The New Student

Diana G. Oblinger, Ph.D.
Who attends college?
## A Generation of Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1970</th>
<th>1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment</td>
<td>7.4M</td>
<td>12.7M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-year enrollment</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend part-time</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older than 25</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-traditional</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have dependents</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NCES, 2002
The Millennials

- Born in or after 1982, “Baby on Board”
- Gravitate toward group activity
- Identify with parents’ values; feel close to parents
- Spend more time on homework and housework; less on TV
- 8 out of 10 say “it’s cool to be smart”
- Fascination for new technologies
- Racially and ethnically diverse
- 1 in 5 has at least one immigrant parent
- “The biggest problem [we have] is the example adults show kids today.”

Howe & Strauss, 2000
Events Shaping Class of 2001

Generations are defined by their life experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Birth | • Americans taken hostage in Iran  
       | • Three Mile Island nuclear accident  
       | • Government bailed out Chrysler |
| 2    | • AIDS is identified |
| 4    | • First computer disk sold  
       | • Sally Ride became the first US woman in space |
| 7    | • The Challenger exploded  
       | • Chernobyl nuclear accident |
| 8    | • Stock market crashed |
| 10   | • Berlin wall came down  
       | • China killed protesters in Tiananmen Square  
       | • Valdez oil spill  
       | • Government rescued the savings & loan industry |
Non-Traditional Students Predominate

• Three-quarters of all undergraduates are non-traditional
  – Delayed enrollment
  – Attend part-time
  – Work full-time
  – Financially independent
  – Have dependents
  – Single parent
  – Lack high school diploma
• More likely to leave without a degree
• At greater risk of dropping out their first year

NCES, 2002
The more non-traditional, the more likely the student is to attend a 2-year institution

NCES, 2002
How do students view technology?
Teen’s Web Use

- 94% use the Internet for school research
- 78% believe the Internet helps them with schoolwork
- 41% use email and instant messaging to contact teachers or schoolmates about class work
- The Internet is their primary communication tool
  - 81% email friends and relatives
  - 70% use instant messaging to keep in touch
  - 56% prefer the Internet to the telephone

Lenhart, Simon & Graziano, 2001
Digital Disconnect

- Students are more Internet-savvy than their teachers
- Schools and teachers do not use the Internet in ways students do
- Teachers use of the Internet is considered poor and uninspiring by students
- Student use of the Internet is largely outside of school

Levine & Arafh, 2002
The IT Generation

• The PC was introduced the year today’s 18-year old college students were born
• 20% began using computers between ages 5-8; all students were using computers between ages 16-18
• 85% of college students own their own computer
• 74% use the Internet 4 or more hours/week; 19% use it 12 or more hours
• 69% are more likely to use the phone than the Internet to communicate socially
• 6% took college courses online

Jones, 2002
College Internet Use

- 79%: Internet has a positive impact on academic experience
- 73%: Use the Internet more than the library for research
- 72%: Check email every day
- 60%: Believe the Internet has improved relationships with classmates
- 46%: Allows them to express ideas that they would not have expressed in class

Jones, 2002
Faculty-Student Contact

- 56%: Internet has improved relationship with professors
- Only 19% communicate with professors more via email than face-to-face, however 55% use email to arrange face-to-face interactions
- 75% of students use email to get clarification or information on assignments
- 58% use email to find or discuss grades
- Only 7% use email to complain about a class or classmates
- 89% have received class announcements via email

Jones, 2002
Student Response to Online Courses

Compared to a traditional class:

- More interaction with faculty and other students
- Higher quality interaction with instructors and other students
- 93% are more likely to ask questions
- 2x as likely to actively participate in discussion
- 2x as likely to ask for clarification
- 83% improved their writing and communication skills
- 80% put more thought into online discussion
- 71% spent more time studying online
- 69% more comfortable asking an awkward question
- 42% more comfortable disagreeing with instructor online

Shea et al., 2002
Information Access: Web or Library?

- 2/3rds of students feel they know how to find valid information from the Web
- Students realize the Web does not meet all their information needs
- Students dislike advertising on websites
- Students do not prefer electronic copies over paper copies
- 9 out of 10 students use campus library print resources
- Inability to access databases remotely is considered a barrier

OCLC, 2002
Information Age Mindset

- Computers aren’t technology
- The Internet is better than TV
- Reality is no longer real
- Doing is more important than knowing
- Nintendo over logic
- Multitasking is a way of life
- Typing is preferred to handwriting
- Staying connected is essential
- Zero tolerance for delays
- Consumer and creator are blurring

Frand, 2000
Customer Service Culture

- Self-service
- Customer-service
- Demand for immediacy
- Customization
- Select services
How are behaviors changing?
Digital Learners

Text → Text & image → Information literacy

Being told (authority based) → Discovery experiential

Deductive (linear) → Bricolage & judgment (lateral)

Don’t know Won’t try → Don’t know Link, lurk & try

Brown, 2000
# Generation Matters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boomer’s</th>
<th>Generation Xer’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Dependent on instructor to define and support learning</td>
<td>Independent problem solvers and self-starters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Computer is a “nice to have”</td>
<td>Technology is a “must have”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulation</td>
<td>Slower pace: its OK to wait; gaming not serious</td>
<td>Crave stimulation; expect immediate answers &amp; feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>Learn “what” or “how” first, then “why”</td>
<td>What’s in it for me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifelong Learning</td>
<td>Work in the same organization for life</td>
<td>View job environments as places to grow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner Control</td>
<td>Instructor focus expected</td>
<td>Learners want autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort with Unknown</td>
<td>Discomfort is avoided</td>
<td>Xers are fearless; hand-holding is not expected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ElementK, 2002
Where Learning Happens

To leverage “learning to learn” we must understand distributed intelligence because learning happens most naturally in communities of practice.

Brown, 2000
Shifting Patterns

- Swirling: Students attend multiple institutions, sometimes simultaneously. 54% Bachelors students had attended 2 or more; 19% 3 or more
- Fewer students go straight through college
- More mature students engage in higher education differently
- Community colleges growing faster than 4-year institutions
- Growth in post-baccalaureate certificates
Second Level Digital Divide

• The digital divide is more than a have/have-not phenomenon
• There are differences among Internet users
• Five dimensions of second-level digital divide
  – Technical means (hardware, software)
  – Autonomy of use (public site vs. home)
  – Use patterns
  – Support networks (who can you turn to for assistance?)
  – Skill (ability to use the Internet effectively)

Hargittai, 2002
What alternatives address “the new student”?
Adult-Friendly Programs

- Flexible scheduling
- Independent or distance learning options
- Low residency requirements
- Flexibility on entrance exams
- Accelerated formats
- Orientation programs for mature learners
- Support for adult learners
eArmyU

- eArmyU partnership between Army, academic institutions, businesses
- Implemented in 27 days
- Growing enrollment (29,500 by 9/02)
  - Age, gender and ethnic mix reflects diversity of the Army
  - 50% have never taken a college course
  - 15% have attended two or more institutions
- Deployed worldwide (36 countries & territories)
- Course completion rate is 80%
- Overall satisfaction 4.0 (1-5 scale)
Buffet Model Courses

- Conduct an initial assessment of each individual
- Provide modularized array of interactive learning materials and activities
- Create individualized study plans
- Build IT based continuous assessment to provide instant feedback
- Replace single-mode instruction with differentiated personnel strategies
- Savings of up to 70% on costs of instruction

Twigg, 2002
## Cost Savings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Traditional Cost</th>
<th>Savings / Student</th>
<th>% Savings</th>
<th>Annual Savings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Va Tech</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>$86</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>$120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Tennessee</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>$109</td>
<td>$79</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>$121,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>$190</td>
<td>$58</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>$165,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tallahassee CC</td>
<td>English Comp</td>
<td>$252</td>
<td>$107</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>$321,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa State</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>$129</td>
<td>$54</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>$97,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twigg, 2002
Games

Games include elements of:
- Urgency
- Complexity
- Learning by trial-and-error
- Scoring points

Games support:
- Active learning
- Experiential learning
- Problem-based learning
- Immediate feedback
- Learner-centered

Moschini, 2002
Learning Communities

• International community of education professionals
• Professional development
• Informal collaboration
  – Plan projects
  – Participate in discussions
  – Share resources
Welcome to the ATS Online Personal Assistant Chat with an ATS Online Personal Assistant. The Personal Assistant is available only during our Normal Office Hours which are:

**NOTE:** This is not a "Chat Room" is rather a two party chat between the Guest and an Adult and Transfer Student Personal Assistant. It makes the Personal Assistant to respond to your inquiries.
Expect the Best - Service Standards

Academic Support Standards
The following are service standards for Academic Support services provided by Athabasca University.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERVICE</th>
<th>STANDARD</th>
<th>CONTACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Support</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coordinator Learning Services (780) 675-6344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial contact by home study</td>
<td>Within 2 weeks of start date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tutor or call centre</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:tutserv@athabascau.ca">tutserv@athabascau.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to voice mail by</td>
<td>2 business days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homestudy tutor or call centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to e-mail by</td>
<td>2 business days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homestudy tutor or call centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments marked</td>
<td>5 business days from receipt by marker*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam marked</td>
<td>5 business days from receipt by marker*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you do not think about the future, you cannot have one.

– John Galsworthy
The New Student

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