

(When) Are Students Customers?

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Overview

- Background to improvement on the campus
- University System of Georgia initiatives
- Southern Polytechnic initiatives
- Results So Far
- Brainstorming Student Roles in Campus Improvement
- Optional Background
- Q&A
- Conclusion and Recommendation

Background- Improvement on the campus

- Questions:
 - Good: Why improve?
 - Better: Why would we not improve?
 - Best: How can we learn to do better as we go?
- Frameworks and Approaches:
 - Baldrige
 - SACS QEP
 - USG initiatives
 - Lean-Six Sigma

The need for continuous improvement at universities

Outside Pressures

- Pew study: Students-most inter-connected
- Flat world
- Accreditation criteria
- Universally available content

Inside Pressures

- Cultural transmissions-
 - More gears
 - Complex meshing
- Decreasing resources
- Increasing demands
- Widening gap between today's business & yesterday's academics

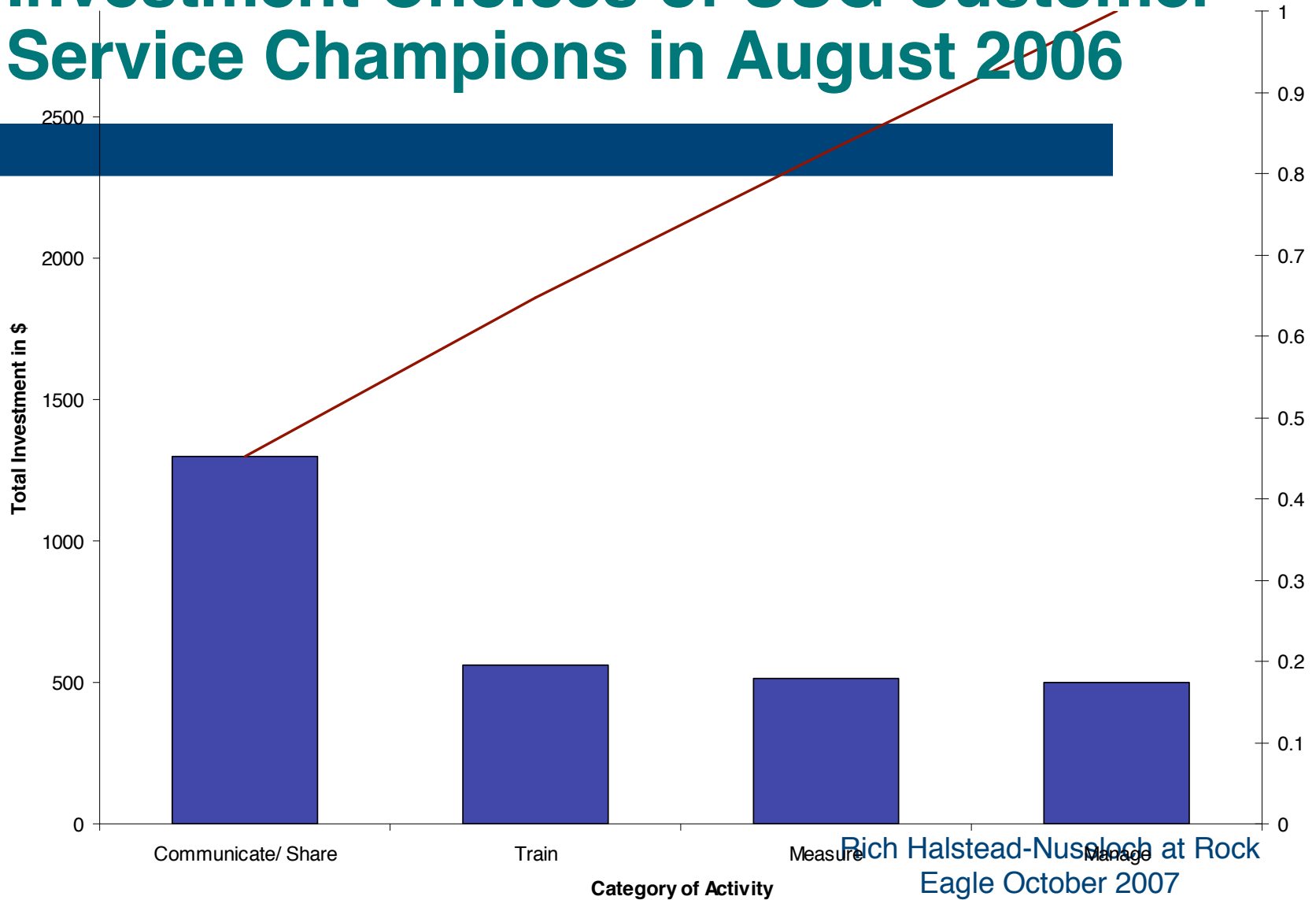
Top three needs for continuous improvement at the university

- Students demand change in that “they use technology and the internet to connect with people in new and distinctive ways.” – Pew: <http://people-press.org/reports/pdf/300.pdf>
- Formal improvement programs are the backbone of modern accreditation criteria – SACS
- We need to become better – USG
 - Faster
 - Friendlier
 - Easier

University System of Georgia Initiatives

- Governor's Teaching Fellows
- Customer Service Initiative
 - Part of Governor Perdue's initiative
 - Faster, Friendlier, Easier service to Georgia
 - Each campus has a champion
 - Initial focus on back office functions, e.g., housing
- Lean-Six Sigma program being established

Investment Choices of USG Customer Service Champions in August 2006



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Southern Polytechnic Initiatives

- SACS Quality Enhancement Plan- QEP
- Customer Service Initiative
 - Led by President Lisa Rossbacher and VP Ron Koger (champion)
 - Currently establishing steering committee
 - I currently serve as master black belt
 - Reviewing about 20 project opportunities
 - Six Sigma Green Belt training

Research: Student as Customer?

- Two groups brainstormed and evaluated student roles
 - University Professors
 - Students
- Role definitions were seeded
- Role definitions were evaluated
 - Best Match; Strong Match and Match
 - Mismatch; Strong Mismatch

Student as Customer? (cont.)

- Advisee
- Apprentice
- Citizen
- Colleague
- Customer
- Employee
- Learner
- Product
- Sojourner
- Stakeholder

Student as Customer?

Faculty members

1. Learner (#2)
2. Contributor (added)
3. Team member (added)
4. Tech dependent (added)
5. Teacher (added)
6. Advisee (#25)

Students

1. Customer (* #20)
2. Learner (* #1)
3. Researcher (added)
4. Achiever (added)
5. Hard worker (added)
6. Audience (added)

**What about our group today?
Is the student also a customer?**



Our Work Together Today

- Goal- Brainstorm and discuss student roles in your classroom
- Reason-
 - Controversial
 - Primary importance
- Use-
 - USG and SPSU Continuous Improvement
 - Research and Development

Our Work Together Today (cont.)

- Self-identify
- Pick a stage of student progress for focus
- Review roles
- Brainstorm additional roles
- Rate the degree of match
- Review our results

Step 1: Self Identify- Primary Job Use a Show of Hands

- Student
- Faculty
- Administration
- IT Staff
- Other Staff
- Other

Step 2- Pick a Stage of Student Progress for Focus

- Pre-Admission/Registration- Admission to your university and then registration in your class
- Lower Division Undergraduate / Associates
- Upper Division Undergraduate
- Graduate / Masters / Doctorate

Pre-Admission/Registration- Registration in your class

- I find considering students as customers lamentable because it “fundamentally debases the relationship between student and teacher”
- “I agree that in one sense students are customers, for if no students came to the University, there would be no need for faculty”
 - Virginia Gray of the University of Minnesota
<http://www1.umn.edu/urelate/kiosk/11.95text/fcc.html>

Lower Division Undergraduate / Associates – SACS Interim 2007 3.5.1

The institution identifies college-level competencies within the general education core and provides evidence that graduates have attained those competencies. (**College-level competencies**)

Rich's Choice- Upper Division Undergraduate SACS Int. 2007 3.5.3

The institution defines and publishes requirements for its undergraduate programs, including its general education components. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. (**Undergraduate program requirements**)

Graduate / Masters / Doctorate – SACS Interim 2007 3.6.1 and 3.6.2

- The institution's post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, master's and doctoral degree programs, are progressively more advanced in academic content than its undergraduate programs. **(Post-baccalaureate program rigor)**
- The institution structures its graduate curricula (1) to include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (2) to ensure ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences. **(Graduate curriculum)**

Step 3- Review Roles for Students- Top 10 Definitions from Google define:

Advisee	someone who receives advice from you as a teacher
Apprentice	be or work as an apprentice in your class: 'She apprenticed with you, the great master teacher'
Citizen	a person in your class who has full rights, privileges and protection of living in the United States
Colleague	a person in your class who is an incipient member of your profession
Customer	someone who pays for goods or services that you deliver in class
Employee	a person who performs work for you as a teacher under a verbal or written understanding where you the teacher give direction to your class as to what tasks are done
Learner	someone who learns from you, a teacher or takes up knowledge or beliefs in your class
Product	a consequence of someone's efforts or of a particular set of circumstances in your class
Sojourner	a person who stays in a place, your class, for a relatively brief period of time
Stakeholder	an individual with an interest in the success of your class in delivering intended results and maintaining the viability of teaching and learning in your class
Student	a learner who is enrolled in your class and educational institution

Step 4- Brainstorm: Additional students roles from your perspective

Step 5- Rate How Well Do These Roles Match Your Perspective?

- **Best Match** - Pick the single role definition that you prefer for your perspective of your students
- **Strong Match** - A role definition that very closely matches your perspective of students that you teach
- **Match** - A role definition that somewhat matches your perspective of the students that you teach
- **Mismatch** - A role definition that is not descriptive of your perspective of the students that you teach
- **Strong Mismatch** - A role definition that is contrary to your perspective of the students that you teach

Results Review

Q&A



My Hypotheses

- Student role is multi-dimensional, where no single role provides a complete description or categorization
- Student role changes
 - Through the term cycle
 - Matures as students progress through their degree and degrees

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

- Campus Improvement is here to stay
- Professionals might
 - Lead
 - Follow
 - Get out of the way
 - Get trampled
- Students fill multiple roles today, including being customers

Recommendation

- Find out what is going on in your campus
 - SACS QEP
 - USG/Campus Programs
- Lead
 - In your own area
 - As a professional
- Publish and share your success



THANK YOU!!!

Where to go for more information

- Baldrige- http://www.quality.nist.gov/Education_Criteria.htm
- SACS Quality Enhancement Plan
<http://www.sacscoc.org/>
- University System of Georgia
<http://customerfocus.usg.edu/>
- Lean-Six Sigma
 - www.isixsigma.com
 - *What is Lean Six Sigma?* Mike George, Dave Rowlands and Bill Kastle, New York:McGraw-Hill, 2004.