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From Community College to Selective Research Institution: A Humanities Transfer Pathway

Partnerships & Collaboration, Innovative Initiatives

This presentation will provide a brief history of the Cleveland Humanities Collaborative (CHC) as well as current day successes and challenges. Attendees will leave this presentation with a blueprint for cultivating relationships at their own two- and four-year partner institutions, along with a guide of best practices for encouraging faculty engagement and buy-in. We will close with a discussion of case studies based on current CHC students.

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From Community College to Selective Research Institution: A Humanities Transfer Pathway

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Cleveland Humanities Collaborative

Overview of the Cleveland Humanities Collaborative (CHC)

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Our Institutions

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C)

- Open Access Institution
- Four campus locations in the county
- More than 55,000 credit and non-credit students annually
- 68% are enrolled part-time
- 95% are seeking an associate degree or taking courses to transfer to a four-year institution
- 14,525 transfer out (2016-2017)

Case Western Reserve University (CWRU)

- Private Research Institution
- Rated "Most Selective" by Barron's Profiles of American Colleges
- 5,262 Undergraduates
- Fall 2018 FY Enrollment: 1,387
- Fall 2018 Transfer Enrollment: 35 (2.52%)
- Fall 2018 2-Year Transfer Enrollment: 16 (1.15%)

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History

- CWRU was approached by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 2014 about establishing a transfer pathway program for students from a local 2-year partner (Tri-C) in the humanities.

- We established a Planning and Oversight Committee (POC) made up of faculty and staff stakeholders from both institutions.

- We took recommendations from the POC to develop plans for pathway advising and student recruitment.

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Keys to Cultivating Relationships between Institutions

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Building Trust

- Challenges
  - Too much, too soon, before we had a clear "game plan" or had built trust between stakeholders at an administrative level
  - Miscommunication, both at our own institutions and with each other
  - Perceived assumptions amongst faculty at both institutions

- Lessons Learned and Best Practices
  - Trust is paramount and tangential
  - Identify a core group of stakeholders that includes members from different levels at both institutions, and includes both "idea" people, and "logistics" people
    - Find neutral territory, and start having meetings there
    - Give people a chance to connect via a productive social environment
    - Spend time learning about institutional cultures

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Creating the Program

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- Challenges
  - We tackled a lot of things at once
  - Our POC committees developed great deliverables, but what to do with them?
  - CWRU was not transfer friendly – how could we ease that process?

- Lessons Learned and Best Practices
  - CHC Administrative Liaison and Program Manager met weekly
  - Identified key documents that needed to be created (such as our **AA Pathway sheet**)
  - Identified stakeholders at both institutions
  - Worked with CWRU Academic departments to update, correct, and expand our Tri-C transfer guide

Recruiting Students

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- Challenges
  - Tri-C serves over 55,000 students. How could we identify 15 who would want to participate in the CHC?
  - How could we make sure the students we recruited were good candidates for transfer to CWRU?
  - How do we build college-wide awareness of CHC at Tri-C?
  - Students (and faculty) were wary of considering CWRU as a viable option due to concerns about admissions, financial aid, and flexibility
  - Online coursework

- Best Practices
  - Establish regular process that identifies eligible students and conduct outreach (unicorn list)
  - Identify opportunities for awareness building
  - Utilize faculty mentors as resources as the campuses and assist with faculty referrals

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Engaging Faculty & Creating Buy-in

Faculty Buy-In

- Challenges
  - Tri-C and CWRU faculty did not have a history of much interaction
  - Difference in teaching loads and campus involvement expectations
  - Getting people to physically go to another campus

- Lessons Learned
  - Faculty were more engaged when students were involved
  - When faculty did get together, they really enjoyed their interactions

- Best Practices
  - Cast a wide net when seeking participants
  - Be clear about expectations or expected deliverables, and whether participants will be compensated in any way
  - Faculty Seminars and Faculty-led Humanities Programming

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Case Management

Support network for CHC Students at Tri-C

- CHC Student Advisor
  - Lead Counseling Faculty
  - Faculty Mentors
  - Transfer Specialists
  - College/Campus Departments
- Monthly Cohort Review Meetings (IPEDS Model)

Case Management

- As students enter the program at Tri-C, they:
  - Meet with the CHC Advisor to discuss program eligibility
  - Complete **CHC Program Application**
  - Sign the **CHC Program Agreement**
  - Meet with the CHC Counselor
  - Meet with Faculty Mentor

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Cohort Building

- Open House/Campus Day at CWRU
- CHC Fall Launch at Tri-C
- Monthly Meetups
- Jump on Admission Workshop
- Cohort Celebration
- Summer/August Bridge
- Concurrent Enrollment
- Concurrent Enrollment Workshop

Concurrent Enrollment Process

- Cross Registration
  - All students enrolled full-time (i.e., for 12 credits) at Tri-C may participate in "Cross-Registration" to take one additional course at CWRU while paying Tri-C tuition.

- Concurrent Enrollment
  - CHC Students who have completed ENG 1010 and have taken a minimum of 6 credits at Tri-C with a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or higher are eligible to participate in "Concurrent Enrollment," which allows students to register for at least 6 credits at Tri-C and then 6 credits at CWRU. Course at CWRU are at no cost to the student.

- Getting these programs set up through:
  - Articulation Agreement
  - Consortium Agreement

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Intrusive/Individualized Transfer Support

- Intrusive Academic Support and Graduation Planning

- Jump on Admission Workshop

- Transfer Specialist Support

- Application Reviews

- CHC Support Letters

- Application Tracking

- Internal Communications with CWRU Admissions

- Required Meetings with Financial Aid

Case Management

Support network for CHC Scholars at CWRU

- CHC Program Manager
  - Faculty Mentor
  - Program Director
  - Major Advisors
  - Student Success Navigators
  - Peer Mentor

Case Management

- Once a prospective student is accepted to CWRU, they:
    - Meet with the CHC Program Manager
    - Meet their Faculty Mentor
    - Participate in a 1-week Bridge Program
    - Enroll in a 1-credit transfer supplement course specifically for CHC Scholars
    - Continue meeting with the Program Manager regularly to discuss academic progress, the path to graduation, life-school balance, etc.

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Case Study Exercise

Questions to Consider

- What challenges would your institution have in supporting this student?

- What resources do you wish you had at your institution to support this student?

Persona 1:
Jack

Jack is 20, and is grappling with housing and food insecurity. He is using public transportation to travel to the different campuses where he is taking classes, which can take hours. His most recent housing arrangement fell through, and he is moving into a shelter for his final semester at his community college, while he applies to four-year schools.
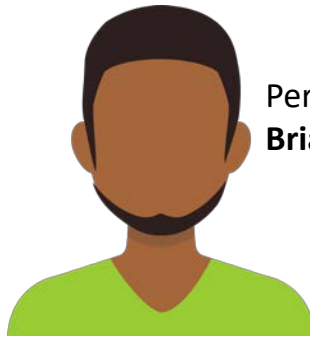
Persona 2:
Brian

Brian is in his 40s, and previously worked in the music industry. He is very independent, has a life outside of school, and is confident that he can navigate his college career alone. He isn't responsive to his professors or advisor, even after ending up on academic probation. Last semester, he took classes for which he wasn't prepared, and failed them. He is now at risk for dismissal.

Persona 3:
Sharon

Sharon is a single mom in her 30s. She attended a 4-year institution right out of high school, but had to stop out due to finances. After 10 years, she enrolled at a community college with plans to transfer to a selective 4-year school. When Sharon doesn't have childcare she brings her child with her to school. She is excelling academically, but feels like an outsider at school.

Big Impact Practices

Big Impact Practices

- Concurrent Enrollment
- Intrusive Admission Support
- Intentional Cohort Building
- Core Team Relationships (trust and patience)

CHC is a high touch program not only terms of student support but in terms of nurturing the cross institutional collaboration.

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Questions?

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