

Trends for Higher Education

Evolution of Higher Education | Spring 2017

From demographics and social change to politics and technology, many trends impact planning in higher education. SCUP's *Trends for Higher Education* is designed to help you and your institution make sense of the most significant evolutionary forces.

This edition focuses on change in higher education. We look through an array of different lenses to gain some perspective on issues and opportunities that appear to be on the horizon—or at our doors.

About *Trends*

Demographic shifts. Political changes. Social movements. The evolution of technology. These all affect your institution. SCUP's *Trends for Higher Education* helps you and your institution stay on top of the major changes in the world around you. How?

- » We scan a wide range of sources and identify significant trends and movements outside of higher education.
- » We help you anticipate how these trends might affect your institution.

How can you use *Trends*?

- » Inform your environmental scanning or SWOT analysis
- » Support strategic planning efforts
- » Discuss the future of higher education
- » Serve as evidence to support your budget requests
- » Assist in program prioritization
- » Help develop new curricula

We've organized *Trends* using STEEP:

Social: How people work internally (psychology) and with each other (sociology)

Technology: How people use technology (including hardware and software), how society relies on technology, and how technology affects society

Economic: Macro- or microeconomics, including global trends, anything related to jobs and skills needed for jobs, and industry shifts

Environmental: Our external surroundings, including sustainability and our evolving workplaces, cities, and living spaces

Political: Public policy, governmental systems, the people within them, and the effects of government decisions on our citizens and communities

Each trend includes a brief trend summary, a footnoted source, and discussion questions to help you analyze and act on the trend.

Join the Conversation

It's impossible for us to identify every issue you may need to consider. What did we miss? What did we get wrong? Tell us!

- » E-mail trends@scup.org
- » Tweet [@Plan4HigherEd](https://twitter.com/Plan4HigherEd) with the hashtag [#scuptrends](https://twitter.com/scuptrends)



Social Trends

Given that the nature of work itself is changing, what are some of the implications for higher education? As higher education evolves, how can we better help faculty see the big picture? How can we better support gender diversity?

Campus Culture in Flux

Challenging social issues will continue to test many college campuses. Expect continued discussion—perhaps heated—around issues like race, religious tolerance, gender diversity, and free speech.¹ The challenges of sexual assault will continue to be a focus.² Many campuses will wrestle with policies regarding guns.³ Empowered by the results of the 2016 election, conservative voices may assert themselves more aggressively on campus.

For discussion

Facing social unrest not unlike the 1960s, institutions must walk a fine line between giving voice to opposing points of view and ensuring that the campus is a safe space for productive debate. How well is your institution addressing this? Are faculty helping students address their concerns? Are administrative policies conducive to constructive discussion? What steps could you take to create the right environment for open discussion of difficult issues?

For discussion

The WEF says changing business models and “jobs displacement” will create demand for training for new jobs as well as for “wholesale reskilling of existing workforces.” Institutions will have to more nimbly adapt curricula for the skills that business and industry need. Automation and other trends will also affect campus jobs—changing the daily duties of everyone from the president on down.

Improving Productivity? Keep It Simple

Do we overthink strategies for improvement? Wally Bock, one of *Inc.* magazine’s top 100 management experts, argues that plain simplification can make business operations more productive. Apart from streamlining approval processes and reducing the number of reports, Bock urges change agents to focus on improving the single key performance indicator (KPI) that will have the most impact. Another strategy: cut extraneous operational steps altogether.⁵

For discussion

Efforts to streamline university business practices and operations often get bogged down in endless discussions and complicated reports. But would a much simpler approach get better results faster? Could simplifying a single KPI or two reap significant changes for your institution? What “we’ve always done that” practices could your institution sunset without harming its operations?

Jobs of the Future

The World Economic Forum (WEF) predicts that the global workforce will shed 7.1 million jobs between 2015 and 2020—largely because more routine work will be automated. At the same time, the WEF predicts accelerated growth in the development of high-demand occupations or job specialties that did not exist 10 or even five years ago. The WEF also suggests that 65 percent of children now in primary school will one day work in jobs that do not yet exist.⁴

Helping Faculty See the Big Picture for Higher Ed

Busy with their own disciplines and work, some faculty members may not fully see how higher education's landscape is shifting. To help faculty get a better sense of the big picture, Michelle Behr, provost and dean at Birmingham-Southern College, hosts two monthly meetings about the evolution of higher education. Faculty convene in small groups as well as in a body to discuss issues like demographic changes, technology, and calls from outside academe for institutions to be more transparent and accountable.⁶

For discussion

How can your institution help faculty develop a deeper and more nuanced understanding of how higher education is evolving? How can your institution help faculty better understand institutional budgets and related decisions in a changing landscape? Might your administrators and faculty use conversations around changes in higher education to get on the same page about strategies to advance institutional priorities? How can adjunct faculty be part of this conversation?

Supporting Gender Diversity

As awareness of individuals who identify as transgender or gender nonconforming is raised, many members of the campus community may need to learn new behaviors and a new vocabulary. Outlining some ways to support gender diversity, a professor recently wrote, “as educators it is our responsibility to reflect on and challenge our gender assumptions so we can create more gender-inclusive spaces where all students are free to be who they are.”⁷

For discussion

Virtually every university today is working hard to be more inclusive, including supporting students who may identify as transgender, gender nonconforming, nonbinary, or intersex. Vital in the classroom, that work needs to extend across a university's staff. How well does your institution help all staff learn how to support gender diversity? What additional work is needed?

Serving Adult Students

Pearson recently surveyed adults aged 25–64 who are pursuing or planning continuing education. Nearly three-quarters (71 percent) anticipate needing more education in the next five years, two-thirds expect to pursue a degree or certificate, and half (51 percent) say they expect to change professional fields. Most respondents (92 percent) say that online programs offer more flexibility than face-to-face classes, but just two-thirds (66 percent) believe that an online class is as prestigious as a traditional classroom class.⁸

For discussion

Many institutions are doing more to serve adult students. But how well does your institution really know its adult students? What motivates them? What helps them succeed as students? Has your institution fully explored how adult students differ from traditional-aged students—and what those differences might imply for program offerings and student services?

Too Many Good Ideas Go to Early Graves

Melissa Vito, a senior administrator at the University of Arizona, says higher education's bureaucracy and aversion to risk and change constitutes an “entrepreneurial gap” that sends too many good ideas to early graves. Vito says institutions need to learn to be more creative, responsive to new ideas, and operationally nimble. Steps to get there include “optimistic leaders” who are disposed to saying “yes,” institutional open-mindedness, and a culture that supports intelligent risk-taking.⁹

For discussion

Vito suggests that institutions need to consciously nurture an entrepreneurial culture that moves quickly and responsively to identify and act on opportunities. Are tradition and risk aversion holding your institution back? Could your institution be more entrepreneurial? What would that look like? What specific practices would need to change? How could such change be instituted?

5 Ways Team Leaders Fail

Having worked with more than 100 senior teams at universities, consultant Patrick Sanaghan finds that team leaders fail in five key ways: they appoint teams that are not sufficiently diverse, they don't map explicit expectations, they do not manage conflict well, they fail to clarify how the group will make decisions, and they do not ask for help. (The last misstep is "one of the traps that really smart people fall into over and over again," Sanaghan finds.)¹⁰

For discussion

Much of the work in higher education takes place in teams, but how often do you and your colleagues assess that process? How well do teams work at your institution? What explicit steps might help staff learn to function better in teams and make teamwork more productive?

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Insights for Innovation

With notable exceptions—such as the College of Innovation and Design at Boise State University and Georgetown University's "Red House"^a—higher education is not known for innovation. In today's competitive landscape, though, new ideas can distinguish leading institutions from the also-rans. A couple of insights from the corporate world suggest ways to spark new ideas.

Innovation comes in different sizes, including incremental improvements, major advancements, and big disruptions, writes Soren Kaplan in the *Fast Company* newsletter *CO.DESIGN*. Kaplan says moderate changes are just as important as the occasional home run. But telling staff to innovate isn't enough—you have to have a plan. Some businesses jump-start that process with an innovation tool kit. One example, Bootcamp Bootleg, is available from the Stanford Design School. Another, Catalyst Toolkit from Intuit, outlines a three-step process for brainstorming, testing, and refining ideas.^b

Another key to innovation? Failure. Also writing for *Fast Company*, Ben Clarke reports that while most big companies used to experiment only a little each year, today's successful companies are perpetual innovators. Google, for example, runs some 7,000 experiments each year. Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos says his company's success hinges on constant, frequent experimentation. Knowing that most experiments fail, Bezos and other leaders view failure as the necessary cost of innovation. These days, Clarke writes, the amount, quality, and pace of experimentation is accelerating, and "the true test of how innovative a company can be is how well it experiments."^c

How could you encourage more innovation and experimentation at your institution?

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Technology Trends

As higher education navigates through the relatively early days of ed tech, what are some guideposts that can help institutions make progress?

Drones Above the Quad

Colleges and universities may soon be awash with drones. Writing in the *EDUCAUSE Review*, Tim Chester, vice president for information technology at the University of Georgia, says that as unmanned aircraft systems become more common in the workplace, universities will be expected to develop new applications for drones and train students in their use. Chester says universities are already conducting research on drones in disciplines such as agriculture, health, and the arts.¹¹

For discussion

As drones become more commonplace, institutions will need policies that govern their use on campus. Savvy institutions will likely claim areas of drone research—and the dollars that they may bring. How deeply has your institution thought about the potential impact of drones? Is it prepared to accommodate more drones on campus? Are there opportunities around drones that should be explored? Are the right policies in place to administer drone usage?

For discussion

No doubt your institution has done some thinking about how to use AI in the classroom, and it may even be experimenting with VR. But what comes next? How well is your institution planning for an era when tools like AI and VR are not novelties, but have been integrated into pedagogy? Beyond the classroom, is your institution planning for how AI can support administrative operations?

IT: What Could Possibly Go Wrong?

A handful of CIOs recently described their single worst experience in IT. Apart from a massive power outage, a catastrophic service-provider error, a systems overload by gamers, and the death of an ancient university phone system two months before it was to be replaced, one CIO had to deal with a faculty member who set up a web page requiring students to log in using their social security numbers. And then there was the sewage backup that “compromised” a university data center....¹⁴

For discussion

No system is perfect, but in these relatively early days of education technology, CIOs are learning that they can't plan enough for what might go wrong in IT. Vigilant oversight, aggressive planning, and quick action in the face of challenges are all critical. In those regards, how well does your institution design and implement IT error tracking systems, protocols for what to do when things go wrong, and the right system redundancies?

AI in HE, circa 2030

Researchers based at Stanford University recently speculated that by 2030, artificial intelligence (AI) “will increasingly blur the line between formal, classroom education and self-paced, individual learning.” They predict that AI will help adaptive learning become mainstream and students will immerse themselves via virtual reality (VR) in subject matter across many different disciplines.¹² Meanwhile, Georgia Institute of Technology is experimenting with “Jill Watson,” a robotic teaching assistant named for the IBM computer.¹³

Next Steps in Cybersecurity

Recognizing that computer hacking is getting more common, sophisticated, and professional, some experts say analytics and automation are the building blocks of next-generation cybersecurity. We're at the beginning phases of using predictive analytics to look for "anomalies," identify potential threats faster, and even take automated corrective actions. But for now, at least, humans will still be needed to interpret what the machines tell them.¹⁵

For discussion

With hacking getting more common and more sophisticated, is your institution keeping pace? Are your IT people keeping current with evolving options to automate some aspects of cybersecurity and use data analytics to track potential problems? Do your IT policies and practices optimally blend technological capacity with human insights and know-how? How can you prod campus IT users to do more to keep data secure?

Tech Talent for Tomorrow

Looking into the near future, McKinsey & Company suggests that institutions will need "experience designers and engineers" who can straddle IT and other functions to deliver top-quality customer experiences. Another necessary function: "product owners," described as "the mini-CEO of a digital product," who define the vision for a product or service and are "fully empowered to make decisions that deliver high business value."¹⁶

For discussion

As higher education adapts to the digital age, has your IT staffing evolved to keep pace? Or are job functions still structured to meet the needs of the 20th century? Are IT professionals properly situated on campus to tap talent outside the IT universe? How might these interactions help recruit new technology professionals? How can your institution best plan for its future IT staffing needs? Is it time to do a full audit of IT functions?

Back from the Dead? The MOOC Is Now a MicroMaster

Just when we thought MOOCs might be history, MIT, Harvard, and their partners at edX have launched 19 "MicroMasters"—modular graduate programs, largely in business and technology, designed to help learners enhance their workplace skills affordably and on their own schedules.¹⁷ EdX CEO Anant Agarwal, also a professor at MIT, told the *Hechinger Report* that he thinks micromasters are "a big next step in the evolution of education."¹⁸

For discussion

Many universities have embraced online learning, but to what extent has this relatively new modality been integrated into your institution? How well is your institution positioned to compete in the online education marketplace? Do most administrators and faculty still think of online as a fringe program? How can your university keep pace with the level of innovation reflected in edX's MicroMasters?

Deeper dive

As reported in *Inside Higher Education*, a recent paper from the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) found that "growth of fully online degree programs led to increased spending and falling enrollments at some place-based colleges, but had little impact on tuition rates." A separate NBER study, meanwhile, analyzed the impact of a new, low-cost online master's program in computer science at Georgia Tech. It found the program had likely not cannibalized students from the residential program on which it is based, but instead appears to have tapped a new student population.¹⁹ How might such findings affect online education at your institution?

The Ethics of Student Data

One of the concerns about collecting student data is that the information might be misused or fall into the wrong hands. Researchers at the Center for Advanced Research through Online Learning at Stanford University and the consulting firm Ithaka S+R have teamed to advance ideas, research, policies, and related resources that will encourage the responsible use of data in educational environments. They collect their findings at the website Responsible Use of Student Data in Higher Education.²⁰

For discussion

Is research at your university sometimes stymied by concerns about data privacy? How well does your institution protect the digital footprint that students, faculty, and staff inevitably leave behind? Has your institution fully thought about these issues? Does it follow the right practices, and does it have the right policies in hand to protect data while also fully tapping into data's potential for learning?

“Untethering” Faculty Development From Sit-Down Meetings

Arguing that typical workshop formats aren't helping faculty master digital tools, experts from California State University, Channel Islands, posit that faculty really need a toolbox of experiences that are “untethered” from a sit-down meeting. Their strategies include an online resource site, the option to access training by videoconference, asynchronous online courses, archived peer experiences, and regular communication through multiple channels.²¹

For discussion

It stands to reason that faculty development for the digital age needs to evolve beyond training techniques that have been used over recent decades. Has your institution successfully evolved its faculty development programming? Does it successfully use digital channels to help faculty master digital learning technologies? How systematic and comprehensive are those training offerings?

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Economic Trends

For institutions as well as students, the economics of higher education are getting more challenging. Meanwhile, the workplace is demanding an ever-changing employee skill set. How can universities meet the challenges of these evolving economic pressures?

Rethinking Classroom Staffing

To help find cheaper ways to deliver higher education, the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems and Western Governors University developed a budget model that tests different staffing patterns for college courses. The model weighs the effect of using academic coaches, advisors, and students to do parts of what full-time faculty have historically done and considers using outside vendors for some tasks. Tested in 10 community colleges, the model helped those pioneers identify cost savings, scale the delivery of educational materials, and boost student success rates.²²

For discussion

Virtually all institutions need to increase productivity, and budget fixes around the edges are no longer sufficient. That means institutions need to fundamentally rethink traditional ways of working. Could a budget model like the one mentioned here help planners in your institution convince leaders—and faculty—to fundamentally change the ways they work? Could such a model help your institution save money and operate more efficiently?

More Private Funding for Higher Education

With Republicans now in charge of the White House and Congress, ideas that promote more private funding of higher education may gain traction. The American Enterprise Institute (AEI), for example, recently argued that having more private financing options for students—including traditional private student loans as well as income share agreements (ISAs) in which students pay for college with a percentage of their after-graduation income—could spur more innovation in higher education. AEI urges institutions to use more private funding to fund innovation.²³

For discussion

Especially as the Trump administration begins to advance its policy agenda, we can expect to hear more discussion about private versus public funding of higher education. As one avenue in that regard, AEI suggests that institutions exploring new types of programs for which the availability of federal aid has yet to be clarified—such as competency-based education—might want to explore private funding for student aid.

College Debt: Just the Facts

The media loves stories about individuals buried in college debt. But what are the facts? Some 40 million Americans have college loans, and together they owe more than \$1.3 trillion. But nearly three-quarters of borrowers (70 percent) owe less than \$25,000. Only eight percent owe more than \$75,000. Experts say most of that debt is manageable, but worry about how debt holders who didn't finish their degrees can pay back what they owe, even if that total is relatively low.²⁴

For discussion

Experts say college debt should be manageable for most borrowers—and worth the investment. But that's not necessarily what borrowers think: In a recent poll, 40 percent of respondents said college debt is *not* worth the investment.²⁵ How convincingly does your institution articulate its value proposition? What more might your institution do to convince a skeptical public about the enduring value of a college education?

New Ideas for Research Funding

Federal support for research in the United States is languishing at pre-Sputnik era levels, forcing research universities to devote more of their own funds to fund basic research. Two research administrators from the University of Minnesota say that model is not sustainable. One solution? Encourage institutions to share research resources, materials, data, and infrastructure. Another idea: Promote more alliances between business and higher education to produce “shared value” by solving big societal problems.²⁶

For discussion

Regardless of how much research your institution conducts, funding is getting tighter, particularly for basic research. Could different types of partnerships help ease that squeeze? Could your university share research equipment and other resources with another institution? Are there untapped partnership possibilities regionally and across your state? Could your institution do more to partner with business and industry in basic research to solve societal problems?

Tomorrow's Workforce Needs Liberal Arts

We're hearing buzz about Kevin Kelly's book *The Inevitable: Understanding the 12 Technological Forces That Will Shape Our Future*. Dartmouth digital learning expert Joshua Kim says that whether intentionally or not, Kelly advocates for the “timeless skills” that the liberal arts imbues, including collaboration, creativity, and synthesis. Kim suspects that Kelly would argue that academe needs to move faster to “prepare our graduates for a world of vastly smarter machines.”²⁷

For discussion

Public concerns about the ability of college graduates to find jobs may have pushed the academic needle toward doing more to prepare students for particular careers. But as Kim suggests, the age of technology may actually require the broad educational palette that the liberal arts imbues. Is your institution having frank and productive conversations about the continuing tension between the liberal arts and professional training? Is more proactivity needed to preserve the liberal arts and integrate liberal studies more definitively within professional training?

Strategic Budgeting: Beyond the Merely Incremental

Experts from Grant Thornton suggest that as finances in higher education get more challenging, budgeting must get more sophisticated. The firm says that incremental budgeting, favored by most universities, has two undesirable effects: it “enshrines the current state of affairs” and leads only to modest changes driven by “internal needs and constituency pressures” rather than big-picture thinking. Grant Thornton recommends more rigorous and objective budgeting tied directly to “long-term planning based on real-life market positioning.”²⁸

For discussion

Rather than shaving bits of money here and there, Grant Thornton advocates “budgeting by substitution,” in which new programs are funded by reducing or eliminating old ones rather than from new sources of funding. Grant Thornton also recommends multi-year budgeting, starting with the last year and working backward to help keep the focus on strategic goals. How might such practices affect your institution? Could they produce better results?

EU Universities Facing a Financial Squeeze

Like higher education institutions in the United States, universities in the European Union are also dealing with constricted finances. A recent report from the European University Association (EUA) finds that public funding to universities between 2008 and 2015 increased in 11 countries and decreased in 13 others. Mentioning decreased financial aid, staff layoffs, and hiring freezes, the report talks about the need for new funding models, greater efficiencies, and more scrutiny of expenditures—as well as the need for universities to make a better public case about the value they add to society.²⁹

For discussion

The EUA cautions that it is unlikely that EU support can fill the gap in funding and that widening funding gaps between national systems stymie efforts toward cross-country collaboration and joint research projects. The EUA's candor suggests that institutions need to "get real" about future funding prospects and the need for operational improvements. Similarly, do some administrators in the US need to stop hoping that public funding will soon return to previous levels? Does the situation in Europe underscore the need for some US institutions to become more forthright about the realities of today's tight economic conditions?

Student Success: Are We Tracking the Right Measures?

Brandon Busteed, head of education and workforce development at Gallup, thinks institutions need to evolve their thinking about data analytics. Even as institutions strive to synthesize big data to improve student success, for example, Busteed urges more attention to measuring things like "the learning growth and development of students from matriculation to graduation" and alumni success in their careers and overall lives. Metrics like those, he says, are the ones that matter most to university "constituents and consumers."³⁰

For discussion

There's a lot of work in institutions these days to collect and analyze data to improve student academic success. But are we measuring the right things? Busteed argues that higher education should take a deeper look at what he calls "behavioral economic measures" like the emotional support that faculty mentors provide and the "deep, experiential learning" that leads to an optimal student experience. Does your institution need to determine how it can take a deeper dive into data like those?

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What's Driving the Rise in Tuition?

How much do we really know about why tuition goes up? Economists don't agree. A recent paper from the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) says that increases in the availability of federal financial aid enabled colleges to charge more. That paper specifically refutes another theory, that rising faculty salaries cause institutions to raise their prices. A different theory, though, says that disinvestment in public higher education at the state level is largely to blame for higher tuitions.

Discussion about the NBER paper in *Inside Higher Education* shows how contentious this issue can be.^d Different respondents to an article about the NBER paper, for example, pin the rising cost of college on reasons that include expanded administrative staffs and offices; the cost of compliance with increasingly more onerous regulations; the cost of providing remedial education, state-of-the-art facilities, or technology; and the growing cost of college employee health care.

Given public concerns about the rising cost of college, how can and should colleges and universities explain why tuition is rising? It's one thing to cite inflation or the decline in state support, but increasingly stakeholders like parents and students demand more detail. Higher education may need to be more forthcoming. At the same time, developing a more nuanced explanation of why tuition is going up may be in an institution's best interests. Deeper conversations may be needed within institutions about what factors are really driving higher costs—for example, faculty who instinctively blame “administrative bloat” may need to see more facets of this incredibly complicated landscape.

^d “Why Is Tuition So High?”

Ellen Wexler, *Inside Higher Education*

www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/02/09/study-increased-student-aid-not-faculty-salaries-drives-tuition



Environmental Trends

The way we need to think about the physical space of higher education continues to evolve rapidly. At the same time we need to preserve environmental resources. What strategies can help higher education meet those challenges?

Betting on the Farm

Universities with agriculture programs have long had college farms, but in recent years a new kind of agronomy has taken root. The website College Values Online recently published a list of the “Top 30 Sustainable College-Run Farms”—farms where students get their hands dirty growing food using environmentally friendly methods. Students at top-ranked California State University, Chico, for example, farm some 800 acres, growing organic vegetables and fruit and raising beef, sheep, and swine.³¹

For discussion

Sustainable college farms provide fresh food for campuses while giving students meaningful hands-on learning experience. Often, sustainable farms are joint efforts with local communities and help educate community members about nutrition. In a few cases, student farm work counts toward tuition.³² Are there opportunities at your institution to begin or expand these kinds of educational programs?

For discussion

Given today’s focus on helping student graduate on time, has your institution fully examined what impact space allocation has on student success? Could better space planning help students access critical classes, particularly for those large-enrollment courses that are seen as gateways to majors and programs? When was the last time your institution conducted a full audit of its space planning practices and resources?

“The Netflix of Demand Management”

Taking top honors in Carnegie Mellon University’s Allegheny Region Cleantech University Prize, the University of Pennsylvania’s “DR-Advisor” system uses data analytics to predict a building’s power consumption. Called “the Netflix of demand management,” DR-Advisor scans historical meter and weather data and other inputs to inform appropriate adjustments in energy use, slashing the cost of power by as much as \$44,000 per building.³⁴

For discussion

As DR-Advisor shows, clean energy research and related data analytics are moving quickly from the design lab to implementation—and reaping significant cost savings in higher education. No doubt this trend will continue and expand. How well is your institution positioned to adopt such emerging energy technologies? What barriers prevent their adoption?

Bottlenecks in Space Allocation

A study of faculty and classroom planning in higher education finds that more than a third (36 percent) of entry-level courses at four-year public universities have 95 percent enrollment or more, creating bottlenecks that slow students on their paths to degrees. At peak times, though, classrooms at four-year public universities and community colleges are used only 70 percent and 39 percent respectively. The study concludes that scheduling practices rather than space constraints limit student access to courses.³³

Deeper dive

Cleantech University Prizes, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, link clean energy research with opportunities for commercialization while also giving students unique learning opportunities. Are there opportunities at your institution to combine research with education to develop these kinds of tools?

Tackling Deferred Maintenance

Benchmarking trends in facilities maintenance, the consulting firm Sightlines notes that higher education must deal simultaneously with two competing factors: Capital needs for university facilities continue to expand while buildings constructed in the 1960s and 1970s have passed “key age thresholds” and need renewal. Adding to this conundrum: Newer buildings often have “shorter equipment lifecycles” and need more frequent maintenance.³⁵

For discussion

Among other strategies, Sightlines recommends that universities recognize that “not all buildings are created equal” and make tough decisions about how they allocate space and fund facilities. Is your institution having the difficult conversations that are needed to make facilities decisions based on mission priorities? Does your institution have what Sightlines calls “an integrated facilities management strategy”?

Deeper dive

Sightlines also recommends that universities “reallocate savings.” The firm estimates that campuses need to spend about \$5.00 per gross square foot (GSF) to “steward” their buildings and manage their physical assets. “Campuses are funding on average 27 percent of this need (\$1.35/GSF),” Sightlines says, while on average spending \$7.20 per GSF on operations and utilities. “A 10 percent savings is a 54 percent increase in stewardship funding” the company says, noting that “campuses generally know how to do this, but policies are needed to reallocate savings from operations to stewardship to create the incentive to attain those savings.” Moreover, Sightlines data show that a \$1 increase in stewardship offsets \$3 in future capital renewal investment.³⁶

Shaping Classrooms for Active Learning

The rise of active learning as a pedagogy challenges campus planners to reconfigure learning spaces. That’s no small task. While adapting space in a traditional library to support Engaged Active Student Learning (EASL) classes, for example, Auburn University needed to design space that could simultaneously meet criteria for multiple disciplines, a variety of academic levels, different pedagogic approaches, and student multitasking.³⁷

For discussion

Active learning changes the way physical space supports learners. Among many other requirements, for example, Auburn identified the need for space where students could read, conduct research, write, complete online assessments, study, engage with peers and instructors, work individually and in groups, and make videos. How adept is your institution at adapting space to meet such a disparate set of needs? If better planning is needed, how can your institution rise to that challenge?

Coal’s No Longer King

Coal consumption in educational institutions—a source of energy for centuries—is down 64 percent since 2008. Analysts at the U.S. Department of Energy looked at 57 institutions, including colleges and universities, that burn coal, finding reduced consumption in all institutions, including 20 that stopped using coal altogether. Universities are switching to natural gas or other fuels, like biomass. Signing on to the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions was seen as one contributing factor in the decline.³⁸

For discussion

The dramatic decline in coal consumption reminds us that many colleges and universities continue to move to renewable and cleaner fuels.³⁹ What are the potential next phases of this revolution? How can your institution take more direct control of its energy needs? Will energies like biomass and solar play larger roles in your institution’s future? In what ways might your institution’s energy supply chain need to be retrofitted?

Are We Done with Bricks and Mortar?

Addressing whether traditional college campuses will disappear like Blockbuster did, author Jeffrey Selingo sees a future of blended learning, in which colleges will mix online learning with “the best experiences they can offer on physical campuses.” Selingo argues that physical campuses will still be essential for experiential learning like internships and research projects that are “nearly impossible to replicate online.”⁴⁰

For discussion

Looking ten or 20 years ahead, what changes will the rise of online learning bring to your institution’s physical plant? Will your institution need to accommodate the same number of students on campus? Could its footprint shrink? What might be some implications for energy and maintenance costs, to say nothing of personnel? What does this trend mean for current and future faculty?

Bridging the College/Contractor Communications Gap

A construction industry trade magazine recently asked a panel of engineers about trends in what were described as the unique design demands of higher education facilities. One current focus is the “increased emphasis on energy efficiency” and energy-use modeling. More universities are exploring onsite power generation. Integrated project design and delivery (“design-build”) is another trend, part of a university predisposition to “alternative delivery models and contracting arrangements,” including public-private partnerships.⁴¹

For discussion

When it comes to capital projects, does your institution sometimes find a communications gap with contractors? One reason might be that university expectations for contractors may differ somewhat—or even significantly—from those of construction clients in the private sector. Recognizing those differences may help planners in higher education communicate more effectively with contractors, develop better specifications, and manage capital projects more efficiently.

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Inspiring Next-Generation Advancements in Campus Sustainability

Winners of the 2016 round of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's Campus Sustainability Achievement Awards advance sustainability in the contexts of faculty development, community engagement, and basic research. These three examples might inspire future directions in sustainability at other institutions:

At Cedar Valley College, the Quality Teaching in Practical Sustainability (Q-TIPS) program trains faculty members to intentionally engage students in “big questions” around challenges in energy consumption, air and water quality, and climate change.

Furman University's Community Conservation Corps (CCC) program weatherizes the residences of low-income homeowners. The program says it has reduced greenhouse gas emissions significantly in some 100 houses.

The University of Manitoba challenged campus competitors to design houses that can host between 80 and 100 solitary nesting bees, whose population is dwindling. This past October, more than 50 winning designs were being field-tested across the university's campus.^e

Often cross-disciplinary and engaging partnerships of students, faculty, administrators, and staff, these three examples suggest proven strategies for developing next-generation campus sustainability solutions. As your institution looks to expand its sustainability efforts in the years ahead, do these examples suggest future directions for sustainability efforts on your campus?

e AASHE Announces 2016 Sustainability Award Winners
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
<http://www.aashe.org/highlights/press-releases/aashe-announces-2016-sustainability-award-winners>



Political Trends

As the Trump administration prepares to influence higher education policy, states continue to reduce their spending on colleges and universities. What creative ideas and new ways of thinking might help institutions navigate this rapidly evolving landscape?

Higher Education During the Trump Administration

How policy under the Trump administration might affect higher education remains an open question. Relatively mum about higher education in the run for the White House, Trump did talk late in the campaign about college costs, student debt, and endowment spending. Will the Trump presidency bring changes in federal student aid and research funding? How might a national infrastructure program help colleges? Is “free” college off the table? Will the Department of Education have a reduced role? Among these possibilities—and many others—the one certainty is that Trump will put his own unique stamp on higher education policy.

For discussion

Before specific policies are shaped, speculation about higher education in the Trump administration remains just that. Nonetheless, institutions might expect the new president to spark conversations at the federal level about student aid, college tuition rates and operating costs, and perhaps endowment spending. More broadly, Trump policies may seek to return more control of education to the states. Every institution should watch very carefully as the Trump administration shapes its higher education policies—and be ready to plan accordingly for the institutional ramifications of such policies once they come into clearer relief.

Less Regulation Ahead?

If the Trump administration shows an appetite for reduced regulation of colleges and universities, it will find some ready support. Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN), chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions, has made reducing regulation one of his priorities. And there is speculation that Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC), who recently won the chair’s role in the House of Representative’s Education and the Workforce Committee, will also advocate for less regulation of higher education.⁴²

For discussion

Amid discussions of college affordability, quality, and student safety in the context of federal higher education policy, expect more talk in the days ahead about the regulation of higher education. Congressional pushback to regulation overall—and to rules imposed by the Obama administration—is building. Compliance requirements may well change. Institutions will have to carefully monitor this changing landscape.

Congress Eyes Endowments, Entitlements

In the wake of headlines that trumpet the size of endowments at prominent universities coupled with news articles that question tuition increases when institutions have ample reserves, expect Congress to look closely at this landscape.⁴³ Additionally, Senate and House subcommittees are taking a close look at college costs and the tax benefits that universities get.⁴⁴ We can expect that scrutiny to continue.

For discussion

For several years now, legislators have been calling for more fiscal transparency in higher education. Recent explorations by Congress into university endowments are a case in point, and college costs are of perpetual interest to lawmakers. Is your institution ready to address more pointed questioning about its reserves, tuition, and spending? Similarly, is your institution prepared to address legislative questioning of its tax breaks?

Deeper dive

We're seeing more focus on university tax exemptions and the payments many institutions make locally in lieu of property taxes.⁴⁵ Princeton University recently settled a local lawsuit over its tax exemption by agreeing to pay more than \$18 million. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* framed that settlement in the context of rising concern over how wealthy universities use their tax-exempt endowments. Assuming we can expect more scrutiny of such issues in the days ahead, how well is your institution poised to address questions about its tax status?

Is College Losing its Luster?

Americans are losing confidence in the value of college. A recent survey by Public Agenda finds that just 42 percent of those polled agreed that a college education is necessary for success in the workplace. That's down 13 percent from a similar survey in 2009. What's more, 57 percent of Americans believe there are ways to succeed economically without a college degree—that's a 14 percent increase from 2009.⁴⁷

For discussion

The decline in public opinion about college is even more troubling as state support for higher education erodes and demographic trends have many institutions scrambling to fill their classrooms. How can your institution help restore public confidence in higher education? In addition to demonstrating how well it educates future citizens and employees, does it need to do more to show stakeholders how it contributes to its communities and develops new knowledge that benefits taxpayers?

Keeping Education Accessible Digitally

As more of higher education turns digital, we can expect louder calls to make sure that educational material remains accessible to all. A recent article in *Inside Higher Education* suggests that advocates for disability rights are turning up the heat on colleges and universities, using tools like lawsuits and leveraging interest in the topic at the Department of Justice to ensure that digital education is accessible. Advocates may also try to influence the next reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.⁴⁶

For discussion

After the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted in 1990, institutions took pains to make sure that the physical campus was more accessible to individuals with disabilities. Today, though, many colleges and universities need to take steps to ensure that digital information and online courses are accessible. How well is your institution meeting this challenge? In terms of shaping policies and practices, what more does it need to do?

Debating Free College

While campaigning, Hillary Clinton advocated that students should be able to graduate from a public university debt free, students from families under certain income thresholds should pay no tuition, and community college should be free.⁴⁸ At the federal level, the future of such ideas is uncertain at best now that Donald Trump is president. Still, these ideas have a lot of public support and are sure to be a continued focus of discussion at the state level. The College Promise Campaign recently tallied 150 free community college programs in 37 states—and says new programs are starting weekly.⁴⁹

For discussion

If the notion of free college gains more of a toehold, what might be some of the implications for your institution? How might its budgeting need to change? Would free college bring more students to your campus—or drive potential students to less expensive institutions? Will the promise of free college attract more first-generation students who might need more support, like mentoring, in order to succeed?

Downstream Risks of Campus Carry

Eight states currently allow concealed weapons on public university campuses.⁵⁰ But those laws were enacted before a recent study from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health concluded that such policies “are unlikely to reduce mass shootings on campus”—and, moreover, “are likely to lead to more shootings, homicides, and suicides on campus—especially among students.”⁵¹

For discussion

A contentious political issue in many states, concealed carry is likely to continue to spark debate. If your institution is directly or even indirectly affected (Arkansas and Tennessee, for example, allow certain faculty members to carry weapons, and 23 states leave campus carry decisions to individual institutions), has evidence now available about the practice been introduced into campus conversations? Assuming that the Trump administration is more favorable to gun rights, how might that influence firearms owners in your state?⁵²

College Quality: Under the Microscope

Expect continued scrutiny of the quality of higher education. A key trend is measuring quality by what graduates earn. The federal College Scorecard was recently redesigned to help students and parents gauge a college’s value based on institutional data on student debt, completion rates, and graduates’ earnings. New college rankings—notably, ones by the *Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education* and the *Economist*—now heavily weight graduates’ earnings.⁵³ Keep an eye also on university accreditation, the focus of increasing criticism by federal legislators.

For discussion

We have heard a lot about student outcomes in recent years, but lately part of the focus has shifted away from “student learning outcomes” and undergraduate student success to outcomes in the sense of student financial success in the workplace after graduation. That raises fundamental questions about the purpose and value of a college education. Has your institution explored these questions? Has it clarified its mission in the face of louder demands that college have an immediate employment and financial payoff?

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Can Universities Keep Pace With Corporate Learning?

When it comes to workplace professional development, is higher education being left in the dust? A fascinating recent blog post summarizes a meeting of “leaders and pioneers who are shaping the future of learning and work.”^f Author Jeremy Walsh, the vice president for strategic initiatives at ed tech consultant Learning House, reports that while that annual meeting once included attendees from universities, the 2016 meeting had not one representative from higher education. “It’s disappointing but true that colleges and universities are no longer looked at as a viable part of the solution for educating, training, and preparing those entering and reskilling in the workforce,” Walsh writes.

Walsh reports that top topics at the meeting included the ongoing competition for the best talent, the growing reliance on freelance talent, a “growing disdain for the lack of preparedness of recent college graduates,” the emergence of new technology solutions for learning and skill development and the speed with which they are taking root, and the impact on jobs of both artificial intelligence and robotics. What kinds of programming can your institution offer to address such concerns?

Offered on demand when the user needs it or wants it, much of corporate learning is in easily digested chunks (“microlearning”), often via such channels as mobile technology and social media. Walsh also heard attendees talking about learning that adapts to help the user learn more effectively and learning that is increasingly supported by artificial intelligence (think Siri and Watson).

Especially if it thinks of corporate education as a market, how can your institution adopt what corporate learning officers think about the delivery of education? Even if your institution does not offer corporate education, how can it equip future employees to be able to best adapt to the learning modalities that business uses?

^f The Future of Learning and Work

Jeremy Walsh, *Frontiers* (WCET blog)

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Three Thoughts About Improving Your Planning Processes

From SWOT to strategic planning, your institution probably relies regularly on many traditional planning approaches. But could different tacks shake things up? These three suggestions may prompt you to try some different planning techniques.

» **Move the goalposts.** Ken Norton, a former project manager at Google, suggests that instead of just looking ahead one or five years, planners try to look 30 years out. Norton cites the book *The Inevitable*, in which author Kevin Kelley argues that “the general trends of products and services in 30 years are currently visible.” A periodic 30-year forecast should feed into your six-month plan, Norton says, and should also help managers decide what things are not important enough for the long term.^g

» **Analyze the force fields.** Strategist Marcel J. Dumestre, author of the new book *Financial Sustainability in U.S. Higher Education: Transformational Strategy in Troubled Times*, says university planning needs to push beyond incremental fixes to strive for transformational change. But he says “the heavy weight of tradition” and “the entrenched forces that preserve the status quo” often stand in the way. One solution? Do a force field analysis. As developed by social psychologist Kurt Lewin, force field analyses require a deep assessment of the unique “driving forces” and “restraining forces” that affect a given institution’s equilibrium. “Restrains can be addressed by proactive countervailing actions that make change possible,” Dumestre says.^h

» **Sprint.** In the new book *Sprint: How to Solve Big Problems and Test New Ideas in Just Five Days*, three principals from Google Ventures, the venture capital arm of Alphabet, Google’s parent company, frame an approach for teams to quickly tackle big problems. Authors Jake Knapp, John Zeratsky, and Braden Kowitz say that sprinting in this context means marshaling expertise from across an institution to take an intensive, fast-paced look at a particular challenge. Detailing the sprint process hour by hour, *Sprint* outlines a way to move notions for change from the abstract through to prototype, testing, and implementation.ⁱ

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Ken Norton (blog)

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Marcel J. Dumestre, Academic Impressions

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Trends for Higher Education Spring 2017

Society for College and University Planning
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The Society for College and University Planning is a community of higher education planning professionals that provides its members with the knowledge and resources to establish and achieve institutional planning goals within the context of best practices and emerging trends. For more information, visit www.scup.org.

What is Integrated Planning?

Integrated planning is the linking of vision, priorities, people, and the physical institution in a flexible system of evaluation, decision-making and action. It shapes and guides the entire organization as it evolves over time and within its community.