TODAY'S COLLEGE STUDENT ON A TIGHTROPE: HOW OUR SERVICES CAN RESPOND

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Student Conduct and Community Standards and Student Activities
2009 Survey of 5000 Undergraduates at 31 Institutions & Staff Interviews

Follow up to:

*When Dreams and Heroes Died* (1980)

*When Hope and Fear Collide* (1998)

Alamo Community Colleges and UTEP were among the sample.

#UTSAsaconf
Millennial College Students

- Research primarily focused on white students at selective institutions
- Entitlement is key
- Parenting they received is the focal point
- Economy and world events are not considered as strongly in describing the generation
# Traditional Universities & Digital Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Universities</th>
<th>Digital Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fixed time (semesters, credits, office hours)</td>
<td>Variable time (24/7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location bound</td>
<td>Any time, any place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider driven</td>
<td>Consumer driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive learning</td>
<td>Active learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Concrete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching (process)</td>
<td>Learning (outcome)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth focus (hunting)</td>
<td>Breadth focus (gathering)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Events Most Cited by Undergraduates

List by Gender
- Economic Downturn and rising gas prices
- September 11 attack
- Obama’s election
- Launch of cell phone
- Advent of Yahoo! and Google

Differences by Ethnicity
- Hurricane Katrina
- Civil right movement
- Hillary Clinton presidential run
- Advent of WWW
  - (African American/Black students)
- Subprime mortgage crisis
  - (Asian students)
TODAY’S TRADITIONAL COLLEGE STUDENT

- They were born in 1990 – the year Iraq invaded Kuwait (*UTSA class of 2016 was born ~1993*)
- 1 year old when US Operation Desert Storm commenced and employed was highest in 20 years
- Entered kindergarten as the DVD was developed
- 7 years old for first Harry Potter book
- 11 years old when September 11 attacks occurred
- 14 years old when Facebook was established
- 15 years old for Hurricane Katrina
- 16 years old when Twitter was established
## Attendance in Person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Once a Month or More</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend on campus or community events</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use the gym or fitness center</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to the Library on campus</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend meeting – academic or professional groups</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a college athletic event</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Survey responses from four-year institutions
Responses dramatically different from two-year colleges*
PIECES OF THE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

- Academics
- Outside the Classroom
- Politics
- Multicultural
- Parents & Families
HOW OUR SERVICES CAN RESPOND

We must educate students for a life:

- Of profound change
  - Critical Thinking
  - Creativity
  - Continual Learning
“IT CAN ONLY BE CALLED TECHNOLOGY IF IT WAS CREATED AFTER YOU WERE BORN.”
HOW OUR SERVICES CAN RESPOND

We must educate students for a life:

- In A Digital Society
  - How To Use Appropriately:
    - Technology
    - Information
    - Media
How Our Services Can Respond

We must educate students for a life:

- In A Diverse Global Society
  - Multiculturalism
  - Globalization
HOW OUR SERVICES CAN RESPOND

We must educate students for a life:

- In An Evolving Information Economy
  - 6 Different Careers, Some Don’t Exist
  - Enriched Majors
  - Internships
  - Career Counseling on Steroids
HOW OUR SERVICES CAN RESPOND

We must educate students for a life:

- For Civic Engagement
  - Communication
  - Values
  - Human Heritage
  - Environment
  - Individual Roles
TRANSFORMING OUR SERVICES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION
OUR SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

- Athletics
- SFAES
- Registrar
- Admissions Orientation
- Student Services
- Student Life
“We know who today's college students are. We know the challenges they will face. We know the skills, knowledge, and attitudes this will require.” (P.197)

But we must meet them halfway along the journey...
ACADEMICS

- Pragmatic – career focused generation
- Reason for college – jobs and money
- Interpersonal development is not a goal
- Increasing interest in earning power
- College is in a slow-down phase (working part-time etc.)
- Grade inflation continues
- Four out of five undergraduates say classes would be improved by more technology
- Faculty note increased disruptions in class due to digital devices
STUDENT LIFE IN COLLEGE
LIFE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM – THE NEW TRIBALISM

- Transitioned from “packs” to “tribes”
- Virtual tribes
  - Student don’t have friends from the “past”
  - Live in competition between intimacy and isolation
  - Not location specific
  - See or speak with 1/3 of their “friends” in the past six months
- Need immediate response
- Blurred lines of what is public and private
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- React quickly “in the moment”
  - Fail to process the impact of statements
  - Difficult for them to process information appropriately in person
- They “meet” classmates before arriving to campus
- Avoid difficult discussions
- Surface level communication
- Avoidance of failure
Support Systems
Parents and Families

- 41% indicated daily contact with parents/family
  - Debrief – Process, Catch-up, Make decisions, Ask for money, Say hello
- 33% share intimate details of their personal life
- Students transition parents to “friends”
- Hold parents in higher regard
  - Deeply understand parents’ past hardship
- Lack of experience with failure (coddled)
- Learned the skill of consumerism
- Digital devices as an umbilical cords
MULTICULTURALISM

- Gains in feeling a sense of community among students of color
- Political correctness has contributed to a decline in deeper conversations regarding diversity
- Racial divide remains strong for jobs after college
- Friendships cross boundaries of ethnicity
- Affinity groups are more available
- Zone of indifference (not necessarily complete improvement)
- New issues include sexual orientation and gay rights
Politics – Talking Global, Acting Local

- Less interested in university student governance
- Activism is more individual
- Apathy = each group has its own interests
  - They care – just not universally
  - Don’t want to “push it” too far
- Occupy college – economic focus
- Environment and sustainability
  - Regardless of location
  - If they choose the issue – then they translate it globally
- 78% get news from the internet
- Focus on local issues – feel more power to change
- 65% report doing community service in the past year
  - 81% at four year colleges
The Future: Clinging to the American Dream

- Grew up in a boom and attending college in a bust
- Contradictory views of their world
- Individualistic
  - Each wages war against all
  - Believe most people look out for themselves (77%)
  - People will take advantage of you (69%)
- Character matters
  - Hard work always pays off (83%)
  - If you want something, earn it (97%)
  - Support networks are their key to optimism (2/3)