

GETTING SMART ON



OUT OF CLASS
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Introduction

Tom Vander Ark at Getting Smart



BUILD A RELATIONSHIP STRATEGY TO SUPPORT STUDENTS IN AND OUT OF CLASS

When I saw the 23% on my first freshman chemistry exam, I was pretty sure I was going to flunk out of engineering school. I was in a developmental math course (it turns out I was more football-ready than college-ready) and I was academically floundering.

My chem prof told me I wasn't smart enough to be an engineer. My girlfriend (now wife) told me she didn't plan to hang out on glaciers, so I might want to rethink my geology major (with an arctic focus). I had no network of support, no purpose, no path forward—my college and career success hung in the balance.

The tables turned at a career fair when a (football playing) alumnus offered me a summer internship. It sounded great and turned out even better—I served as the owner representative on an environmental impact study of a West Virginia coal gasification plant. It was interesting, challenging and real responsibility.

I changed majors, connected with an advisor more interested in my success than in weeding me out, and had a clear path to graduation. While my classwork wasn't very relevant, my advisor expanded my network and my summer job opportunities got even better and more lucrative. I graduated with an A- average and lots of job offers—a far cry from that freshman failure. For me, success was about finding my purpose, developing a path and connecting with people who cared.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 01Introduction: Build a Relationship Strategy to Support Students In and Out of Class
- 044 Steps to Reorganize Schools Around Learning Relationships
- 0715 HigherEd Student Personas That Will Help You Redesign Learner Experience
- 10The One Chart You Will Need to Help HigherEd Learners Succeed
- 13Conclusion: Operationalizing Paradigm Shifts in HigherEd

I was lucky, but schools are facing a key challenge over the next two decades. How can we take luck out of the equation? We need to systematically ensure that every student does with intention what I did serendipitously—find THEIR purpose, identify THEIR path and develop THEIR network of people to support them so they can succeed in school and in life after graduation.

LESSONS FROM NEW SECONDARY SCHOOLS

School networks are the most important innovation in the last 20 years of U.S. education. These purpose-built networks supported the development of about 4,000 new secondary schools designed around strong sustained adult relationships, a compelling purpose and a clear pathway to college and careers.

Nearly all of these schools featured a structural innovation—an advisory system where academic progress could be monitored, guidance could be offered and support services could be facilitated. Reaching a consensus that these things matter is fairly trivial, but the most challenging part was (and remains) designing the organizations to institutionalize these services.

Though not for the faint of heart, the effort is worth it. These new schools and associated advocacy efforts helped boost the U.S. high school graduation rate from about 66% in 2000 to 82% at last count.

From informal to formal classrooms, from early education to professional development, from K-12 to HigherEd—learning is motivated and supported by relationships. Auckland researcher John Hattie identified that [teacher-student relationships](#) are one of the key factors in a student's academic success.

[America's Promise](#) incorporated relationships as the first of their five promises: "Caring adults are the centerpieces of children's development. They serve as guides, caretakers and advisors, who give positive and productive guidance throughout their development."

RELATIONSHIPS KEY TO COLLEGE COMPLETION RATES

The new worst case scenario is attending college, accumulating debt and then dropping out—and it's becoming an epidemic. As an example of low on-time graduation rates, only 10% of [San Jose State](#) students graduate in four years. [One reason](#) may be that there is only one advisor for every 1,848 students at that institution.

A Gallup study found that if college graduates had a professor who cared about them, made them excited about learning and encouraged them to follow their path (which Gallup called being "emotionally supported"), the odds of being engaged in their work more than doubled. However, only 14% of graduates recall having a professor who did all those things.

For the last seven years, Gunnar Counselman has been studying factors related to student success. He found that [research confirms](#) the importance of relationships and that students need to connect with people who care, develop a sense of purpose and find or create a path for achieving their goals.

Counselman founded [Fidelis Education](#) in 2011 to build a learner relationship management system that incorporates a 3 P framework—purpose, people and path—for institutions to analyze student success factors.

For me, success was about finding my purpose, developing a path and connecting with people who cared.

I was lucky, but schools are facing a key challenge over the next two decades. How can we take luck out of the equation?

Purpose. How many of your students really know what their degree plan means for them and how many don't know? Of those who claim to know, do they really or do they just have a good story? If you, the educator, don't know what they're going for and why it matters to them, how will you help them? Why should they trust that the hard work will pay off if it's not connected to any motivating purpose?

People. Which of your students have a strong personal support network of mentors from home, school or work? Which ones have positive peer relationships and a real sense of belonging at your institution? Which ones have professional guides and strong relationships with their faculty advisors? If you don't know, you have no hope of helping them fill in the gaps and reach higher.

Path. Which of your students feel that they're on track to reach their goals? Do they truly believe that if they graduate, their chances will be better? Do they see themselves as masters of their own destiny, shaping their path? How many do, how many don't and which are which?



Despite universal acknowledgement that these are important questions to ask, most schools don't have access to reliable insights into which students have the 3 Ps and which do not, because the reality is that most advisors and coaches are managing hundreds of students at a time.

Further, for many students, post-secondary education is the time when they are defining for themselves and then having to manage the 3 Ps of their life. They are navigating new challenges: learning how to manage their time, seeking out a new social circle and deciding who they want be and what they want to study—all while embarking on a new academic journey. [As college graduation dropout rates](#) continue to increase, it is important to focus on what we can do to provide students with all of the support that they need.

The reality in most institutions now is that relationships between students and the adults who can support them (in both their academic goals and 3 P goals) are assigned randomly, without intention, and they are hit-or-miss when it comes to quality.

Most higher education institutions have a customer relationship management system (CRM) that tracks prospects, a student information system (SIS) that tracks student enrollment data and a learning management system (LMS) that tracks content and assessments. Very few institutions have developed an intentional learning relationship management system (LRM) for cultivating relationships and tracking out-of-class student supports.

The LRM category (some refer to it as integrated planning and advising for student success, also called iPASS) [remains an emerging category](#) with the potential to solve critical problems in higher education like attrition and skills gaps. Through LRM, the Fidelis Education approach to out-of-class student support services offers a three-pronged plan with mentors, learning communities and apps to overcome learning gaps.

4 Steps to Reorganize Schools Around Learning Relationships

Gunnar Counselman, CEO at Fidelis Education

Tom Vander Ark issued a radical challenge to schools: to ensure that every single student has (1) an important purpose, (2) a clear pathway to prepare for that purpose and (3) a network of people to support them. He claims these three Ps—purpose, path and people—are what students need to succeed in life after school, and a school’s job is to equip students to do just that.

I agree with him 100%—schools SHOULD apply this simple framework, and doing so would make their students more successful. Teachers apply the three Ps every day both in and out of the classroom, but so often they do it without real support from the schools themselves.

A quick glance at most schools’ organizational structures, as they exist today, makes clear that they are designed to transfer knowledge to motivated and well-supported students, but not to motivate and provide support to students. To consistently do so demands that we redesign our institutions.

Any organizational redesign must be done slowly and with care—especially when we’re talking about schools. More than just about any other kind of organization, schools are about people and their relationships to one another, and those relationships take time to form and are stubbornly resistant to rapid change.

This article is intended to provide a simple roadmap for building organizations that can consistently imbue students with the motivational assets that they need to succeed in school and in life after school: a motivating PURPOSE; a clear PATH of goals, content and credentials; and a support network of PEOPLE uniquely qualified to help each student to pursue their purpose.

4 STEP TEMPLATE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL REDESIGN EFFORT

1. Inventory current practices relevant to the three Ps.
2. Align the leadership.
3. Design the student experience so that it ensures all students get access to the three Ps.
4. Train everyone, from faculty to advisors, to understand their roles as they pertain to the three Ps.

STEP 1. INVENTORY CURRENT PRACTICES



Interview. A great way to start this process is by interviewing top leadership and “field personnel” (i.e. the people who work directly with students). Your goal is twofold: first to make sure that people feel heard, and second to actually hear what’s working. As we pointed out above, people are 3P naturals. In almost every situation we’ve ever seen—even if the organization has no formal mentoring program, poor advising and no social-emotional learning effort—people are taking it upon themselves every day

to fill in the gaps. Even when they're not formalized in writing, people support and stand up within their communities. Where there's no paid tutoring, you'll find teachers after class doing whatever they can.

Survey. Find out what people are doing to support students and look at the trends. Both qualitative and quantitative data matter. A survey can also help provide a baseline to refer back to as you move forward to implement a learner relationship strategy.

Technology. Find out what technologies everyone is using, even the stuff that's not being paid for. In other words, if Google and Facebook are not on your list, your list isn't complete. Good people will find a way, even when their organizations make that difficult. The technology that they're using will paint a picture of how they're doing it.

STEP 2. ALIGN THE LEADERSHIP



Organizational priorities assessment. Schools, more than any other type of organization, are inherently intensely relational and human. Teachers and administrators deeply care about their students, about their jobs and about their institutions. It's unwise to propose changes without understanding what the organization thinks. Formally collecting data about what the various silos within the organization value and prioritize and then making that data transparent will go a long way towards two important goals: building trust and identifying where there is real disagreement vs just organizational friction. We've found organizations frequently agree on the big things, but let politics get in the way of action. An organizational priorities assessment can make that clear to everyone involved and provide focus.

Persona development. An important part of design thinking is developing user personas: in this case, student personas. Figuring out the types of students you serve and how many there are of each type provides a starting point for the design effort, and allows you to evaluate various student experience designs in light of who your students are.

The most important question on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is "If you knew then what you know now, how likely would you be to repeat your decision to attend XYZ university." This question gets to the heart of value proposition, but it's buried on page four of the NSSE. We suggest using a survey called the Net Outcomes Score (NOS) to better understand which student personas you perform best with and why. We'll explore the NOS further in a future post, but at its core it's like Bain & Company's famous Net Promoter Score, but focuses on what matters most in education success rather than what matters most in business referrals.

STEP 3. DESIGN THE STUDENT EXPERIENCES



Leaders workshop. Starting the student experience design with the most senior leaders is about more than optics and politics. We've found that VPs, deans and provosts are usually the best people to start with because they have both ground level insights from interacting with students, and senior level perspective about the organization. Similarly, the people who interact with students all day, every

day figure out how to make the organization work for those students—even when it doesn't. Middle managers are frequently too busy handling their bosses and their subordinates to develop real insights. Have the leaders lay down the major muscle groups of the student experience first, then go department to department adding details.

In-silo workshops. Senior leaders are the best place to start, but the reality of most organizations is that the senior people don't know all of the details, and you need the details. So take the design workshop on the road—not to sell it, but to improve it. Take it to admissions, advising, student affairs, career services, to academic departments and to alumni affairs. Take it to every part of the organization that doesn't normally communicate well with the other parts and use this process to begin breaking down the silos.

STEP 4. TRAIN EVERYONE



We'll let this final point stand on its own, saying only that in our experience, you can't over-invest in training, and when done right training is more like a football practice than it is like a lecture. Establish plays, run drills and build the confidence of the team. Keep in mind that everyone is part of the team—senior leadership, professors, advisors and even incoming students.

My company, Fidelis, built software to support this transformation, but we have learned that software is just a small part of the need—essential but not sufficient. Don't fall into the technology trap. Technology is necessary, but it can't lead. The educational philosophy itself must lead and then technology can help scale the ideas.

More immediate than the need for software is the requirement for change management consulting and support. We've found that, more often than not, organizations need to build both the will and skill necessary to establish a student lifecycle able to provide students with a motivating PURPOSE; a clear PATH of content, credentials and goals; and a strong support network of PEOPLE to help.

One of the hardest parts of the four steps above is figuring out the student personas. When taking a deeper look at student-centered design, it is clear that using student personas can help you develop a learning relationship management strategy and organization design.

15 HigherEd Student Personas That Will Help You Redesign Learner Experience

Gunnar Counselman, CEO at Fidelis Education

In [4 Steps to Reorganize Schools Around Learning Relationships](#), I shared a template for organizational redesign, which we at [Fidelis](#) use with HigherEd institutions that want to ensure that every student has “the three Ps”: an important purpose, a clear pathway for that purpose, and a network of people to support them.

To achieve high-impact redesign, colleges must also define their “student lifecycle,” which can incorporate the people students interact with, their defined purpose, and the paths available to them. From day one through graduation, colleges have the opportunity to personalize the learner experience by taking a smarter approach to student support services.

Student lifecycle redesign requires that institutions do the following:

- **EMPATHIZE** with students
- **DEFINE** a point of view about what students need school to help them do in their lives
- **IDEATE** ways to help students
- **PROTOTYPE** and build examples and solutions to show students
- **EXPERIMENT** and work with students to see what improves their experience

Most schools struggle to nail the very first step—empathy. Building empathy with students in education is actually a lot harder than it sounds. Seeing the world as students do and helping them to navigate from that perspective is a challenge, especially on traditional campuses with large student populations and institution-centric designs. While acknowledging that every student is different, it is also human tendency to project one’s own values onto others and fill in details with one’s own story rather than the student’s story.

The good news is that we’ve found a shortcut. Our work with dozens of institutions has led to the discovery of the 15 most common student “personas,” which shed light on what motivates different types of students. Having a deep understanding of each persona enables adults to get on the same page as students, and effectively build the type of relationships necessary to support a student’s path and purpose.

IDENTIFYING THE MOST COMMON STUDENT PERSONAS

The Most Common Student Personas

Box Checkers <p>Just need a degree to check a box for a job or promotion.</p>	2nd Chancers <p>College for them is another shot at success. This time, they're determined to do it right.</p>	Golden Ticket Chasers <p>College is success and success is college. The degree is the end.</p>
Academic Wanderers <p>They love school, but know what they want to do with it.</p>	Good Soldiers <p>Are living someone else's dream or just doing what's expected of them.</p>	The ROI Set <p>Return on investment is the most important thing.</p>
Socializers <p>They party all the time, party all the time, party all the ... you get it.</p>	The Great Escapers <p>School is a way out of something, not yet a way to something.</p>	Passionistas <p>Following their passion is the most important thing to them.</p>
Scholastic Tourists <p>They're from elsewhere, will go back elsewhere. They think of college like many think of a gap year.</p>	Prestige Hounds <p>They want the best. Period. Elite school, elite job.</p>	Savvy Operators <p>They know how the world works, make good decisions, balance their efforts.</p>
Aspiring Academics <p>They want to be a professor, researcher or academic.</p>	The Chairman <p>They're headed for the top. Hardworking, talented and ambitious.</p>	<p>Brought to you by Fidelis Education.</p>

USING STUDENT PERSONAS AS ENTRY POINTS TO REDESIGN

Without understanding and being able to empathize with students, you risk some students feeling as though they are just another number, or are being pushed through the system. The following examples illustrate how personas can be entry points for designing an optimal student lifecycle.

2nd Chancers

"2nd Chancers" are everyone's favorite adult student because college often means something very personal to them. They're frequently moms or dads going back to school after having raised a family, and their degrees are both the means to an end and an end in and of themselves. You'll often hear 2nd Chancers talk about "making their kids proud" or "doing it right this time." They take ownership of their early setbacks, but express a deep commitment to getting it right. One thing to remember is that the story of the 2nd Chancer is a famous and highly relatable one.

Box Checkers

“Box Checkers” are almost always working adults who have some kind of pay raise or promotion associated with degree completion. They aren’t motivated by the learning itself, but by the value of the “checked box.” They’ve often made it to the midpoint of their careers without a degree, but have hit a barrier to advancement. In some cases, they get an automatic pay increase by earning a degree. Box Checkers tend to be tough nuts for many educators because we believe that a degree is more than a task to complete. Efforts to get Box Checkers to engage in a more transformational experience can send them running for the hills if there’s not a strong relationship already in place.

Support Me Students

“Support Me Students” have always struggled, often for familial and environmental reasons outside of their own control. They’re frequently coming back to school after years or they’ve developed a sense of dependency during their first run through school. Support Me Students are challenging because they lack any and all proactivity and frequently want to be seen as 2nd Chancers. Frankly, you will want to bend them away from their natural “support me” tendencies over time—lest they graduate without having grown. The key difference between a Support Me Student and a 2nd Chancer is that 2nd Chancers have a sense of confidence and have clear goals whereas Support Me Students tend to exhibit more helplessness and despair. Unlike other personas who need help but don’t admit it, Support Me Students tend to know when they need assistance and gravitate to situations that have help available.

(Re)Designing Around Student Needs

The above persona descriptions make obvious that if you misdiagnose a Support Me Student and treat them like a Box Checker, they’re going to flounder for a lack of structure, guidance and love. Support Me Students don’t have confidence independently yet and if we want them to succeed, we have to connect with them, show them that we care and then set increasingly high expectations.

At the same time, treating a 2nd Chancer like a Box Checker will leave them feeling uninspired, like they squandered their second chance. 2nd Chancers want encouragement. They want to be seen succeeding and they crave connection to the educated world from which they’ve been separated. Give them that, and they’ll work themselves to the bone. But be careful with 2nd Chancers, as they often forget how much work school is and life can get in the way. Encouraging their families to be more self-sufficient often makes a difference.

And woe to the person who treats a Box Checker like a Support Me Student. They will feel smothered and bolt faster than it takes to say, “can I get a copy of my transcript, please?”

The idea here is not to build an exhaustive list of personas. That’s not possible, nor is it wise. Instead, use the framework to inform a process to identify personas in your school, build empathy with them and create more positive student lifecycles.

When you do that, you’ll be ready to continue the process of designing a student lifecycle that ensures every student is prepared to succeed in life with a PURPOSE that is both clear and important to them, a solid PATH of goals that leads toward that purpose, and a support network of PEOPLE appropriate to who they are and what they want to accomplish.

...every student is prepared to succeed in life with a PURPOSE that is both clear and important to them, a solid PATH of goals that leads toward that purpose, and a support network of PEOPLE appropriate to who they are and what they want to accomplish.

The One Chart You Will Need to Help HigherEd Learners Succeed

Gunnar Counselman, CEO at Fidelis Education

While consulting a few years ago I stumbled into a profound insight about personalized education and student value—one that neatly fits on a single chart and that can be the foundation of a college’s student success strategy. I arrived before my client for a meeting we had and I was killing time alone in her office thumbing through my Facebook feed when the door swung open and she shuffled in carrying a big binder that said “NSSE” on the cover. It was their “fresh off the press” [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) and my client, the provost, wanted to change our plan for the meeting and get my help finding actionable insights within the report.

The Marine Corps’ motto is officially *Semper Fidelis* (always faithful), but if you ask most Marines they’ll say that “*Semper Gumby*” is just as accurate (always flexible). So being an old Jar Head I said “aye aye ma’am” and we dug in.

Although I’d heard of the [NSSE](#), I’d never before seen the meticulously researched report. I quickly flipped through the report, looking at all the charts and trying desperately to tease some signal from the noise. We spent 10 minutes getting our bearings and chatting about things we found interesting or surprising, but there wasn’t anything actionable that I could identify. My former employer [Bain & Company](#) had taught me that every deck has to have a million dollar slide, the slide that people will talk about and repeat and show over and over again to create change. I couldn’t find the big “ah-ha” that would go on that slide.

Charts [from 2015 NSSE Report](#).

While I value the research and results, most of the charts in the document were really difficult for me to interpret. Finally, though, I found something to focus our attention on, from which we could draw real insight.

Buried deep in the report was an awesome question, paraphrased below.

“On a scale of 1–10, if you knew then what you know now, how likely would you be to repeat your decision to attend [the college]”

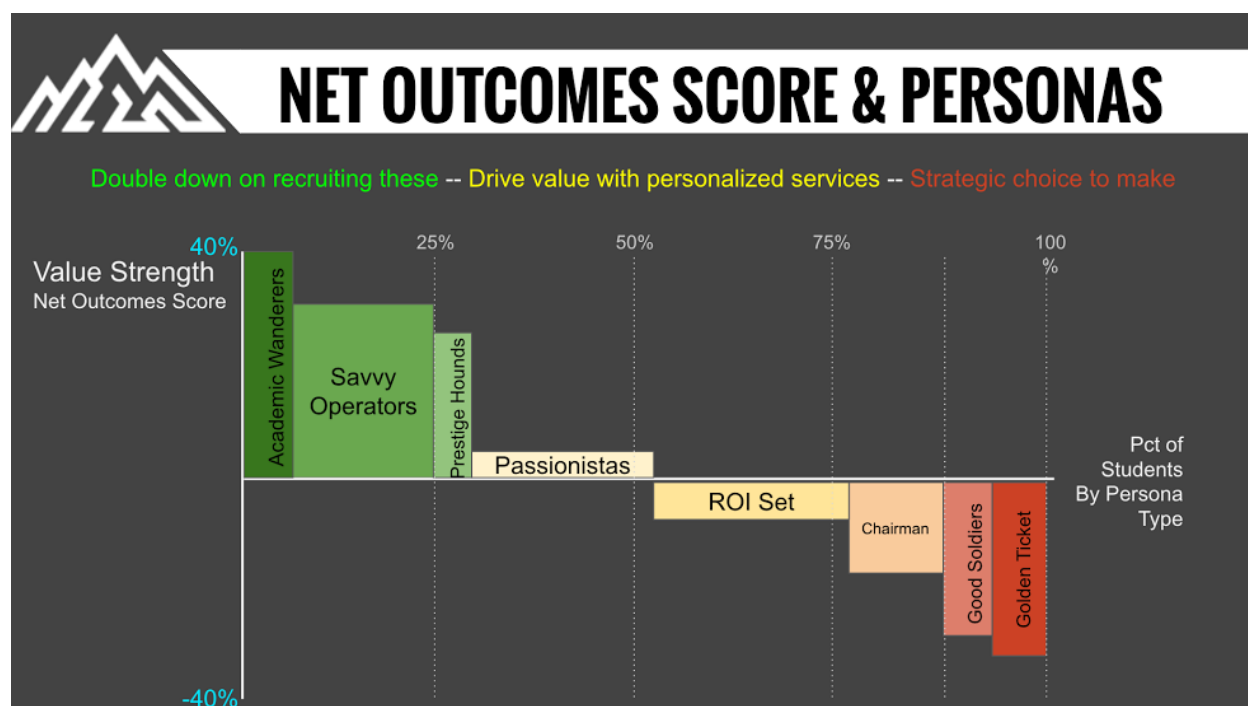
What’s so great about this question is that it gets directly to the heart of the value proposition for one of the biggest and most important investments of time and money that a person will ever make. Like the [Net Promoter Score](#) question that Bain & Company uses, which focuses on what matters most in business—growth through referrals—this question focuses on what matters most in a client service, that is, the client’s perception of value over time.

My client and I spent the better part of our two hour meeting talking about this one question and its meaning. I ran a few quick multivariate regression analyses on the spot with some handy data that convinced us that the question very likely correlates with the key outcome metrics we were focused on,

like graduation and placement rates. Eventually we decided to redo the survey and to combine it with the [Student Personas and Archetypes](#) work that we'd just completed. We made a couple of changes that turned out to be useful, including the following:

1. We sent the survey to students AND alumni because alumni have a better vantage point from which to evaluate value.
2. We divided the students' answers by persona rather than by demographics.
3. We added some follow up questions that focused on relationship strategies oriented on [The 3 Ps of Success](#).

The results were astonishingly simple and immediately illuminating. We'd found the million dollar slide, though the client refused to renegotiate our fee.



THE NET OUTCOMES SCORE EXPLAINED

The Y axis is the **Net Outcomes Score (NOS)** from a [survey](#) of current students and alumni. The survey instrument asks the question "On a scale of 1–10, how likely would you be to repeat your decision to attend [your institution]." We subtract the percent who answer 1–6 from the percent who answer 9 &10 and the difference is the Net Outcomes Score (NOS).

The X axis is the percent of students of each persona arranged from highest value to lowest value.

STRATEGY MAKING

So what does this chart mean for your out-of-class relationship strategy? It's tautological that an awesome value proposition drives your graduation rate, application-start rates and alumni giving rates. This chart gives you a simple three-step plan to affect all those metrics. Here's what it meant for my client.

1. **Double Down on Recruiting Core Students/Green**

The client needed to focus on recruiting more Academic Wanderers, Savvy Operators and Prestige Hounds. Aligning marketing messaging to attract their applications and making adjustments to the application process to make identification of these students easier were the two obvious tactics.

2. **Focus Out-of-Class Support for the Middle/Yellow**

The majority (62%) of my client's students were lukewarm on the value proposition, so they needed to invest in out-of-class, non curricular support services for Passionistas, the ROI Set and Chairmen to improve their sense of value. They couldn't quickly change the core experience due to faculty control over the classroom, and frankly they didn't want to because they felt that the core education was high quality. But they were able to invest in proactive coaching for these students, targeted mentoring, volunteering and intentional career exploration to help these groups find more value in their education.

3. **Slow Down Recruitment of Non-Core Students/Red**

The client had a hard decision to make. There were a number of personas that they were performing terribly with and that issue was going to be prohibitively expensive to fix. Ultimately, the right decision was probably to cut bait and spend less effort recruiting Golden Ticket Chasers and Good Soldiers. The key to making this strategy work both morally and strategically was to create programming in the short term that delivered as much value as possible while "teaching out" the students they already had.

Conclusion

Tammi Cooper of Fidelis Education

OPERATIONALIZING PARADIGM SHIFTS IN HIGHERED

At the beginning of this series, Tom Vander Ark [described his college experience](#) to illustrate the profound impact relationships can have on students. He described the iterative process of discovering his PURPOSE, finding a PATH to that purpose, and then building a network of PEOPLE to help him stay on track. I'm sure most readers can connect personally with his story—in fact, you've probably heard some variant of it at every commencement you've attended. But despite the ubiquity of our sentiment as educators regarding the importance of these relationships to learning, few colleges attempt to systematically harness these powerful relationships to support student success. Why is this the case?

Letting a thousand silos bloom. To explore why colleges struggled to systematize learning relationships, we need to consider the environment of a typical college, which is complex at best, and a collection of warring fiefdoms at worst. Colleges typically offer services in silos, focusing on specific aspects of a student's path to success such as academic advising, career services, developmental education, etc. Communication channels are also in silos, with student communication getting trapped in e-mails, text messages, face-to-face conversations and even social media accounts. The departmental structure and communication technology together prevent colleges from institutionalizing the kind of gestalt approach to student success that Tom Vander Ark needed and that all students can benefit from.

These silos are particularly troublesome when trying to serve the incredibly diverse students we see today. [Fidelis](#) argues that the best way to empathize with students is via thoughtful application of [student personas](#). And that the best way to measure our success with these students is not with the trailing indicators of value like retention—after all, when they've dropped out it's too late—but with a direct measure of value based on each student's willingness to repeat their decision via the [Net Outcomes Score](#).

Mission improbable. Change is always hard, but this concept of transformation of a relationship-driven organization can feel a bit like mission impossible. Most universities don't even seriously ask their students what their long term goals (their purpose) are beyond the application, much less help the student to construct a personalized pathway of courses, credentials, non-academic experiences and mentors. Just writing that sentence leaves me thinking "You've got to be kidding, right?" As an educator I can attest that it's work that we should be doing, but as a former associate provost at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, I also know how hard it is.

My friend and colleague at Fidelis, Gunnar Counselman, wrote, "[any organizational redesign must be done slowly and with care.](#)" However, maybe he has underestimated what we are proposing—he and I joked that perhaps his nickname should be "Captain Understatement."

I'd argue that this effort to align schools around people, path and purpose is nothing short of a paradigm shift. Consider these changes:

FROM	TO
Students access services on their initiative, often independently of one another	Students are proactively guided to services based on their goals
Students participate in courses to complete their degrees	Students assemble learning experiences, credentials and degrees that prepare them to achieve a compelling purpose
College lets students defer hard decisions about life	College provides students a laboratory in which to experiment and rapidly iterate to find their purpose more effectively
Students find mentors through luck and serendipity	Students are proactively introduced to potential mentors and organizations in which they can find mentors
Students get a job after they complete their degrees	Career planning is a natural extension of the integrated college experience

Even in my most recent position as VP of innovation at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, it was difficult for me to envision another way. After all, almost everyone in the world has been to school as it is now and shifting to a new paradigm is hard.

The theory is easy to agree with, but envisioning the effort to operationalize these ideas is incredibly challenging. Strangely enough, what's pushed me has been developing a deep familiarity with Learning Relationship Management—the software itself. Really understanding the capabilities of the Fidelis system has allowed me to begin to connect these ideas and consider the possibilities through each lens.

People (like an advisor or student success coach at your school) can systematically:

- Communicate with students and track all activity automatically
- Review a dashboard of data about a student (that's customizable)
- Access information about whether a student is registered for next semester, what their academic standing is, when you communicated with them last, the notes you took last time you met with them, how they interacted with a mentor or mentee, whether or not they completed a learning app on the financial aid process you recommended to them last week

What else fits here? What are you currently tracking that you gather from disparate systems from the time a student enrolls until they become alumni? What else might be useful to you?

The **Path** (the roadmap for a student to reach their purpose) facilitates:

- Following a student's degree progress and their coursework within the system
- Visual reminders of ALL goals (for example, running a marathon impacts a student's ability to fulfill their purpose—let's recognize that)
- Student access to custom learning apps sent just when they need it
- Sending a reusable tutorial accessible by all your students about resume writing, how to register for next semester, how to seek tutoring—on a personalized, per-student basis with a few clicks

Might there be other uses you can think of? Creating developmental content, for example? Consider all the things a student needs at different points in their educational experience and imagine having the ability to push those things out to them on-demand.

The **Purpose** is the guide:

- Your staff can help each student define their purpose. The purpose displays on the home page, right next to their path to get there (courses, learning apps and other goals), right next to the people helping them make it happen (coach, mentors and mentees)

The screenshot displays a user interface for a student dashboard. On the left, a profile for John Perko is shown with a coach (David Speno) and several mentors. The main area is divided into sections: 'Path' with goals like 'Career Strategic Mindset', 'Intro to Sustainable Energy', and 'MBTI Personality Test'; 'Purpose' with the statement 'I want to transition from production to design at Tesla.'; and a 'Calendar' section. Below these is a 'Stream' section titled 'LRM - K2 Uber Admins' which contains three charts: 'Flags / Wk', 'Avg Goal %', and 'Student Time on Platform / Wk'. To the right of these charts are 'Student Averages' for Mentors (5), Mentees (2), and Communities (4). At the bottom, a table lists student performance metrics.

STUDENT	DAYS SINCE LAST LOG/CHK/SESS	DAYS SINCE LAST MENTOR CHK	PERFORMANCE (GPA)	REG FOR NEXT COURSE	GOALS SET	GOAL %	AVG HRS/WK	PROACTIVE SCORE	MSG / NOTIFY	FLAGS
<input type="checkbox"/> Eric Perko Marketing	8 9 14	4	2.7	Y	2	80	20	80	1 1 1	1 1
<input type="checkbox"/> Andrea Kilgore Political Science	4 9 6	7	2.9	N	4	70	10	70	1 1 1	1 1
<input type="checkbox"/> Alexander McCallister Accounting	6 9 4	5	3.2	Y	1	96	8	96	1 1 1	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Derek Lowe Philosophy	14 9 11	2	3.9	Y	3	54	8	54	1 1 1	1

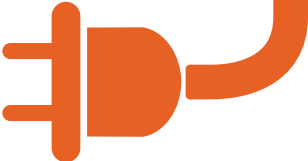
As we've described, there's organization redesign, but first and foremost a paradigm shift is required. A shift to caring about the students and their desired purposes, helping them determine the best paths to get there and connecting them to the people who will help them reach those goals. It's easy to see why the shift is important, but it has to be operationalized well to achieve its promise.

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