LEARNING COMMUNITIES: EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

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OUTLINE

- Brief review of theory & research

- Overview of plan for Fall 2013

- Group process

  - Use collective university knowledge to identify and record connections between university resources and the Fall 2013 LLCs

"the problem of the state university is the very practical one of trying to break up its great masses into informal groups without adding too much to the cost of instruction"
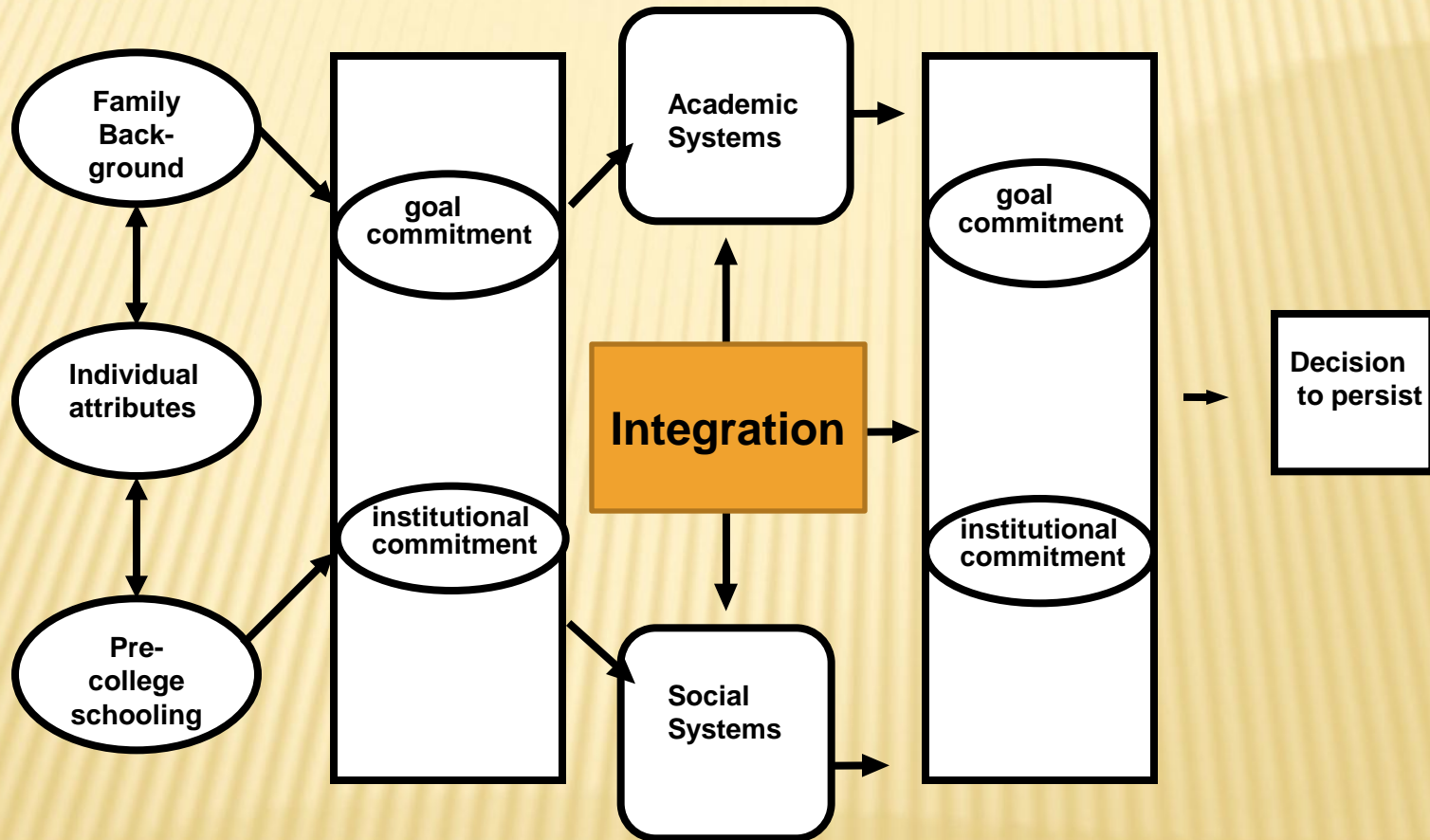
R.L. Duffus
The New York Times
January 8, 1928

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT WHY LEARNING COMMUNITIES ARE ASSOCIATED WITH STUDENT SUCCESS?

TINTO'S MODEL OF PERSISTENCE

THEORIES RELATED TO LLC'S

✖ Persistence

  ✚ Tinto (1993) suggests that the degree in which academic and social systems of an institution integrate and reinforce one another may lead to persistence or attrition

THEORIES RELATED TO LLC'S

✖ Kurt Lewin: B=f(P*E)

  ✚ Behavior is a function of the interaction of a person and his or her environment

THEORIES RELATED TO LLC'S

- Astin's Theory of Involvement
  - Based on research at Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) and Cooperative Institutional Research Program
  - Ongoing study of over 12 million students
- Three types of involvement are linked to desired outcomes (GPA, persistence, etc):
  - Faculty-student involvement
  - Student involvement with academics (time on task)
  - Peer to peer interactions

THEORIES RELATED TO LLC'S

× Engagement

+ A large body of research suggests that the more "engaged" students are, the more they will learn (Astin, 1984; Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Gardner, et al., 2005; Kuh, et al., 2005; Light, 2001; Pace, 1986).

+ Two components to engagement

× **What students do** – time and energy devoted to educationally purposeful activities

× **What institutions do** – using effective educational practices to induce students to do the right things

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Learning communities "*represent an intentional restructuring of students' time, credit, and learning experiences* to build community, enhance learning, and foster connections among students, faculty, and disciplines. At their best, learning communities practice pedagogies of active engagement and reflection."

Learning Communities:

Reforming Undergraduate Education (2004)

RESEARCH ON LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Research suggests that participation in Living-Learning Communities:

- positively impacts student engagement (Zhao & Kuh, 2004; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh & Whitt, 2005)
- positively impacts academic achievement (Knight, 2003; Stassen, 2003)
- positively impacts persistence and degree attainment (Inkelas & Weisman, 2003; Pike, Schroeder & Berry, 1997; Stassen, 2003; Tinto, 1993)
- increases students' awareness of diversity (Pike, 2002)
- reduces negative effects of binge drinking (Brower, 2008)

THE UNIVERSITY'S PLAN FOR 2013

Core focus of the Living-Learning Communities Program

- ✖ Persistence
- ✖ Belonging
- ✖ Self-Efficacy
- ✖ Love of Learning

THE UNIVERSITY'S PLAN FOR 2013

- Offering 33 communities
- New LLCs are interdisciplinary and interest based
  - For more information please visit the FYE Living-Learning Communities website at
    - http://fye.uiowa.edu/admitted-now-what/living-learning-communities
- In process of recruiting campus partners and community partners

THE UNIVERSITY'S PLAN FOR 2013

- Housing Application Process:
  - Students rank their top 5 communities
  - Students will be able to select a roommate from their first choice LLC
  - Students, who apply by February 28, will get to pick their room from the locations on campus of their top 3 LLCs
  - Students, who apply after February, will be assigned based on remaining space

SST GROUP PROCESS

× Purpose:

+ Use collective university knowledge of SST members to identify possible connections between university resources and Fall 2013 LLCs

× University Resources are here defined as departments, staff members, faculty members, campus programs or events

∗ We also welcome Iowa City community resources

× Please list full names and departments of proposed campus partners

SST GROUP PROCESS

- Instructions:
  - Break into small groups
    - Approximately 5 people
  - Elect a note taker and be prepared to report back to the larger group
    - Information can be recorded electronically or hard copy
    - Please send information collected to presenters
  - 10 minutes to brainstorm
  - 10 minutes to report back

QUESTIONS?