Beyond the Headlines: A Decision-Making Rubric for the Next Phase of Online Program Growth

Presented by:

PEARSON

Today's Speakers

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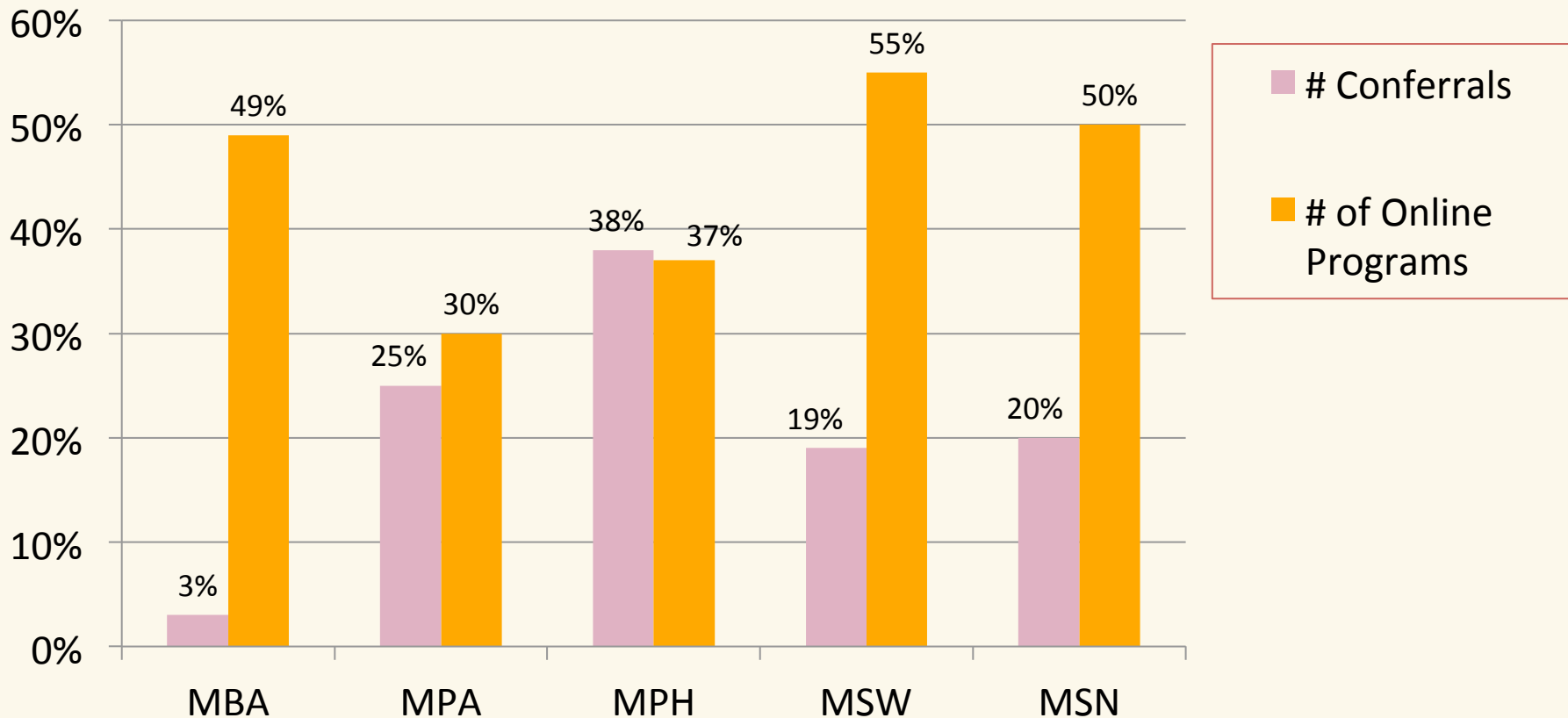Pearson Embanet

Key Market Forces to Consider

Market Overview

- Online enrollment slowing down

- Rapid growth in competition

- Slow growth v. strong growth programs

- Opportunity to improve student experience

- Must improve student outcomes

How to Effectively:

Plan for the Online Marketplace

Validate Program Expansion

Reduce Risk

Overview: Ohio University

- Founded in 1804

- Multi campus institution

- 38,857 students

- 1,113 full-time faculty.

Overview: Ohio University

Vision: Ohio University will be the nation's best transformative learning community where students realize their promise, faculty advance knowledge, staff achieve excellence, and alumni become global leaders.

eLearning OHIO: Established to provide educational access to students wherever they live.

Audience Poll

How do you determine what is the right online market for program expansion at your institution?

a) The decision is made within the College

b) The decision is made with the distance education unit

c) The decision is made within Admissions

d) The institution uses third party vendor partners for market research

e) We do not review the online marketplace for program expansion

So you want to take a program online….

- Where to start?

- Top down vs bottom up

- Who to involve in planning

- Market research process, needs analysis and sustainability reports

- Internal support or external vendor partners

Overview: University of Alabama at Birmingham

- Public, urban university

- Mission of access to education and healthcare with tuition and research-driven financial model

- Major Academic Medical Center

Overview: University of Alabama at Birmingham

- 19,000 students, 23,000 employees

- Decentralized operating structure

- 4 years ago established aggressive growth goals
  - 50% growth by 2020

Overview: Collat School of Business

- Located in a regional center of business

- Serving traditional and non-traditional students

- Highest levels of accreditation

- SACS & AACSB for School and Accounting programs

- 2,700 students, 65 FT faculty

Overview: Collat School of Business

- Environment of growth directive

- Prior to '09 had slow, but steady decreases of student count and credit hours for the previous 6 years

  - Fall '14 over Fall '11
    - 33% increase of student count
    - 20% of CH

  - Original goal 3,000 students by 2020 (50%)
    - Now 5,000 by 2020

  - Required MUCH strategic planning

Strategic Planning for Growth

- Classic problem for businesses…now for education

    - From shrinking traditional markets…to new markets

    - Reconsidering competitive landscape…competition with HUGE marketing outreach

    - From decreasing state funding…to market based programs

    - Increasing expectations (and needs) of students

- Importance of competitive advantage

- Risk dispersion in support growth

How to Influence Change Across the Institution to Prepare to Take Degrees Online

Have you considered?

- Why do you want to take your program online? Perceived market, revenue generation, service to students?

- Is this top down or bottom up? Is there faculty buy-in?

- State authorizations and other federal regulations.

Have you considered?

- Who needs to be on the planning team? Is there more than one team?

- What is the timeline to launch the program and can you meet it?

- Do you have the right support and services in place?

Planning Process for New Online Programs

- Step 1 – Idea Generation and Feasibility Review

- Step 2 – Program Proposal Development

- Step 3 – Approval processes

- Step 4 – Develop a Launch Plan

Influencing Change

- Importance of addressing program-level concerns

- Managing faculty buy-in and support

Challenges of Growing Academic Programs

- Increasing complexities of broader markets

- Outsourcing with a partner (not vendor)

- Investing in resources needed

- Obtaining central support for process type changes

Challenges of Growing Academic Programs

Establishing a shared vision

- Senior leadership

- Front line leadership

- All personnel

Understanding perspectives

- Role of ongoing communication

Role of Faculty and Shared Governance

- High quality academic programs cannot be delivered without faculty

- Understanding the realities of the need for growth

- Defining faculty deployment

Audience Poll

What do faculty see as the most pressing challenge facing delivering online programs?

a) Maintaining quality

b) Achieving learning objectives

c) Engaging students

d) Managing class sizes and workload

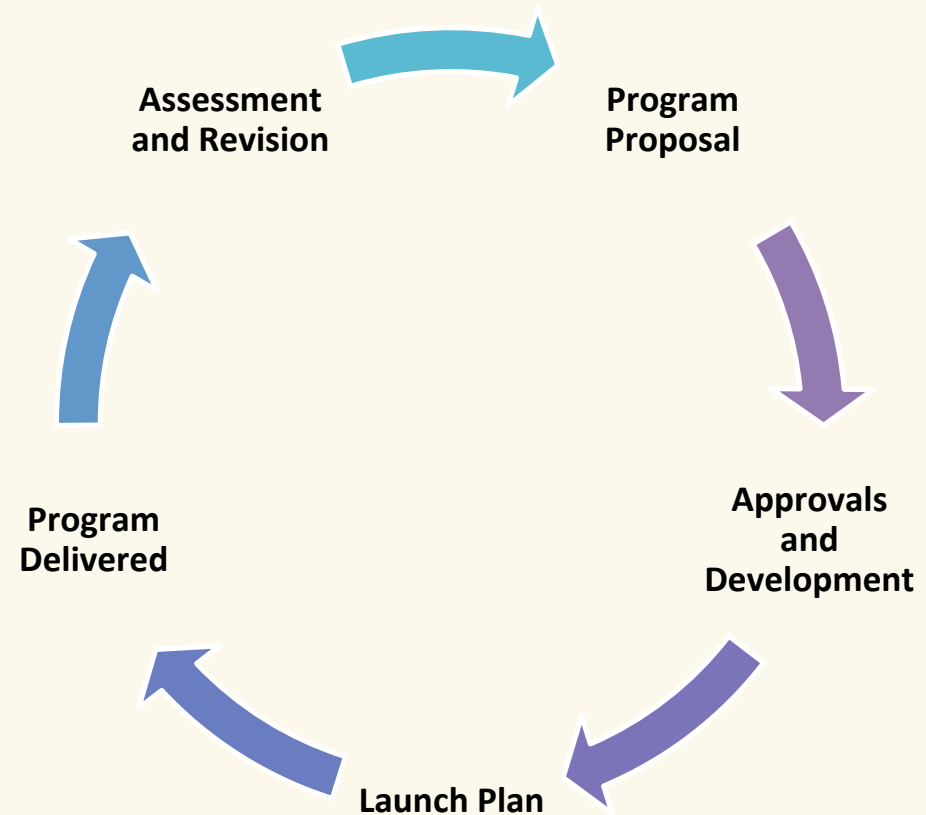e) Needing support

f) Teaching evaluations

A Few Faculty Wins

- Faculty recognition of benefits of online

  - Planning and working with an instructional designer

  - Extension of online to F2F teaching

  - Student engagement from a breadth of students

- Flexibility of schedule

- Reducing preps

Key Considerations When Evaluating Online Program Management Services

Continuous Quality Improvement is Essential

- Assessment of the online program is an **ongoing process**

- Keep in mind internal and external **constituents**

- Online **course quality** – Quality Matters

- Online **program quality** – OLC Quality Scorecard

Assessment and Revision

Program Proposal

Approvals and Development

Launch Plan

Program Delivered

Key Variable for Quality (Online) Programs

- Standards for courses

  - Program level -- Formerly Sloan C

  - Course level--Quality Matters

  - Interactivity

    - Rubric adapted from: Roblyer, M. D., & Wiencke, W. R. (2004). Exploring the Interaction Equation: Validating a Rubric to Assess and Encourage Interaction in Distance Courses. The American Journal of Distance Education 8,4: pp. 25-37.

Key Variable for Quality (Online) Programs

- Student engagement

  - Different….but the same

- Perceptions slowly changing

  - Rigor of programs

  - Workload for success

  - Commitment outside the courses

- Students' seeing **their** vision
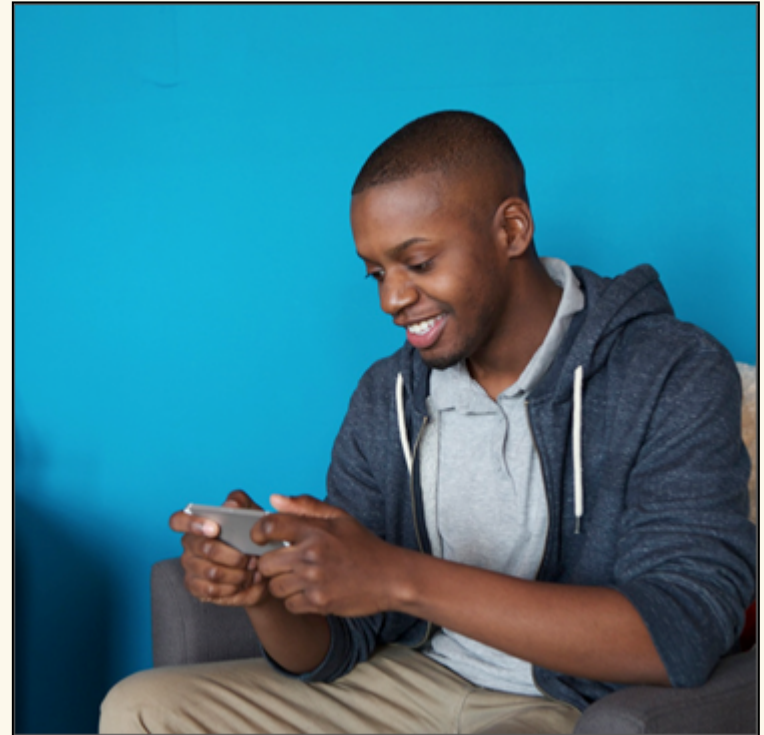
A Few Student Wins

- Performance and retention/persistence

- Student organizations

- Bootcamp events

- Advisory Boards' interests

- Social media

  - Facebook

  - LinkedIn

Challenges/Opportunities Remain

- Student and professional organizations

- Campus activities when not on campus

- Employer engagement

  - Internships

  - Mentors

  - Career Fairs

- Alumni Relationships

Keys to Success

	Higher Enrollments	**Lower Enrollments**	**Declining Enrollments**
Know the audience	*Online Adult Learner Focus with appropriate levels of investment*	*Online Adult Learner Focus with inadequate investment*	*On-ground program replicated online*
Size the opportunity			
Watch the competition			

Questions for Today's Speakers

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Closing Comments

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