

# WHAT DO THEY WANT (AND NEED): FOSTERING SUCCESS WITH TODAY'S COLLEGE STUDENTS

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JUSTIN SHUKAS, M.ED.

DIRECTOR OF FRATERNITY & SORORITY LIFE – UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

# OVERVIEW

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- Generational Characteristics
- *Generation Z Goes to College*
- Critical Issues
- So What? How Does This Impact You in Your Role?
- Questions

# GENERATIONAL OVERVIEW

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# BABY BOOMERS

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- Born after the end of WWII between 1946 and 1964.
- Postwar America was stable, had a healthy economy, and consumerism was seen as the cure for the Great Depression.
- Driven by ambition to succeed, advance, and earn.
- Philosophy: working hard is the path to success.
- Goal: Achieve the American Dream of having house, car, and material possessions.

Adopted from Grace, M. & Seemiler, C. (2016). *Generation Z Goes to College*. San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass.

# GENERATION X

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- Born between 1965 and 1980.
- Grew up during height of cable TV, saw the first personal computers.
- 25% increase in married women in the workforce, raised in a time where it was more common for both parents to work.
- Spike in divorce rates during their childhood.
- Cynical about the world, skeptical, and pragmatic.
- Goal: balance work and family, seek to play active and supportive roles in their children's lives

Adopted from Grace, M. & Seemiler, C. (2016). *Generation Z Goes to College*. San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass.

# GENERATION Y / MILLENNIALS

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- Born 1980 to early 1990's.
- The “Me Generation” – criticized for being entitled and expecting things to be handed to them. Grew up getting participation trophies.
- Use their 20's to further education, launch careers, and determine what they want in life.
- Used to strong support system, financially and emotionally.
- Most educated generation in history – 1 in 3 have Bachelors Degree.
- Used to being connected 0 no boundaries between work and play like previous generations.

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# GENERATION Z

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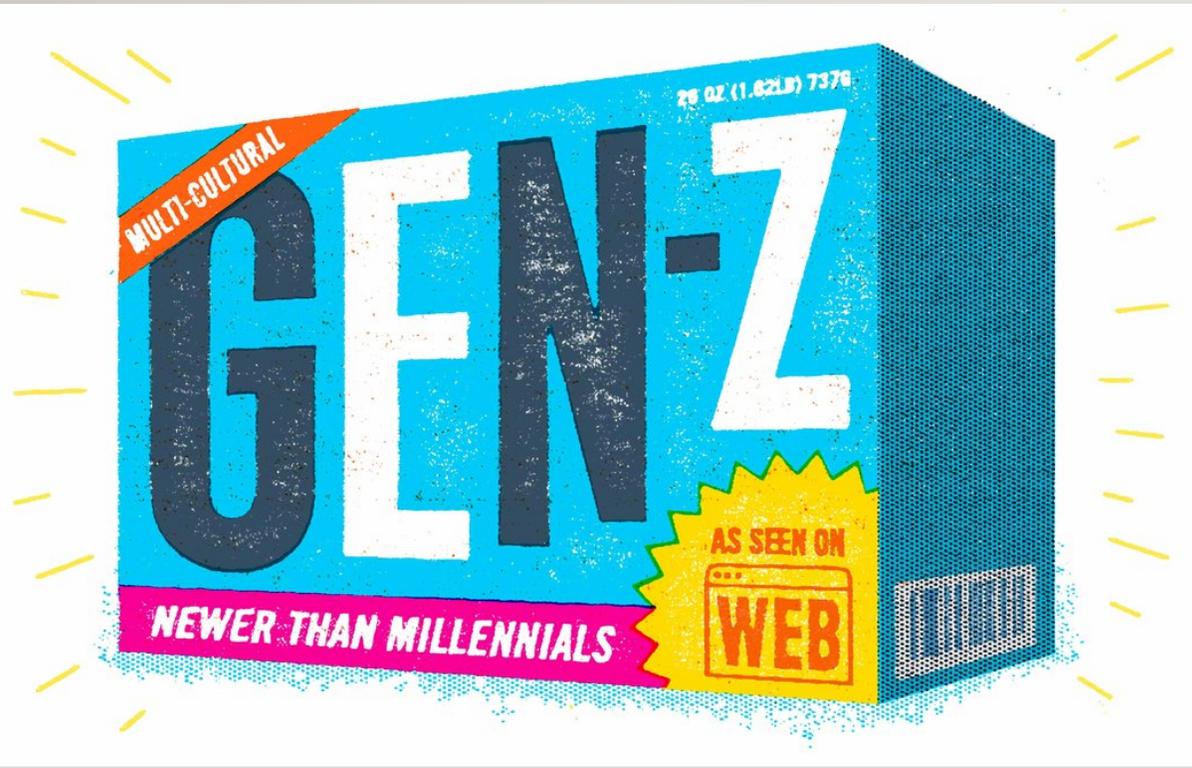


# GENERATION Z

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- Born 1995-2010.
- Their world has been shaped by the Internet.
- Currently  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the world's population, projected to be  $\frac{1}{3}$  of population by 2020.
- 9/11, economic recession, war, and high unemployment rates have impacted their lives.
- Their phone has taken the place of video games, paper, music player, etc.
- Goal: to find solutions to world's problems.
- Characteristics: loyal, compassionate, thoughtful, open minded, responsible, determined.

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# CLASS OF 2019

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- *Students heading into their first year of college this year are mostly 18 and were born in 1997.*
- *Among those who have never been alive in their lifetimes are Princess Diana, Notorious B.I.G., Jacques Cousteau, and Mother Teresa.*
- *Joining them in the world the year they were born were Dolly the sheep, The McCaughey septuplets, and Michael “Prince” Jackson Jr.*

Adapted from 2019 Beloit Mindset List. (n.d.). In *Beloit College online*. Retrieved from <https://www.beloit.edu/mindset/2019/>

# SINCE THEY HAVE BEEN ON THE PLANET:

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- Hybrid automobiles have always been mass produced
- They have grown up treating Wi-Fi as an entitlement.
- The NCAA has always had a precise means to determine a national champion in college football.
- The announcement of someone being the “first woman” to hold a position has only impressed their parents.
- “No means no” has always been morphing, slowly, into “only yes means yes.”
- Cell phones have become so ubiquitous in class that teachers don’t know which students are using them to take notes and which ones are planning a party.
- The therapeutic use of marijuana has always been legal in a growing number of American states.
- Fifteen nations have always been constructing the International Space Station.
- *The Lion King* has always been on Broadway.
- Sir Paul and Sir Elton have always been knights of the same musical roundtable.

Adapted from 2019 Beloit Mindset List. (n.d.). In *Beloit College online*. Retrieved from <https://www.beloit.edu/mindset/2019/>

COREY SEEMILLER  
MEGHAN GRACE

**GENERATION Z** GOES TO  
**COLLEGE**

**JOSSEY-BASS**  
A Wiley Brand



# MOTIVATION, BELIEFS, AND PERSPECTIVES

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- >70% are motivated by not wanting to let others down, motivated by awards (advancement or earning credit, rather than tangible gifts).
- Information about anything is literally at their finger tips.
- 24/7 communication/connection (online shopping, video and music streaming, email, etc.)
- FOMO (Fear Of Missions Out).
- Creative workspaces and entrepreneurship (Google, eBay, Uber, Airbnb, etc.).
- Disaster and tragedy (9/11, mass shootings, Hurricane Katrina, SARS, Ebola, etc.).
- Diversity and social justice.
- Socially liberal and politically conservative.

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# COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS AND PREFERENCES

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- 1 in 3 send over 3,000 text messages per month.
- 65% dislike or only somewhat like making phone calls.
- 25% dislike and almost 50% said they somewhat like email – too formal and lengthy.
- 83% prefer to face to face contact versus virtual communication.
- > 2/3 prefer interacting with friends online versus social media interactions.

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# SOCIAL MEDIA USE

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- Facebook is number 1 platform (all encompassing follow, like, chat, post, etc.).
- Social media is used less to share about themselves, and more to keep up with others.
- Motivations: keeping up with others, new knowledge, sharing personal information, and sharing expertise or opinion.

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# FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND ROMANCE

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- Gen Z students prefer friends they can relate to.
  - Shared values and shared hobbies are the most important factors for making friends and sustainable relationships.
- < 1/2 find it important to live near friends unlike previous generations.
- 88% of Gen Z feel they are extremely close to their parents and see them as sources of emotional and financial support.
- 1/2 take opinions and perspectives of their family into their decision making
- Online dating is the new norm. No longer need to be in the right place at the right time when you can view limitless profiles and “swipe to the right.”

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# CARES AND CONCERNS

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- Education is the foundation for individual success and societal prosperity.
  - Education leads to future personal success
  - Education is an investment in America's future.
  - An educated society is a better society.
  - America's education system is declining.
  - There is limited
  - There is limited access to quality education.
- >80% are concerned about the costs of college, 17% say it is their #1 social concern
- 68% of Gen Z care about racial equality.
- Libertarian views on government regulation (abortion, euthanasia, marriage, etc.).

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# ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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- Gen Z gets customized news fed their way via apps and follow specific issues
- Sharing and forwarding news stories makes it easy to share thus educating others on the issues THEY care about.
- Crowdfund ideas, inventions, and causes.
- Businesses with social missions are the best businesses
- > 40% plan to go green.
- “Philanthro-teens” use money they raise to benefit organizations they care about.

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# LEADERSHIP STYLES AND CAPACITIES

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- 80% of employers seeks graduates with leadership skills and the ability to work on a team.
- > 70% of employers expect new employees to have written communication skills and the ability to solve problems.
- Strengths-Based leadership
- Role models: Parents, Teachers, Coaches, Peers, Fictional Characters,
- Not role models: Bosses, Religious Leaders, Professional Athletes and Celebrities, Political Leaders
- Respect hierarchies but want leaders to listen to their ideas, values, and perspectives.

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# MAXIMIZING LEARNING

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- The multitude of information now demands students to determine what is most credible.
- 90% of online content today was created in the last 2 years.
- Logic-based and experiential learning are most common for Gen Z.
- Students seek to fill their "toolboxes" with applicable knowledge and skills for the workplace.
- Standardized tests and less time for the arts has decreased Gen Z's creativity.
- Intrapersonal and social learning methods are preferred.
- Facilitated learning versus passive lectures.
- The learning space is critically important to Gen Z.

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# WORKING WITH GENERATION Z

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- They crave face to face interaction.
- Realistic problem solvers appreciate honesty and authenticity from those who lead them.
- Parents are their co-pilots – highly influential and important stakeholders.
- Gen Z is highly concerned about campus safety and the potential for violence.
- They champion inclusive and affirming spaces.
- High-stress and large-scale events lead to high anxiety.
- They are what they eat and they care about healthy food options.

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# PROGRAMMATIC STRATEGIES: CREATING REAL-WORLD LEARNING EXPERIENCES

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- Provide leadership opportunities for students who don't identify as "leaders".
- Leadership opportunities should connect to student's passion(s).
- Shift service-learning to social change.
- Scrap mandatory volunteer requirements.
- Promote study abroad and global immersion trips, 55% want to study or live abroad.
- Be ware of the "Do Not Enter Sign" – respect Gen Z's sacred safe space.

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# MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

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- The suicide rate among 15 to 24-year-olds in the U.S. has increased moderately but steadily since 2007.
- A survey of college counseling centers has found that more than half their clients have severe psychological problems, an increase of 13 percent in just two years.
- Anxiety and depression, in that order, are now the most common mental health diagnoses among college students, according to the Center for Collegiate Mental Health at Penn State.

Adopted from Elore, T. (2016) What's happening to college students Today? I have a sad story to tell you. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/artificial-maturity/201511/what-s-happening-college-students-today>

# CONTRIBUTING ISSUES

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- Unrealistic life on social media.
- Not taught how to evaluate mistakes of failures.
- Lofty expectations.

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# HOW CAN WE HELP?

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- Put social media in perspective.
- Put failure in perspective.
- Put their story in perspective.

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# HOW DOES THIS IMPACT?

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- Sorority/fraternity recruitment
- Living in the chapter facility (study abroad, usage, furniture, etc.)
- Meals and food preparation
- Physical layout and renovations to chapter facility
- House responsibilities/chores/leadership
- Interactions with leaders/general members
- Philanthropy and service projects
- Relationships with HQ/FSL Staff/Advisors/House Directors

# QUESTIONS

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- Justin Shukas
- Director of Fraternity & Sorority Life – University of Oregon
- [jshukas@uoregon.edu](mailto:jshukas@uoregon.edu)
- 541-346-1149

# REFERENCES

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