

Managing the transition to higher education



Managing the transition to Higher Education Shaping the context of managing the transition to higher education covers crucial issues such as funding of education, states having more local control of educational programs, and the call for greater accountability of schools. More recently, the states provide the largest source of operating budgets for educational institutions in the form of scholarships and subsidies. (Losco and Brian, 2000)

Some schools have already adopted a co-admission agreement which is designed to provide the most efficient route to a college degree. It helps ensure that students take only the required courses and this scheme also decreases the level of student confusion about which courses are requisite ones in earning a degree. The secondary goal is to increase the degree completion rate of students in urban areas. Students are helped to be more efficient in their college experience so they can complete their degree as quickly as possible to assume family and job obligations. Some schools have instituted joint marketing procedures to entice high school students who are deeply interested in an undergraduate degree. (Rivard, 2001)

Advanced technologies encompassing the internet and online databases have been utilized to promote teaching and learning on campus. The very nature of technology requires colleges and universities to make rapid decisions with flexibility. Students are more adept with the internet use for their academic and social relationships. In general, universities have already made substantial commitments to ubiquitous computing facilities which allow the development of a common database for institutional use and sharing with other universities. The technologically advanced institutions can share the lessons learned, and solutions with universities that are still establishing their academic computing program. (Rivard, 2000) The quality

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assessment of teaching and learning effectiveness is directly linked to state funding. School regulators measure the various dimensions of teaching quality in order to judge a school's academic quality. First, universities follow strict rules when they receive state grants, which will involve detailed auditing and performance measurement. Second, universities will have to bid against each other to participate in specific initiatives for which funds will be earmarked and accounted separately. All these policies are in keeping with the demand for quality standards for higher education. (Alexander, 2000)

As part of the changing nature of the close relationship between government and higher education, the government is putting an increasing burden on higher education to play a key role in revamping the prevailing low-wage economic structures into high-performance, technology-based economies. Governments depend heavily on the different specializations of higher education to upgrade learning skills and improve workers' ability to develop and use technology with the goal of doubling productivity and strengthening the country's standard of living. (Levine, 1997) Higher education is an indispensable element in this economic and social transformation process. Higher education has become an essential component of national economic investment strategy. In a global economic environment, there is a need for the state to increase the level of investment in higher education so as to continually provide highly educated and skilled workforce for business and industry. Without this investment and reliance on education, the competitive status of a nation will definitely deteriorate. (Levine, 1997)

The Coventry University Transition to Higher Education Survey consisted of a total of 276 respondents. About 60% of the respondents are female and only

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40% are male. Approximately 90% of the respondents are 25 years old and below. Only 10% are 26 years old and above. Online enrollment is the preferred mode for the respondents with about 65% having enrolled online. Only 33% of the respondents followed the paper trail. The respondents stated that they did not have any difficulty during their first day at Coventry University. Regarding University owned accommodation, 75% of the respondents emphasized location as the main reason for their choice. Another 50% of the respondents had placed a premium on campus security. Another 45% of the respondent had stated that they were comfortable with the university accommodation. Then the third important factor for the students with respect to accommodation was the value for money (45%). The respondents gave a high rating to the information about the university (85%), the course info (40%), the first impressions (60%), the information beforehand (50%) the campus directions (79%), the free time provided to them (77%) and the Library Tour (50%). Moreover, the respondents gave a high rating to the University and campus facilities (85%), the financial advice and support provided to them (71%), the library facilities (85%), the friendliness of lecturers (70%) social events on campus (30%), students union (50%) and the quality of teaching (61%). The main problems the respondents had encountered during their first three weeks were financial constraints (70%), illness (40%), punctuality (40%), provision for cooking (45%), fire drills (30%) and the suitability of their rooms (55%).

Approximately 75% of the students have joined societies. Finally, approximately 99% of the students indicated that they had made the right decision to study at Coventry University. Only 3 respondents stated otherwise.

Students are able to efficiently manage the transition to higher education. In the process of adjusting to a new school environment they have to deal with financial constraints, personal preferences and the quality of university facilities and the quality of teaching and research. Schools like Coventry University have to deal with the more crucial issues covering state funding of education, states having more local control of educational programs, and the demand for greater accountability of schools.

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