offer**
 - *Early admission, early action, rolling admission*
 - *Offer dates & confirmation deadlines*

- **College-university transfer & articulation**
 - *Increasing seamless pathways*
 - *Blending/overlap of college & university roles, offerings*

Financial Aid

- **Before the late 1970's:**
 - *Financial aid generally used to meet students' demonstrated financial aid*
 - *An incentive for enrolment*

- **Modern financial aid practices focus on:**
 - *Both students' willingness to pay & ability to pay*
 - *Increasing use to influence institutional brand, reputation & rankings in U.S.*
 - *Being used to achieve both recruitment & retention goals*

- **Shift from student support service to key SEM activity**

Financial Aid (cont'd.)

- **In U.S. “out of control” tuition increases & sticker shock have led to increased spending in student financial support**
 - *63% of U.S. undergraduates receive some form of financial aid (2003/04)*
 - *Average student debt levels comparable to Canada*
 - *Loans have replaced grants as primary method to pay for college*

Financial Aid (cont'd.)

- **In Canada, increasing government intervention (tuition decreases, freezes or limits; tax credits; savings programs)**
 - *Inability of federal, provincial & institutional financial aid programs to make up difference between family finances & PSE costs*
 - *Represents 60% of funding announcements over last 4 years*
 - *Universal aid theoretically benefits all students equally but used predominantly by higher income families*

Financial Aid Practices

- Needs assessment
 - *Government controlled in Canada; institutionally based in U.S.*
- Awarding philosophies
 - *Front-loading*
 - *Gapping*
- Awarding timetable
- Tuition discounting
- Leveraging

Financial Aid Practices (cont'd.)

- **Merit scholarships**
- **Athletic scholarships**
- **Needs-based aid/bursaries**
- **Work-study programs**
- **Tuition/pricing policies**
- **Debt relief (tax credits, post-graduation tax rebates, income-contingent loan repayment, tuition payment plans)**

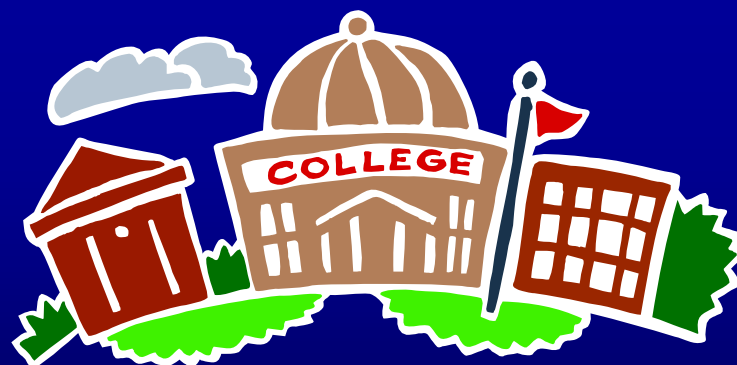
Retention

- **Retention programs are those activities focused on the first-year experience, faculty-student engagement and related student services**
- **Retention programs & planning not well developed at most institutions**
- **Use of NSSE & Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC)**
- **Most Canadian institutions have not set retention goals**

Retention Best Practices

- **Learning/Information Commons**
- **Intrusive Academic Advising**
- **One Stop Student Services Centres**
- **Supplemental instruction**
- **Common first year programs**
- **Teaching & learning centres**

Emerging SEM Issues in Canada



Data

- **Concern over lack of common data set**
- **Use of KPI's**
 - *Being used as a tool for assessment of strategies, tactics & outcomes*
 - *Also used as a basis for funding (& ranking) institutions*

Enrolment Planning

- **Not just first-year numbers, but total enrolment...right through the funnel**
- **Concern over reversed gender imbalance**
 - *1971: 68% of university graduates were male*
 - *2003: 26% of 19 year old men attended university; 39% of women*
- **Demographic “bubble” about to burst**
 - *Will increase in educational participation rate & immigration make up for it?*

Recruitment

- **Increasing competition (with each other, U.S. & other institutions) has resulted in seeking of new markets (geographic, non-high school)**
- **CRM systems, segmented marketing, more sophisticated marketing plans, Web portals & enhanced Web sites and e-services**
 - *Second Life, Web 2.0, blogs, RSS feeds, podcasts, vodcasts, IM, Academica Group's SkoolPool*
- **On-line “navigators” being promoted by Maclean's, Globe & Mail/Strategic Counsel**

Recruitment (cont'd.)

- **Concern with access (& persistence) of “1st generation” & “low-income” students**
- **Desire for increased flexibility (scheduling, course offerings, mode of instructional delivery)**
- **Focus on parental expectations & pressures**
 - *Gen-X parents involved in children’s college search, selection & career choices*
- **Impact & use of social networking: jury is still out**
 - *Flickr, YouTube, Digg, Facebook, My Space*

Admissions

- **Change in philosophy from gatekeeper to facilitating enrolment**
 - *Self-admission (UBC); self-reporting of grades (Mount Royal; Dalhousie & Acadia moving to it as well)*
- **Centralized application centres**
- **Some universities (UWO, Queens) beginning to advocate entrance testing due to a concern over grade inflation at the high school level**

Admissions (cont'd.)

- **Holistic admissions assessment**
- **Pressure for more transfer pathways & collaborative agreements**
- **Reserving spaces for under-represented groups**

Financial Aid

- **Affordability seen as an accessibility issue**
 - ***Low-income students think they can't afford tuition & rule themselves out before graduating from HS***
 - ***Overestimate costs of PSE by 75% & underestimate benefits by 40%***
 - ***Need for financial aid workshops for families when students in middle & high school to build expectations for attending PSE***
 - ***On-campus work-study programs***
 - ***Need to simplify financial aid & make it more transparent***

Financial Aid (cont'd.)

- **Growing use of merit aid**
 - *Disproportionately awarded to higher income students*
 - *Now being questioned, shift to more use of needs-based aid/upfront grants*

- **Targeted aid/scholarships (eg. to Aboriginal students in B.C., UWinnipeg)**

- **Increase in athletics scholarships**

- **Slated closure of Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation in 2009**
 - *Now responsible for 30% of all non-repayable grants awarded in Canada*

Student Success

- Recognition of link between recruitment & retention
- Primary obstacles to access & success seen as unmet financial need; inadequate academic preparation; & insufficient information, guidance & encouragement
- Many programs focus on academic support & social integration
- Bridging & transition programs
- Recognition of need to reach out to parents, families & communities
 - *Parent listservs, web-based resources*

Q & A

Thank you!