

Student Voices Webinar Script

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Good afternoon everyone and welcome to the Collecting Student Voices to Support Institutional Effectiveness Webinar - a joint collaboration between the Association for Institutional Research and the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges and two institutions (Golden West College, a two-year public institution in California, and IUPUI a four-year institution from Indiana).

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My name is Alyssa Nguyen, and I am the Director of Research and Evaluation for the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges - a nonprofit membership-based organization in California working with all 115 California Community Colleges to transform the lives of our students by using data to arrive at deep insights and actionable steps that result in individual student success and system-wide transformation. We have extensive experience in the student voices arena, having conducted focus groups, online and telephone surveys with students to learn more about what contributes to their success. This work has culminated into a framework we call the Student Support (Re)Defined framework - highlighting six factors we consistently hear from students to which they attribute their success.

In today's webinar, we will spotlight how two institutions used student voices to support institutional effectiveness efforts.

I am joined by Dr. Daniel Galvan, research analyst at Golden West College in California and Dr. Michele Hansen of IUPUI.

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For today's webinar, we have three outcomes -

The first is to know why it's important to systematically collect student voices to inform practices and policies to improve institutional effectiveness.

The second is to understand the steps and methods for collecting student voices that can be used — **in other words, the “how” part of collecting student voices.**

And the third and final outcome is to provide you all with practical examples for what collecting student voices looks like in action, so that you have a blueprint of how this could be applied on your campus.

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We will begin with an overview of student voices, and then carve out time for you to hear directly from the two institutions spotlighted in how they used student voices to support their local efforts.

We have allocated time toward the end of the webinar for Q&A with the presenters, and then we'll wrap up with a few resources and contact information should you want to connect directly with any of our presenters.

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So, what do we mean by collecting student voices? When we talk about student voices, we are really talking about amplifying student perspectives and experiences in a way that will help inform our institutions' policies, practices, and programs to be more effective.

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There are many ways students' perspectives and experiences can be amplified - and this amplification can range from light touch strategies such as one-time events via activities like surveys or comment cards, to systematic listening practices such as town hall meetings or focus groups, to more deeper engagements that have students at the decision-making table actively informing the policies and practices at institutions.

In today's webinar, we will focus on examples and actions to support institutional effectiveness via systematic listening practices.

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Why collect student voices?

At a minimum, collecting student voices helps us deepen our understanding of the student experience. It also helps create a more complete story about those experiences, helping to contextualize.

By listening to students, we can get a better sense of what their challenges and barriers are, which can be used to help them.

It can also foster urgency for change, motivate stakeholder involvement, and strengthen student outcomes.

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There are five general components or steps to collecting student voices:

Define the objective, determine the target students to engage, select your method, analyze the results, and then establish next steps.

Treat as an iterative inquiry process, not a "one and done" activity

Involve cross-functional teams--including students--in planning and implementing

Ensure equitable student representation

Engage students where they are

Honor student involvement and contributions

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There are multiple ways student voices can be gathered and listed. Here are just a few common examples that include focus groups, surveys, and inclass or college-wide activities.

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As mentioned earlier, we are going to be spotlighting two institutions that used student voices to advance specific institutional effectiveness areas.

The first spotlight is on Golden West College, and here to present Golden West College's story is Dr. Daniel Galvan.

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- Introduce title of presentation and myself.

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- Presentation will include the study background and components.
- Themes from student voices will be covered, along with the dissemination of results.
- Lastly, I will be sharing how we used this study's findings to support student success at Golden West College.

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- Student population of about 17,500 students
- Enrollment Status:
 - 32% Full-Time
 - 67% Part-Time
- Instructional Modality:
 - 82% Traditional
 - 16% Online
 - 2% Hybrid
- About 52% of students receive Financial Aid
- Transfer Volume:
 - 73% California State University (CSU)
 - 10% University of California (UC)
 - 5% In State Private
 - 11% Out of State

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- Golden West College was selected to participate in The RP Group's 2017 Leading from the Middle (LFM) Academy.
- Golden West College LFM team included managers and classified staff.
- The GWC LFM team conducted a thorough mixed methods study focused on student support services with the overall goals of understanding students' experiences accessing and utilizing support services on campus, identifying things that work well for students, as well as challenges that they experience with student support services, and determining if any special population had different experiences in accessing and utilizing available support services.
- The timing of this study aligned well with the goal of meeting the needs of GWC students with the opening of the new Student Services Center in March 2018.

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- Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods approach.

- New Student Experience, Interviews with Managers and Staff, along with Focus Group findings were used to create 2 campus-wide surveys. In the end, data collected from the various components was analyzed and included in a report.

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- I will be covering the various components that we included in our study.

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As a new employee to Golden West College in Fall 2017, managers and staff did not know who I was. This allowed me to go through the New Student Onboarding process as if I were a new student: Everything from the online applications to the on-campus experiences.

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- Interviews with Managers and Staff allowed the researchers conducting the study to gain program context.
- This information was then used to create the Focus Group protocol questions.

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- This was the first time Golden West College conducted a study with these many focus groups, so there were several logistical processes that had to happen to ensure that this was a well-executed study.
- Students' confidentiality and protection was important, so we had the moderator and note takers participate in IRB training.

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- Two surveys were sent to all GWC students enrolled in the Fall 2017 semester:
Student Services Satisfaction Survey (109 responses)
Campus Engagement and Experience Survey (211 responses)
Survey themes largely mirrored the findings from the student focus groups.
98% of students surveyed (n=206) said they feel welcomed on campus.
- Examples of GWC features that make students feel welcomed: "helpful staff", "friendly teachers/staff", "the campus is open and inviting", GWC "is smaller than OCC so it feels tight knit", "nice and inclusive environment".

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- When asked about the quality of support services provided at GWC, most students indicated services were "Excellent" or "Average"
- Common concerns students had with student support services offices:
Not enough staff to help students efficiently ("long wait lines");
Poor communication with students;

Students perceive staff as not being concerned about their needs (“I wish the people in financial aid would be more patient and more willing to work with the students”, “Some areas do need better customer service”);

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- This is a mind map of student quotes and overall themes from the focus groups.

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- Welcoming - students identified various aspects of Golden West College that made them feel welcomed on campus.
- Not Welcoming - students also shared experiences of not feeling welcomed on campus.
- Navigational Capital - students shared experiences on trying to find their way around campus and navigating different resources and services.
- Social capital - students identified specific individuals who have been instrumental in their student success at Golden West College.
- Engagement - students shared various experiences of being engaged on campus.

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- Two surveys were sent to all GWC students enrolled in Fall 2017, with a total of 321 responses.
- Overall, most students rated their experiences with various support services as “Excellent” or “Average.”
- Survey themes largely mirrored the findings from the student focus groups.
- Common concerns students had with student services offices were mostly customer service related.
- Results were shared through a report, along with various department meetings and a Campus Conversation event open to the entire campus to learn about the findings.

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- Student services worked to address the various concerns students raised.

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- Logistics, Gate Keepers, and acknowledging that students’ voices are valid data.

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- I want to begin by providing some institutional context: IUPUI is Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. We are a large urban public research institution that awards both Indiana University (IU) and Purdue degrees. Governed by IU.
- First-Time cohort of just over 3,600 and New External Transfers of just over 1,200 each year.
- Over 250 degree programs from both Indiana & Purdue Universities, guided by the Principles of Learning for Undergraduate Success (PLUS). PLUS focuses on student learning in the following

areas: Communication, Community Contributions, Program Solving, and Being Innovative. Revised Institutional learning outcomes so they would “speak” to students---developed with student input.

- Complex institution because of structure. Students select IUPUI due to diversity of academic programs offered as indicated each year on our entering student surveys. Location in Indianapolis also attractive to students due to career and internship opportunities available in metropolitan areas, long with service learning/community engagement opportunities.
- About 50% of first-year students commute to campus and about 42% are Federal Pell Recipients. We serve a large population of under-resourced students with high levels of unmet financial need. Only two urban peers have a higher number of students on Federal Pell Grants: Wayne State University and University of Illinois Chicago.
- We have a large comprehensive Institutional Research and Decision Support (IRDS) office (survey research, institutional effectiveness, assessment, program evaluation, strategic enrollment management, and student-success data focus).
- IUPUI is an exciting place to work because it is very innovative, and its leaders are willing to propose new and creative solutions to improve student success. As such, IRDS is engaged in a lot of analyses and investigations to meet the needs of decision makers. More specifically, we engage data support and analysis to assess new interventions and continuously improve academic programs as well as student support programs (Summer Bridge, peer mentoring, advising, student success coaching, our Diversity, Enrichment and Achievement program – mentoring wrap around support for students of color – as well as other programs).

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- Student-Focused Paradigm: IUPUI was one of the founding institutions for the Association of Institutional Research Statement of Aspirational Practice, which has a student focused-paradigm. This means that all investigations and analyses conducted are grounded in understanding and improving student success and learning. In IRDS we prioritize incoming requests by assessing the likely impact on improving student learning and success as well as the number of students estimated to be affected by the results of the study. Improving Student Success and Learning is also a priority of the new IUPUI strategic plan.
- In an effort to understand students’ lived experiences, we employ multiple methods (self-report questionnaires, focus groups, interviews, institutional data). We have used these methods to determine factors that affect student success and ways to intervene early to remove barriers that students may face. Predictors of student success: high levels of external commitments (working for pay off-campus, commuting, taking care of household respondents and dependents), high levels of unmet financial aid, rigor of high school curriculum (high HS GPAs and Indiana Academic Honors Diploma), engagement in High Impact Practices and Summer Bridge/DEAP.
- In addition to conducting analyses of retention, graduation rates, and GPAs, we also assess student learning, development (career, identify, self-efficacy, academic hope), and belongingness (low sense of belonging during first semester shown to predict persistence). We have conducted focus groups on factors to influence fit, belongingness and how welcoming/inclusive campus and classroom environments perceived to be—and how sense of belonging can change over time.

- We strive to engage in culturally responsive IR and assessment: to ensure that we examine equity and incorporate students' voices. We employ methods that examine whether all students have learning opportunities that are responsive to their needs, and at a minimum, we disaggregate outcomes by student groups (e.g., first generation, gender, historically marginalized groups, under-resourced, nontraditional, transfer, first generation, and more). In order to ensure that our courses, programs, and interventions are responsive to students' needs and diverse learning approaches, we focus on investigating the quality of experiences in addition to the outcomes of those experiences. This means that assessment planning requires assessing how students experience and engage in learning experiences (process or formative assessment) as necessary compliments to outcomes assessment.
- We even incorporate student voice into our formal academic program reviews (focus groups with current students, surveys of alumni) and administrative review process for senior leaders (focus groups with students)
- We have formed a Strategic Information Council and Data Inquiry Group (DIG) to formalize and build in structures/mechanisms to ensure that we are leveraging student data and developing action plans based on results. The Strategic Information Council was developed to engage senior and executive leaders from academic affairs, student affairs, finance and administration, advising, undergraduate education, and institutional research to identify and address barriers to student success. The purpose is to implement evidence-informed initiatives aimed at specific groups as well as strategies for mining and connecting various forms of institutional data to identify problems and implement effective solutions. DIG's primary charge is to leverage the data and analytic tools available across IUPUI. As such, group members engage in dialogue around data-driven decision making, serve as advisors around types of data needed for decision making, and provide input on issues such as data quality, literacy, use, capacity, and transparency. Group members are composed of key data users/analysts in schools and other units. They serve as data coaches for IUPUI in collaboration with the office of Institutional Research and Decision Support.

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- Discuss specific approach we implemented. We implemented JagsSpeaks as a student survey process to ensure equitable student voice in key institutional decisions. We found that our student surveys were suffering from low response rates and samples that were not representative – largely composed of white female students with high GPAs. We often use surveys to make major decisions about policies, programs, and services directly affecting students. As such, we needed an approach that captured more representative student voices.
- JagsSpeaks was born. Short, 10-15 item surveys focused on one timely topic, aimed to develop action plans based on results. Research suggests that students are more likely to respond to surveys that focus on topics that are relevant to them and likely to have an immediate impact.
- In an effort to make sure the topics were relevant for which we sought student input, in the past we asked for insights from Student Government. In the future we will also seek input from the Chancellor's Student Advisory Committee. Student Affairs leaders and the assessment director are active on the planning committee.
- We have been successful in obtaining student input on survey topics and are successfully implementing an iterative, ongoing approach to capture and act on student voices.

- Examples of surveys include: obtaining student opinions on library renovation, campus safety, campus recreation centers, examining student participation in community service and engagement and what barriers they face, and more.

Slide 32- Questions and Answers

Slide 33- End of Presentation