Defining the Faculty Role in Student Success

Presentation for the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

David Bevevino
Practice Manager
We help schools support students from enrollment to graduation and beyond.

- **ROOTED IN RESEARCH**
  - 7,500+ Peer-tested best practices
  - 500+ Enrollment innovations tested annually

- **ADVANTAGE OF SCALE**
  - 1,500+ Institutions served
  - 3.7 M+ Students supported by our SSMS

- **WE DELIVER RESULTS**
  - 95% Of our partners continue with us year after year, reflecting the goals we achieve together

- **Find and enroll your right-fit students**
- **Prepare your institution for the future**
- **Support and graduate more students**
In the U.S., Completion Rates are Creeping Up

Significant Student Service Investments Show Modest Payoff

**Average Six-Year Graduation Rates**

Public U.S. Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduation Rate</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average growth in student services spending per student FTE, 2003-2013**


1) Data reflects share of first-time students who have received a bachelor’s degree within six years
2) At four-year institutions

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A True Perspective on Outcomes Demands a New Set of Success Metrics

What Actually Happens to Our Students?

For Every **100 Students** Who Start a Bachelor’s Degree...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drop out of college</th>
<th>Still enrolled after six years</th>
<th>Earn an associate’s</th>
<th>Graduate but are underemployed</th>
<th>Graduate and are working a job requiring a BA by age 27</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our new student success mandate:

- Graduate more students...
- ...in less time, at lower cost...
- ...with better post-grad outcomes...
- ...to deliver a better Return on Education

Source: Shapiro D, et al., “Completing College: A National View of Student Attainment Rates – Fall 2010 Cohort (Signature Report No. 12)” National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (2016); Federal Reserve Bank of NY: [https://www.newyorkfed.org/research/college-labor-market/college-labor-market_underemployment_rates.html](https://www.newyorkfed.org/research/college-labor-market/college-labor-market_underemployment_rates.html); EAB interviews and analysis
Breakaway Performers in Every Selectivity Band

Getting to Best-Demonstrated Peer Performance Holds Huge National Gains

**Highest Volatility in Success Rates at Middle-Selectivity Institutions**

Four-Year Graduation 25th to 75th Percentiles, by Institutional Selectivity

1) ACT composite midpoint used as a proxy for selectivity, n=1105

Source: EAB Analysis of 2014 IPEDS Data
Finances and Preparedness Not Whole Story

Nearly 40% of Completion Delays Relate to Navigating Academic “Product”

Selected Findings from UW-Madison Report: Predictors of Time to Degree (2014)

As Expected, Finances are Biggest Cause of Delays

Students Gravitating to “Delay-Prone” Fields

Many Delays from Unproductive Exploration and “Do-Overs”

**Extra Completion Time**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Stop-Out</th>
<th>17 mo.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per Part-Time Term</td>
<td>2.6 mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URM*</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Gen*</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Being a URM or first-generation student alone does not predict delayed graduation

| STEM | 2 mo. |
| Nursing | 2 mo. |
| Engineering | 2 mo. |
| Business | 1 mo. |

| Under-loading | 4.5 mo. |
| 6 DFW Credits | 4 mo. |
| College/School Change | 2 mo. |
| Study Abroad | 1.5 mo. |
| Double Major | 1 mo. |

The Recession Shifted the Burden to Our Students

Tuition Replaced Public Funding, Unlikely to Return to Pre-recession Levels

Tuition as a Percentage of Educational Revenues for Public Universities, 1990-2015

- Shaded areas indicate recessions
- "Educational revenues" include state and local support for higher education (minus support for research, agriculture, and medicine), and net tuition and fees. It does not include federal grants or contracts.

Historic increase in 3 years following recent recession

Disadvantaged Students Face Higher Climb in First Term

The Achievement Gap

Chance of Earning a Four-Year Degree by Age 24

- Well-Resourced
  - Difficult Class: "I’ll form a study group"
  - Short on Cash: "My parents will help me"
  - Lonely: "I’ll join a club"

- Under-Resourced
  - Difficult Class: "I’m not smart enough"
  - Short on Cash: "I’ll work full-time"
  - Lonely: "I’ll go back home"

SAT Score

- Top Income Quartile: 0.8, 0.7, 0.7, 0.5
- Bottom Income Quartile: 0.4, 0.2, 0.2, 0.1

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Population of 18-Year-Olds Will Contract Dramatically Starting in 2025

A Brief Respite before the Cliff

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{2017-2021} & : & -1\% \\
\text{2022-2025} & : & 8\% \\
\text{2026-2029} & : & -14\% \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{2021 Population} & : & 4.17 \text{ Million 18-Year-Olds} \\
\text{2017 Levels} & : & \uparrow \\
\text{2029 Population} & : & 3.86 \text{ Million 18-Year-Olds} \\
\text{645,000 fewer students} & : & \\
\end{align*}
\]

A Moral Hazard for Presidents

“I have to resist the temptation to stand pat on decent numbers. I’m due to retire just as the birth dearth hits, and it’d be easy to say ‘I’ll be gone, you’ll be gone’ to the board.”

Sources: Grawe, Nathan D., Demographics and the Demand for Higher Education, 2017; EAB analysis.
All Hands on Deck for Student Success: Public

Significant Financial Impact from Modest Retention Improvements

- **14,500** student public institution
- **$9,300** net revenue per student
- **3% persistence improvement** over 3 years span

Projected Net Revenue Above Baseline

- **$0.8M** Fall 2018
- **$2.2M** Fall 2019
- **$4.0M** Fall 2020
- **$5.2M** Fall 2021
- **$5.9M** Fall 2022
- **$6.3M** Fall 2023

3% total increase in overall persistence over 3-year span

Source: EAB interviews and analysis
An Organizational Dilemma

Who “Owns” Student Success On Your Campus?

"Student success needs to be someone’s job"
"I have academic credibility and run the first year"
"We own the curriculum and the purse strings"
"I understand the non-academic roots of attrition"
"I know how to manage to numbers, not just ideas"

Provost

Enrollment Manager
- Admissions
- Scholarships and Aid
- Stop-Out Recruitment

VP of Undergraduate Studies
- The First Year Experience
- Honors Programs

Academic Deans
- Departmental Programming
- Curricular Design

VP of Student Success
- Success data and dashboards
- Overseeing initiatives
- Advising policies and practices

VP of Student Affairs
- Orientation
- Student Involvement
- Counseling Interventions

The Student Success Office

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Questions for Discussion

In your experience and analysis, **where in the student lifecycle** (from onboarding to post-graduate success) **is UW Milwaukee struggling the most?** And where have you most improved?

**How have organizational and ownership structures created obstacles for coordination around student success?**
Faculty at the Center of Student Success

Research on Retention and Long-Term Outcomes Confirms Critical Role

Contributing to Persistence

“In accordance with Chickering and Gamson, several researchers documented the strong association of both formal and informal faculty-student contact to enhanced student learning. These interactions influenced the degree to which students became engaged with faculty and were frequently the best predictors of student persistence (Braxton, Sullivan, & Johnson, 1997; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Pascarella & Terenzini; Stage & Hossler, 2000).”

Paul Umbach and Matthew Wawrzynski

“Faculty Do Matter: The Role of College Faculty in Student Learning and Engagement”

Contributing to Well-Being

“[I]f graduates had a professor who cared about them as a person, made them excited about learning, and encouraged them to pursue their dreams, their odds of being engaged at work nearly doubled, as did their odds of thriving in their well-being ... Feeling supported and having deep learning experiences means everything when it comes to long-term outcomes for college graduates ... Yet few college graduates achieve the winning combination. Only 14% of graduates strongly agree that they were supported by professors who cared, made them excited about learning and encouraged their dreams.”

Great Jobs, Great Lives

The 2014 Gallup-Purdue Index Report

### Three Critical Questions

**Overcoming the Silo Problem and Garnering Campus-Wide Support**

1. **What should I expect of individual faculty?**
   
   "We talk about how everything we do supports students’ short- and long-term success, but that hasn’t changed anyone’s behavior when they get back to their desk.”

2. **What should I expect of units, committees, and faculty governance?**
   
   "We administrators have a lot of ideas about how to fix graduation rates, but shared governance means that most of the important decisions about the student experience happen outside of central administration.”

3. **How do I hardwire changes into institutional culture?**
   
   "It’s hard to keep one particular issue top of mind when all of our faculty and departments have competing priorities. We’ve started a lot of initiatives over the years, but few lasted beyond the pilot phase.”

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
## Six Roles for Faculty in Student Success

### Individual and Collective Responsibilities to Guide Institutional Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collective Decision-Making</strong></td>
<td>1. <strong>Remove Curricular Barriers to Completion</strong>&lt;br&gt;Considering student success in each stage of curricular decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. <strong>Redesign Academic Policies</strong>&lt;br&gt;Garnering support for student-facing rule changes that promote persistence to degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. <strong>Support Evolving Advising Models</strong>&lt;br&gt;Building buy-in for, confidence in, and collaboration with central and professional advising staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Contribution</strong></td>
<td>4. <strong>Enhance the Learning Experience</strong>&lt;br&gt;Evaluating and scaling high-impact learning innovations across courses and disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. <strong>Flag Signs of Student Risk</strong>&lt;br&gt;Equipping faculty with the right tools and techniques to maximize early warning systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. <strong>Mentor Rising-Risk Student Groups</strong>&lt;br&gt;Targeting faculty engagement efforts toward students lacking a strong connection to campus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Sustaining Momentum

Through Structured Accountability and Incentives

**Determining the right metrics, organizational structures, and incentives to encourage improvement among central administrators, deans, department chairs, and frontline faculty**
Strategically Deployed Faculty Members Accelerate Campus Consensus

**Practice #3: Task-Based Retention Teams**

**Matching Talent and Task**

**Campus Response Team**
- 20 faculty members
- Long-term planning skills
- Direct topics for analysis

**Data Management Team**
- 5 members, mostly staff
- Data systems experience
- Gather data on request

**Data Investigation Team**
- 5 faculty, 4 staff members
- Specialized in analysis (e.g. math/statistics faculty)

**Retention Committee**
- 37 faculty and staff members
- Approves/rejects proposals
- Shares members with subcommittees

Data Management Team: Compile and synthesize course DFW rate data

Data Investigation Team: Analyze data and create easy-to-read visualizations

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Faculty Influence Extends Beyond the Curriculum

Policy Decisions Have Direct and Indirect Effects on Student Progression

**Course Planning**
Departments plan sections one term at a time, limiting long-term planning

**Withdrawal Process**
Easy Yes/No prompt for course or institutional withdrawal leads to poor student decisions

**Registration Holds**
Small, unpaid bursar fees lead to hundreds of stop-outs after registration hold

**Enrollment Status**
Many students take light course loads without anticipating impact on time-to-degree

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**Progression-informed policy change**

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**Multi-term scheduling**
Annual course planning period enables full-year course registration for students
- 3% retention gain at Cleveland State University

**Withdrawal surveys**
Automated advising prompts walk students through consequences and campus resources
- 40% of students starting survey retained at Penn State

**Emergency Grants**
Students missing fee payments proactively counseled and assisted in exceptional cases
- 5-8% retention gain at Xavier University

**Redefine “Full Time”**
Students advised to take at least 30 credits per year unless they face serious conflicts
- Higher course loads led to higher GPAs and grad rates at University of Hawaii

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Practice #5: Academic Policy Audit

Supporting Reexamination on Your Campus

Policy Audit Toolkit to Accelerate Revision Efforts

1 Diagnostic checklist

2 Individual policy descriptions
   • Details each policy’s importance and relevance to student success

3 Policy calibration scale
   • Illustrates example policies on a scale of “too lenient” to “too strict”
   • Highlights best practice policy that balances competing priorities

4 Implementation Guidelines
   • Outlines related decisions and important obstacles to consider
   • Features institutional case studies, tools, and templates to save your team time in revising policies

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
A Clear Opportunity for Improvement

Every Institution Leaking Credits from Same Intro Courses

Course Completion Rates in Gateway Courses at Seven Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Completion Rate</th>
<th>Regional Comprehensive</th>
<th>High-Research Comprehensive</th>
<th>Very Large Research</th>
<th>Small, Teaching-Focused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFW</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Completion Rate</th>
<th>Calculus 1</th>
<th>General Biology</th>
<th>Chemistry 1</th>
<th>General Psychology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Unproductive Credit Rate</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Academic Performance Solutions data and analysis; EAB interviews and analysis.
Student Outcomes

Supporting Course Completion at Critical Points

Mapping Redesign Efforts to Course-Based Milestones

FIRST FOUR WEEKS

Ensure students get off to a strong start

- Early and frequent low-stakes assessment
- Intensive early start cohorts
- Growth mindset priming exercises
- Second-chance accelerated courses

MIDDLE EIGHT WEEKS

Prevent students from going off path

- Supplemental instruction
- Course behavior alerts
- Active learning
- Standardized assessment across course sections

FINAL FOUR WEEKS

Prevent unnecessary withdrawals

- Automated withdrawal advising

The Course Completion Playbook: Nine ways to improve DFW rates while maintaining rigor

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Flag Signs of Student Risk

Don’t Let Classroom Contact Go to Waste

Faculty-Student Interactions Aid Risk Identification and Engagement

Average first semester student hours spent...
- 1...In an advising office
- 225...In a classroom

Powerful predictive metrics right under our noses
- First-year GPA gap between students with and without attendance problems
  - Mississippi State University, 2013

In all cases analyzed, midterm and first-exam grades strongly predicted final grades... Midterm and final grades were also strongly correlated in a variety of other academic disciplines at the liberal arts college, including the humanities, the social sciences, and the fine arts.”

James Barron & Philip Jensen
Journal of College Science Teaching (2014)

In response, extensive deployment of early warning systems in higher ed
- 74% Public Universities
- 78% Private Universities
- 68% Community Colleges

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Best Practices for Early Alerts

Early Alert Processes Should Be Simple, Strategic, and Sensitive

Making it Simple

Single Referral
- Faculty given option to suggest specific response, but able to send all alerts to single office

Target High-Risk Courses and Students
- Focus compliance efforts at highest-impact populations

All-Inclusive
- Single system for logging academic, attendance, and behavioral alerts

Includes Assistants
- Train graduate and teaching assistants to ensure coverage of introductory course sections

Addressing Faculty Concerns

Student Privacy
- Faculty, advisors, RAs, and support staff able to submit alerts, but full access limited

Positive Messaging
- Students encouraged to take clear action steps, rather than simply alerted of risk

Follow-up
- Faculty informed of alert receipt, as well as progress and resolution of cases

Flexible Faculty Role
- Faculty able to decide whether and how to get involved with student issues
Instructor-Specific Time Window and Grade Scale Improve Adoption

Faculty asked to determine best early assessment point

- Week 3
- Week 6

Typical: Standard early grade deadline

Faculty asked to report whether students are “on track” or “off track”

Typical: Single grade threshold for institution

Faculty able to choose and prioritize resources sent to students

1. Office hours
2. Supplementary instruction
3. Tutoring center
4. Departmental resource

Typical: Early warning office dictates response

Source: WVU Early Alert Program; EAB interviews and analysis.
Promotion and compliance messaging should come from academic leaders

- Provost reminds faculty each term of relationship between early risk indicators and attrition
- Department chairs and deans contact faculty who fail to submit necessary alerts (not central support office or academic advisors)

Demonstrate increased utilization of support services and effect on grades, retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Tutoring</th>
<th>Tutoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passed</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passed</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More than Compliance at Stake

“If instructors and staff are not aware of how the systems work or why they are structured the way they are, and if the only messages they receive about it are regarding participation, a significant opportunity for campus-wide discussions about retention and student success has been missed.”

“Early Alert Project Action Team: Final Report”
Western Michigan University (2014)
The Department’s Piece of the Persistence Pie

Plenty of Variance, Even After Major Declaration

Average Time to Degree and Graduation Rate After 60 Credits, by Major Grouping

- **Foreign Language, Literature, Linguistics**
  - Graduation rate: 78.5%
  - Time to degree: 5.12 years
- **Theology**
  - Graduation rate: 85.9%
  - Time to degree: 4.15 years

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- Track **graduation rates once students reach 60 credits**
  (typical timing of required major declaration)
- Ask programs in **bottom quartile of grad rate** to provide recommendations and next steps to improve:
  - Align curriculum with transfer needs
  - Increase section capacity of a critical course
  - Improve learning outcomes in upper-division courses

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1. Analysis of EAB Student Success Collaborative data (n=105 institutions, 1053981 students).
2. UMaine uses 65 SCH, but 60 is typical for most institutions.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Addressing Time-to-Degree Concerns

Diving Deeper into Five Program-Driven Causes of Graduation Delays

**Why Are Students With 60+ Credits Taking Too Long to Graduate?**

1. Inconsistent faculty advising; students often take wrong courses
2. Overly complex major requirements; difficult to graduate in four years
3. **Students transferring from other program(s) suffer more delays**
4. Poor instruction in some courses resulting in DFWs and delays
5. Transfer articulation policies require many students to repeat credits

- Are these students from highly selective or impacted majors? Should we intervene earlier to path them into better-fit programs?
- Are these students taking different versions of critical introductory courses that aren’t aligned with our department’s expectations?
- Do we require too many specific prerequisites for upper-division courses in our program?

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Tracking Experiential and Active Learning

Ensuring Access to Best-Practice Pedagogy and High-Impact Experiences

1. **Measure Participation**
   Departmental dashboard (Strategic Accountability Matrix) measures percentage of students participating in experiential learning

2. **Validate Rigor**
   Mostly-faculty committee determines definitions and quality criteria for course-based experiential learning, service learning, and internships

3. **Expand Access**
   Focus on participation data and long-term outcomes by demographic group to determine gaps and ideas for program improvements

**Reporting on Active Learning Pedagogy**

- Dean of Arts & Sciences requires faculty to submit yearly annual reports on learning outcomes assessment (measures and results), active/collaborative learning strategies, actions taken and next steps
- Scores reports on quality for merit process to eliminate “phoning it in”
Beyond the Degree Plan

2015-2016 History Major Map

1st Year
- Take any of HIST 111, HIST 112, HIST 120, or HIST 125.
- Internship on campus (e.g., the Arts and Science International Internship in Europe, the Sociology Internship in Europe, or the Sociology Internship in South Africa).

2nd Year
- Complete the required courses.
- Internship on campus (e.g., the Arts and Science International Internship in Europe, the Sociology Internship in Europe, or the Sociology Internship in South Africa).

3rd or Final Year
- Complete the required courses.
- Internship on campus (e.g., the Arts and Science International Internship in Europe, the Sociology Internship in Europe, or the Sociology Internship in South Africa).

4th or Final Year
- Complete the required courses.
- Internship on campus (e.g., the Arts and Science International Internship in Europe, the Sociology Internship in Europe, or the Sociology Internship in South Africa).

Focus on experiential, service learning

Year-by-year path through curricular, co-curricular options

Third-year co-op recommended for all students

Career ideas in diverse fields

Map serves as gateway to online resources

Where could I go after graduation?
- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Archival science
- Business administration and management
- Campaign organization
- Communications
- Community development
- Counseling
- Ethics
- Events management & promotion
- Genealogical research
- Human resources
- Insurance
- Intelligence analysis
- International development
- International relations
- Journalism
- Law
- Library science
- Management consulting
- Marketing and marketing research
- Medical records & research
- Museum studies
- Museum management
- Policy analyst
- Public administration
- Publishing
- Social work
- Technical writing
- Tourism and travel
- Urban and regional planning

Visit careers.queensu.ca/majormap.html for the online version with links!
Avoiding Pitfalls in Incentive Design

Adjusted KPIs Allow for Fair and Effective Assessment

**Anticipate and Counteract Perverse Incentives**

- "We’ll fight over students if we take retention too seriously"
- Units not penalized when students are retained or graduate at the institution
- "Incentivizing greater retention means inflating grades"
- Create and monitor quality KPIs to prevent exploitation
- "We can’t be held accountable for early attrition and undecided students"
- Incentivize units to improve “native junior” graduation rate

**Evaluate Units and Individuals Based on Controllable Outcomes**

- "External factors often cause spikes in the data—we can’t control that"
- Use rolling 3-year averages to compensate for outlier trends
- "How can I move the dial on an institution-wide metric?"
- Measure and reward concrete activities that contribute to institutional success
- "I have different students and a different mission than other units"
- Allow for limited customization in metric design and weight

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Creating Departmental Accountability

Mission-Adjusted Performance Bonuses Push Units to Improve

**Student Success Metric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Example: Student Credit Hours lost to DFW</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Expected</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Student Credit Hours lost to DFW</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>Student Credit Hours lost to DFW</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategic Accountability Matrix**

Metric weight adjusted according to unit characteristics (Philosophy judged less on internship placements)

Negotiated by chair, dean, and provost to avoid unjustified alterations to formula

Department performance evaluated across 18 strategic priorities, including:

**High-Impact Practices**
1. Internships
2. Intercultural immersion
3. Freshmen degree plans
4. Advisee satisfaction

**Student Progression**
1. Credit hours lost to DFW
2. Midterm grade reports
3. 30 credits first year
4. 60 credits first two years

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Questions for Discussion

Which one or two ideas shared today would be most immediately impactful if developed locally or scaled campus-wide?

What are the biggest barriers to implementation?

What changes might be necessary to influence perceptions, behaviors, or incentives pertaining to these ideas?