

Learning Community Cohort - Student Led Campus Wide Engagement

SLCWE Cohort Call 3 - Minutes

This call featured two guest speakers regarding student engagement systems (i.e. tracking systems): Ryan O'Connell and Amber Finnicum-Simmons.

Ryan O'Connell: Senior Product Manager for Campus Labs

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- Previously worked for Duke and IUPUI, as a consumer of the products he now works with
- As product manager, he provides framework for problems that need to be solved to developers that can create solutions
- Campus Labs was actually started by two students. The central idea is that there is a lot of information being collected independently on campus and what is needed is a way to bring that information together to provide a holistic view of the students and for the campus to present itself accurately
 - Student engagement systems originally came out of this idea of compliance - making sure that student orgs are doing what they're supposed to. Evolved into much more.
- Now, student engagement systems fall under four general models or functions
 1. Tracking & Identifying Student Engagement
 - Letting the campus get a pulse on their campus culture and involvement
 - Also a sense of "complying" with requirements to achieve the Carnegie Classification or President's Honor Roll
 2. Direct Communication and Outreach
 - Communicating directly to students in a way that they enjoy
 3. Student Success and Retention
 - Tool for knowing how students are engaged, what they find meaningful, and how that contributes to their success and retention
 - Similar goal with academics
 4. Nudging

- "Mother in your pocket" idea - Exposure of students to events/activities/programs that they would be interested in, but require prompting to attend or participate
- Numbers/Statistics
 - ~850-900 institutions in the U.S. use some type of engagement system, usually falling under the "Tracking and Identifying Student Engagement" model
 - ~730 use OrgSync or Collegiate Link (both under Campus Labs)
 - In 2016-17 academic year, ~3 new memberships, 1.3 million events created, and 1.1 million service hours logged
 - Generally at four-year, public institutions
- Emphasis on post-graduate employability
 - Employers in the current workforce are looking for soft skills from graduates, that are not always visible during hiring
 - There are two approaches to filling this skill gap:
 1. Institutions will guide students down specific paths in order to gain these skills
 2. Students will be able to show that they have these skills through a comprehensive student record or "augmented transcript", describing both curricular and co-curricular experiences
 - Great book on this topic by NASPA: Engagement Employability
- Student Engagement Systems create guided paths for students
 - Trying to connect co-curricular pathways in a curricular-based ways, so that students have a formalized structure for co-curricular experiences
 - Research has shown that students that even just partially complete the pathways achieve more learning outcomes

Amber Finnicum-Simmons, Community Impact Coordinator at Stetson University
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- Stetson Bonner Alum, now in AmeriCorps VISTA role in the office of community engagement

- OrgSync, called HatterSync, has been established at Stetson for 6-7 years. Amber used it as a student, and now as an administrator
 - HatterSync has the capacity to link the whole campus, but through several different portals (one for student orgs, one for service tracking, one for the law school)
 - Ryan's Input: Important aspect to consider when choosing a student engagement system: is it customizable to the needs of your campus?
 - To increase student usage of HatterSync, Stetson requires students to use it (e.g. to receive funding, to be an official org, etc.), which is a common practice on campuses who have a system
 - Stetson's OrgSync Consultant has been really excellent because he comes from a higher ed background and really understands Stetson.
 - Ryan's Input: Another important aspect to consider: look at who will be your support if you implement a system. Your consultants won't just be the people who support you technically, but also help with design of your system to fit the needs of your campus. Look for consultants that know the product and higher ed.
 - In regards to buy-in from the college if you'd want to implement a student engagement system, what stakeholders should be brought to the table?
 - Ryan's Input: Bring in people who will benefit from the data gathered through this type of system
 - At Stetson, Office of Student Life and Campus Vibrancy / IT handles the cover charge for HatterSync because they are invested in the data and results
 - In regards to management of the system, how often does it require administration and maintenance?
 - At Stetson, there are no formal committee meetings, but there were when the system was first launched.
 - Ryan's Input: Generally, the systems require more work at the beginning, but less the longer they are working
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 Sam Ha turned on comment notifications for Amber Finnicum-Simmons, Annie Pasqua, Ariane Hoy, Betsy Shimberg, Brad Brewer, Bryan Figura, Charli Lienemann, Charmaine Wilson, Claudio Mir, Elvis Diaz, Gregory Chery, Ian McGinnity, Jana Schroeder, Katie Turek, Kristi Cordier, Liz Brandt, Matt Cummings, Michelle Howell, Natalie Vickous, Robert Hackett, Sharifa Ford, Stefanie Edgell, and Zane Dukes

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