STRATEGIES FOR THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO STUDENT SUCCESS

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The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up food at the table, and tyrannize their teachers.
One cannot approach today’s student with twenty-year-old tools. We must view the student as a being composed of mind, body, and spirit.
OUTLINE

1. The Context
2. The Cause
3. The Response
4. An Example Model
ASSUMPTIONS

#1 – Student Success is Retention to Graduation

#2 – Focus First on Holistic Student

#3 – Mental Health Awareness is Essential

#4 – Classroom is Central
IMPORTANT LIMITATIONS

• Too many dimensions to cover in 75 minutes

• Provide an overview of one complete model

• Mental health will be the focus

• Spirit dimension discussed in terms of ethics
CONTEXT — MENTAL HEALTH

• Worldwide about 10%-20% of children and adolescents experience mental disorders

• 91% of GenZ between 18 & 21 say they have experienced at least one physical or emotional symptom due to stress in the past month compared to 74% of adults overall

• University of Iowa indicates mental health is the number one reason students leave school
• Increased anxiety and lower self-esteem

• Students visiting counseling centers for mental health issues increased by 30% while enrollment increased 6% (2009-2015)

• 40% felt depressed in last 12 months

• 61% felt overwhelming anxiety

• 10% seriously considered suicide
CONTEXT — TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

• Childhood is extended

• Decrease in cognitive efficiency (Twenge, 2017)

• Postponing typical adult activities (Twenge, 2017)
Dubbed the safest generation

• 1971 – 70% of students walked or rode their bicycle to school if they lived within one mile

• 1990s – only 30% walked or rode the bike

• Crime decreased
THE CAUSE — ENVIRONMENT

- Life in a postmodern society
  - No absolutes
- Multiple generations of prosperity
- Terrorism
- Hyperconnectivity
- Destigmatization of mental health
  - Mental health should not carry a stigma
  - But “Hi my name is Trey Carr, and I have OCD” ought not be commonplace
THE CAUSE — HYPERCONNECTIVITY

“The devices they hold in their hands have both extended their childhoods and isolated them from true human interaction. As a result, they are both the physically safest generation and the most mentally fragile”

(Twenge, 2017)
THE CAUSE — HYPERCONNECTIVITY

• We live in an era largely defined by widespread fear. A great deal of collective anxiety is held in place by hyperconnectivity. (Nancy Koehn)

• UNICEF study: Children with less than two hours of connectivity (TV or online) outperform those who spend more time.

• Connected every hour of every day creates constant social comparison, thus lonelier and social rejection: FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)

• JAMA reports a connection between device usage and ADHD
THE CAUSE – SCREEN TIME

MORE SCREEN TIME ➔ LESS IN-PERSON SOCIAL INTERACTION ➔ MORE LONELINESS

LONELINESS AND DEVICE USAGE (Twenge)
THE CAUSE — PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

• Snowplow parents
• Solve all problems
• Lack of resilience
• Safest generation ever
• Failure is shattering
• Decreased coping skills
• Decreased relational and emotional competence
• Increased entitlement
The Response – Understanding Gen Z

• perhaps more extrinsically motivated and less intrinsically
  • learning is less important than the grade
  • getting a job is more important than getting an education
• less likely to talk and/or ask questions in class
• fear saying the wrong thing, or they have not formed solid opinions
• attention span is reduced (ADHD)
• have less experience reading lengthy pieces
The Response — Valuing Students

Across recent school and policy documentation, the priority afforded to the holistic development of the student is increasingly evident: that is, the moral, social, and emotional development of the student (O’Flaherty and McCormack, 2019)

• It is important that students:
  • Feel cared for
  • Feel valued
  • Develop life skills
  • Feel happy

• Holistic development largely happens due to professor’s goodwill
THE RESPONSE – ATTENTION SPANS

Response to address short attention spans:
• Use variety of pedagogical tools
• Reduce anxiety for classroom discussion
• Experiential learning increasingly important
• Involve students in complex problems provided by industry
• Project based learning generates improved learning outcomes
THE RESPONSE – PEDAGOGY

Case Method (Academy of Management Learning and Education)

• Case method continues as the prevailing pedagogical tool in many business schools.
  • Active learning
  • Student engagement
  • Comprehensive thinking
  • Critical thinking

• Cases using story telling promote:
  • Holistic learning by engaging students' emotions
  • Advancement of environmental sustainability management education
  • General management
  • Cognitive and emotional learning to increase outcomes
THE RESPONSE — ETHICS

• Ethics instruction making a comeback
• School of Business’ responsibility to help make business leaders more transparent, accountable, and sustainable development
• Students encouraged to develop ethical knowledge and skills within their value system
• Nonthreatening student-led discussions
  • Addresses the concern that Gen Z doesn’t want to speak up
“Ultimately, the ethics of American business depends on the conscience of America’s business leaders.

Our schools of business must be principled teachers of right and wrong and not surrender to moral confusion and relativism”

President George W. Bush
July 2002
“There’s no longer any question that critical thinking about about obligations to society must be as much a part of business success as finance and other traditional skills.

It’s up to business schools to make new ways of business thinking contagious”

Donna Sockell
Chronicle of Higher Education
July 2013
THE RESPONSE — MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

• Campus Experts Say:
  • Suicide is on the rise
  • Can ask whether the student has such thoughts
  • Asking does not plant the thought
  • Increase in number of students self-reporting suicide ideation

• Suggested Involvement:
  • Express care and concern for the student
  • Try to understand the situation (not quick to provide advice)
  • Help build a care network or refer
  • Stay engaged
THE RESPONSE — EXPECTATIONS

• Don’t just accept a verbal excuse
• Don’t minimize the assignment
• Don’t automatically forgive an assignment
• Behavior has consequences

Jeff Sargent, Ph.D.
THE RESPONSE — PREPARATION

• Develop consistent policies
• Be sensitive to student concerns
• Learn to refer
• Teach learning skills and mental health skills in college orientation to prepare high school students for college and college students for adulthood
The Response — Orientation

Provide self-help training

• Deal with anxiety
• Take notes
• Time management
• Fitness and wellness
• Manage finances
• Monitor oneself
• Take responsibility
THE RESPONSE — EARLY WARNING

• Conduct brief survey a few weeks into freshman year for early warning
• Stress increases midterm (spring)
  • Be sensitive to timing
  • Balance workload during the semester
**THE RESPONSE — COUNSELING**

- UCLA offers online screening for depression and counselors follow-up
- Virginia Tech provides satellite counseling clinics
- Ohio State University uses a counseling app to make appointments, breathing exercises, and relaxing playlists, and emergency contact
- One survey indicated one counselor for 1,737 students, well over the recommended one for every 1,000-1,500.
- Embedded counselors in dorms
THE RESPONSE — FUTURE QUESTIONS

1. How do we address mental health issues in an academic setting?
2. What is a mental health issue?
3. What is a valid mental health excuse?
4. How can faculty “do no harm”?
5. What are we doing to foster resilience?

Jeff Sargent, Ph.D.
Holistic Student Model

- School Community
- Finances
- Academics
- Health / Support
- Commitments
- Graduation
- Career Planning
- Effectiveness

Lee University
School of Business
Holistic Student Model

Commitments
- Time management
- Task prioritization
- Balance

Effectiveness
- Confidence
- Communication skills
- Increased awareness and ownership
- Long-term goals
HOLISTIC STUDENT MODEL

School Community
  • Highlight connections
  • Fit

Finances
  • Personal finance
  • Budgeting
  • Control over financial situation
Holistic Student Model

Academics
- Study skills
- Academic habits
- Utilization of available resources

Health/Support
- Physical and emotional well-being
- Personal support network
HOLISTIC STUDENT MODEL

Graduation
• Commitment toward degree
• Future plans
• Value of pursuing education
• Desire and motivation

Career Planning
• Mapping a career path
• Assessing skills and strengths
• Resume, interview skills, networking
SUMMARY

1. Gen Z students are different.

2. There is a change in mental health among today’s students.

3. Addressing mental health is important for universities and business schools.

4. Our goal is to help students be successful.
OUR CHALLENGE

How can we be a catalyst for change in our colleges and universities?
Bibliography


- Sargent, J. (2008, April 5). Personal interview.

QUESTIONS

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