

Overcoming Barriers to Radical Innovation

January 5, 2024



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2024 Presidents Institute

Independent Higher Education in a Democratic Society

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Presenters

John Comerford, President, Otterbein University

William Groves, Chancellor, Antioch University

Sue Stuebner, President, Colby Sawyer College

Edward Wingenbach, President, Hampshire College

Chair

James Lentini, President, Molloy University



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Tuition Reset

Colby-Sawyer College

President's Institute

Council of Independent Colleges

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Colby-Sawyer College



Colby-Sawyer College

- Founded in 1837
 - All-women's college until 1989
- Located in Dartmouth-Lake Sunapee region of NH
- 40% of students are first-generation students
- 40% of students enroll from NH, 80% from New England
- Largest majors include nursing, business, biology, psychology, and exercise science
- 1,000 total students:
 - 700 traditional undergraduates
 - 300 graduate and professional learners

Radical Change: Why a Tuition Reset?

What is a Tuition Reset?

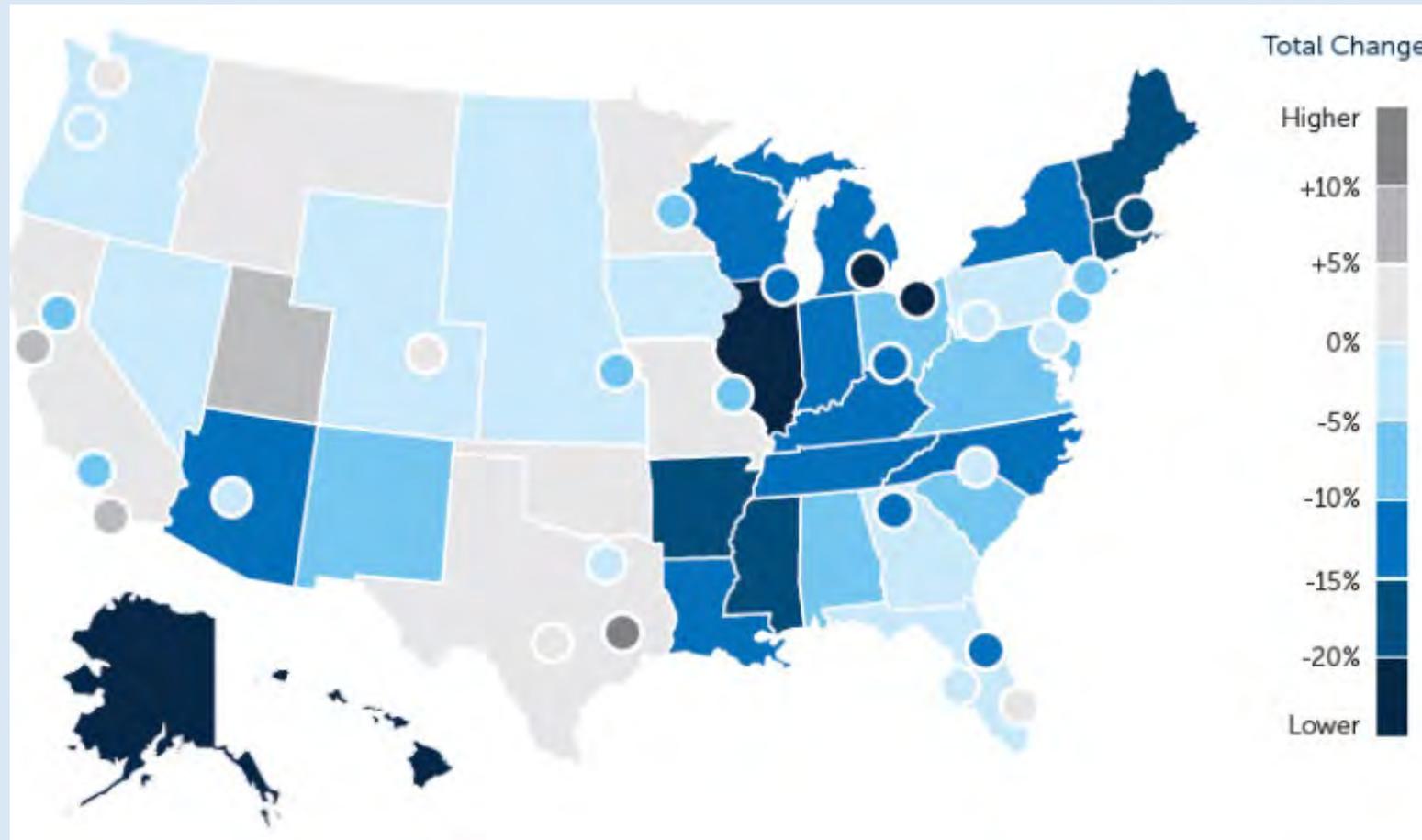
- Lowering overall sticker price, but net cost to students remains the same for vast majority of students
- This is possible because the actual net tuition received after discount is substantially lower than previous and new tuition sticker price
- Between 2010 and the start of the 2023-24 academic year, approximately 64 institutions have pursued a tuition reset (*Source: Lucie Lapovsky*)

Reasons for a Reset (Colby-Sawyer met all of the criteria)

Inquiry and applicant pools have been declining	
Enrollment has been declining	
The college is under capacity	
The tuition discount rate is above 50%	
Almost all students receive institutional aid	
Many competitors have lower published prices	

Source: Lucie Lapovsky article, “Do Price Resets Work?”

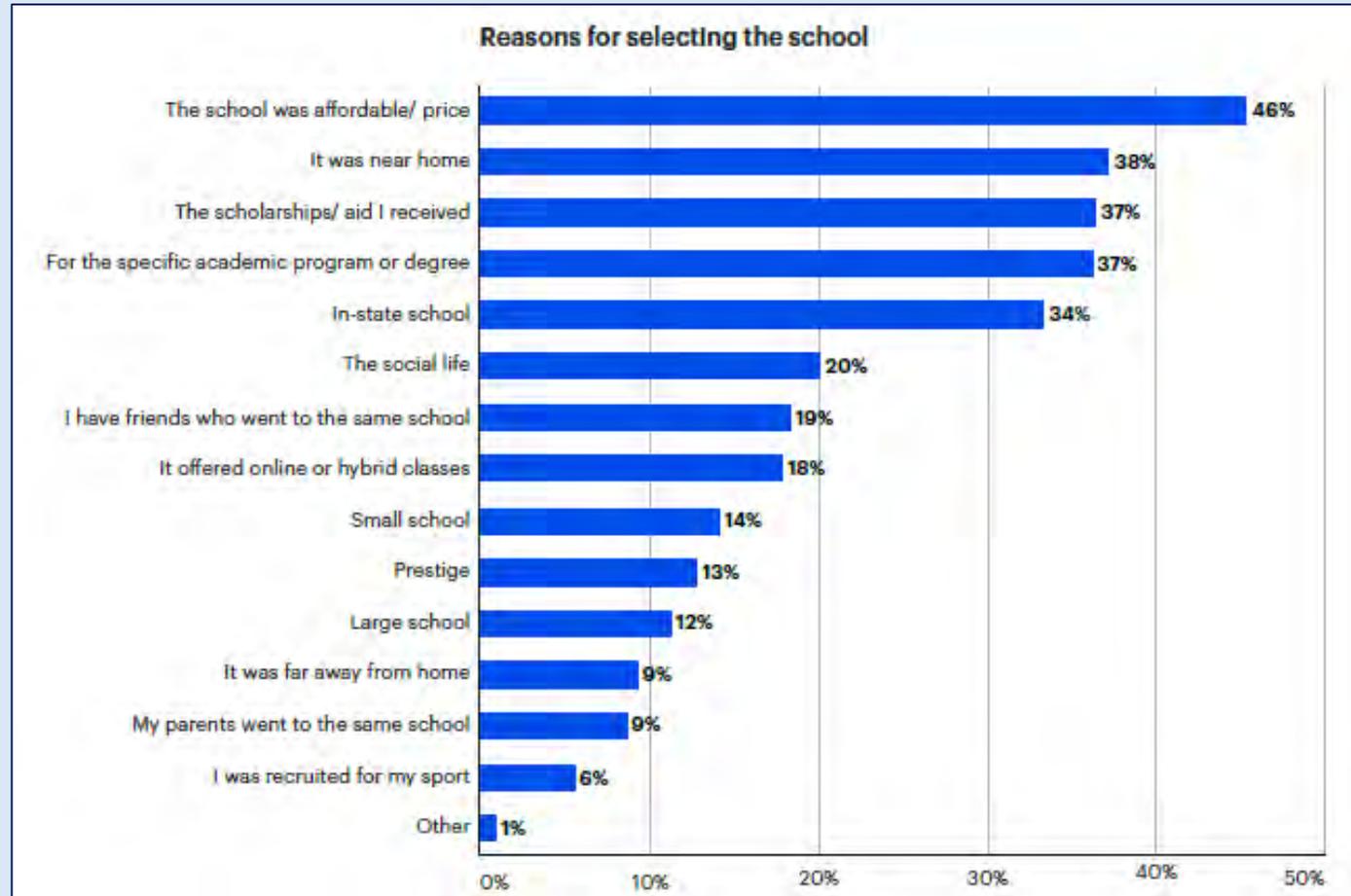
Change in HS graduates: 2019-2029



Sticker Price and College Choice



Source: "How America Pays for College"
(Sallie Mae, 2023)



Strategic Questions

- In a period of significant decline of traditional high school students in New England, how many families are we not in conversation with due to our high price?
- How can we increase – or at a minimum stabilize – our traditional undergraduate enrollment and net tuition revenue despite the stark demographic projections?
- Will a tuition reset work in New England where many equate high price with high value and consumers expect significant merit scholarships?

Process and Timeline for Reset

Timeline

- **January 2022: Introduced concept to Board of Trustees at winter meeting**
- Hired tuition reset consultant immediately thereafter
- **February 2022: Formed Tuition Reset Group**
- May 2022: Consultant presented to full board at spring meeting
- **June 2022: Senior officers met with peers from institution that had gone through a reset**
- **July 2022: Board approved tuition reset at summer retreat**
- **Late August 2022: Held all faculty and staff meeting to inform internal community**
- **September 2022: Launched reset publicly to prospective and current students**
- **November 2022: Launched institutional marketing campaign**

Reset Working Group

- Trustees
 - Chair of the Board
 - Vice Chair
 - Chair, Finance and Investment Committee
 - 3 additional trustees
- Staff
 - President
 - Vice President for Admission and Financial Aid
 - Vice President for Finance and Administration
 - Vice President for Marketing and Communications
 - Dean, School of Arts and Sciences
 - Assistant Athletic Director and Head Baseball Coach

Goals of Tuition Reset

- Increase transparency and accessibility
 - Remove confusion around high-price/high discount model
- Increase number of families willing to engage with Colby
- Grow applications and ideally change the composition of application pool
- Increase enrollment by modest amount (anticipated in Year Two (FA2024) and beyond)
- Increase net revenue (total and per student)



91%

Percent of tuition reset schools that saw increase in applications

Tuition Reset “Sticker” Price

Approach	Tuition	Room & Board	Other Expenses	Total
Keep price the same	\$46,364	\$16,368	\$2,000	\$64,732
Tuition Reset Approach	\$17,500 -62.3%	\$16,859 3%	\$2,000 0%	\$36,359 -43.8%

- Reviewed the approach of schools that have pursued a reset
- New price more reflective of what our students actually pay
- New price close to in-state tuition of public competitors

Lessons Learned

Positive Outcomes

- We were the first to announce in our region a reset (another institution followed 3 weeks later)
- Faculty, staff, alumni, prospective parents all very positive about change
- Very few parents of current students who were upset about change
- Positive media coverage and external interest
- Engaging with high schools that have not sent students to CSC before

Aggressive Institutional Marketing

Previous attachment

100%

possible for you.

Colby-Sawyer.edu/100



Colby·Sawyer
College



Challenges

- We moved very quickly to implement this change
 - Trustees did not want to wait until Fall 2024
 - Taxed a small number of staff to a high degree
- Talking to an institution that had gone through reset was key for senior officer buy-in
 - Wish we had done this earlier
- Communication with current students about reset likely too dense and created confusion
 - Held open forum for current students
- Two month delay between reset announcement and institutional marketing campaign

Unknowns

- Application Growth
 - Fall 2023 cycle: Applications Flat
 - Fall 2024 cycle: 18% increase in applications to date
- New England region and focus on merit awards
 - Crucial that admissions, financial aid, and coaches all focus on net cost to families
 - Critical to articulate value of degree, not just lower price
- Hard to pinpoint exact impact
 - Would applications continued to decline if we had not pursued reset?
 - What strategy has most impact – tuition reset, new VP initiatives, new facilities constructed on campus, etc.

Take a Pause



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Hampshire College

Overcoming Barriers to Radical Innovation

Ed Wingenbach
President



The Need:

Undergraduate liberal arts education in America needs a revolution.

The challenges confronting our society and economy transform rapidly, while colleges remain mired in outmoded practices. Instead of engaging these urgent challenges, higher education offers traditionalist majors, asserting that they provide the skills demanded by a world unimagined by the past.

Tweaking existing models is not enough. The current moment demands bold reinvention of American higher education; the future – of our country and our students – depends on it.





The Vision:

Liberal arts undergraduate education should be fundamentally restructured to address globally relevant problems in urgent need of solutions.

In this reimagining, urgent questions, not departmental affiliations or majors, shape what, how, and why students learn.

Specialization is brought to bear – collaboratively – to generate new possibilities, new questions, and new solutions to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Pillars of curricular innovation:

- **Urgent:** Hampshire is the *only* college to orient itself entirely around the most pressing challenges of our time.
- **Unbounded:** Radically transdisciplinary Learning Collaboratives with affiliated faculty, staff, and students support the structure of our curriculum.
- **Entrepreneurial:** Embedding the project-based, independent, and collaborative learning into every level of the student experience.



What are the Urgent Challenges?

How should we act on our responsibilities in the face of changing climate?

How do we disrupt and dismantle white supremacy?

How do we decide what constitutes truth in a "post-truth" era?

How can art and creative practices engage trauma?

URGENT ISSUES

A bold, new approach to college education, centered around globally relevant questions in urgent need of solutions, empowering students to become agents of momentous change.

How should we act on our responsibilities in the face of changing climate?
How do we disrupt and dismantle white supremacy?
How do we decide what constitutes truth in a “post truth” era?
How can art and creative practices engage trauma?



UNBOUNDED LEARNING

An environment free from the bounds of a typical college, allowing a truly open exchange of ideas and pursuits.

ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS

A self-directed journey that instills the skills and assembles the resources needed to explore one’s passions and take action to make change.

Learning Collaboratives

DIV. I, II, III

No majors, departments, or schools

Community Engaged Learning

Semester Unbound

Project Teams



Timeline for Restructuring Hampshire's Curriculum

Fall 2019:

- Community-wide process to identify a bold new academic program, true to the College's mission as an experimenting institution designed to influence higher education.

Spring 2019 - Spring 2022:

- Four urgent challenges identified; Learning Collaborative structures built to support transdisciplinary work.
- Faculty commit to tag 50% of courses to an urgent challenge, redevelop syllabi, and launch new courses.
- Entrepreneurial skill-building in Division II is implemented through a 'supported project' framework.
- Returning and new students join in the process of building the new curriculum.
- Faculty develop a strategic hiring plan to meet needs of new curriculum and growing student body.

Fall 2023:

- Largest entering class since 2018 is the first to enter Division I with the new program fully built.
- More than 50% of courses are tagged to an urgent challenge and Learning Collaboratives are successfully engaging students, faculty, and staff as the hubs of the academic community.
- Full-time faculty grows 25%.



Strategies

1. Mission forward
2. Radically inclusive
3. Prioritize the work, remove distractions
4. Complete transparency (budget, data)
5. Anticipate practical benefits, but not focus
6. Provide models and examples
7. Recognize necessity, without panic
8. Only vote once
9. Make space to honor feelings of loss



Challenges

1. Motivating change without offering new resources
2. Avoiding interest group rent seeking
3. Creating sufficient space for real engagement
4. Negotiating competing interpretations of goals
5. Maintaining excitement during implementation
6. Tracking policy implications and making revisions
7. Translating to audiences without framework
8. Resisting the gravitational pull of disciplinary expectations and peer comparisons



Successes

1. Entering class up 24%, 2022 to 2023
2. Net revenue/student up 14%, 2022 to 2023
3. Applications up 12%, 2022 to 2023
4. Retention up 9.6%, 2022 to 2023
5. \$41 million in *unrestricted* cash and pledges raised since 2019
6. Two largest gifts since College's founding
7. Students 33.8% BIPOC, 37.5% Pell eligible, 21.9% first generation

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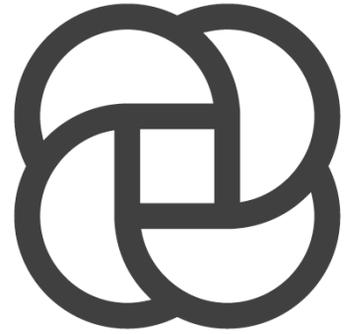
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COALITION FOR THE
COMMON GOOD

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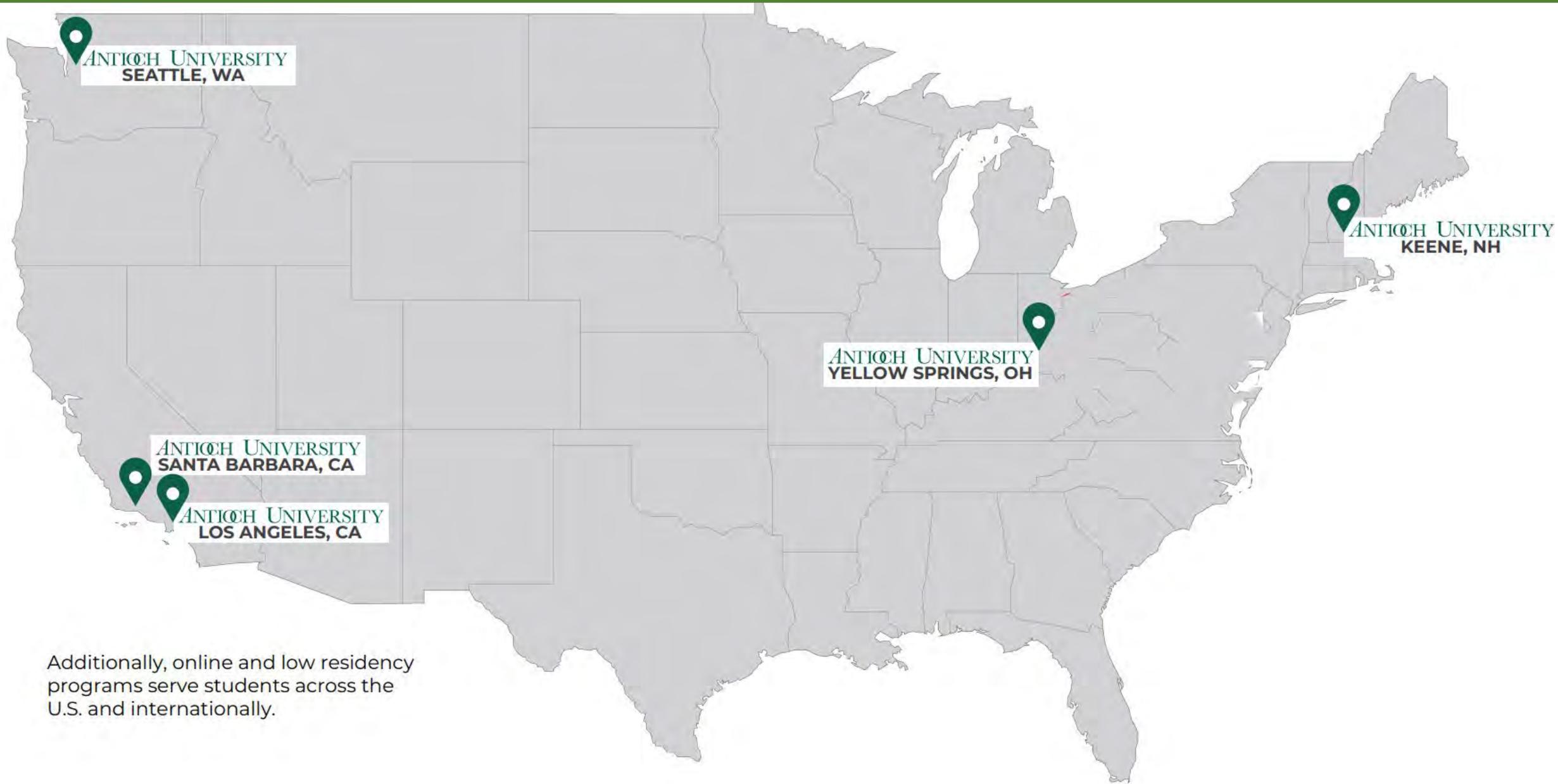


OTTERBEIN
UNIVERSITY



**ANTIOCH
UNIVERSITY**



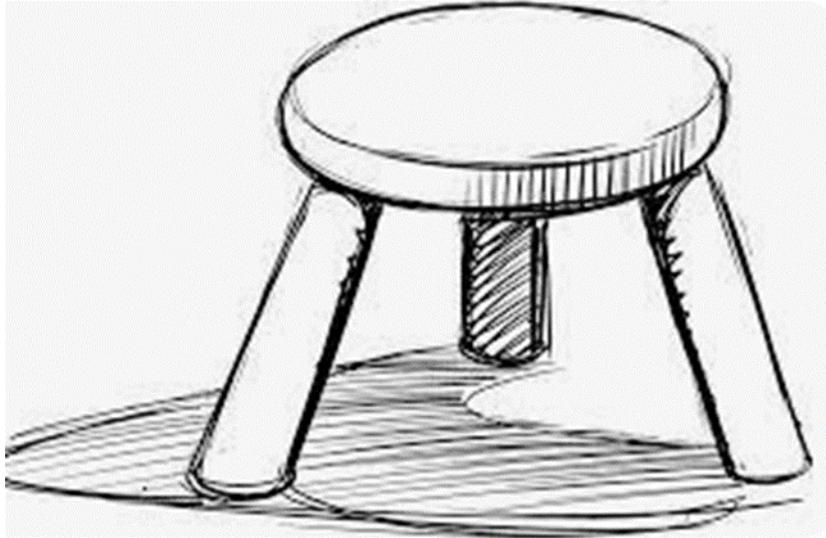


Additionally, online and low residency programs serve students across the U.S. and internationally.

Mission

The Coalition for the Common Good is a network of affiliated private, nonprofit colleges and universities that, through collaboration and integration, provide transformative education and lifelong learning. Together, we are dedicated to promoting the common good, including democracy, social justice, equity, inclusion, and engaged global citizenship.



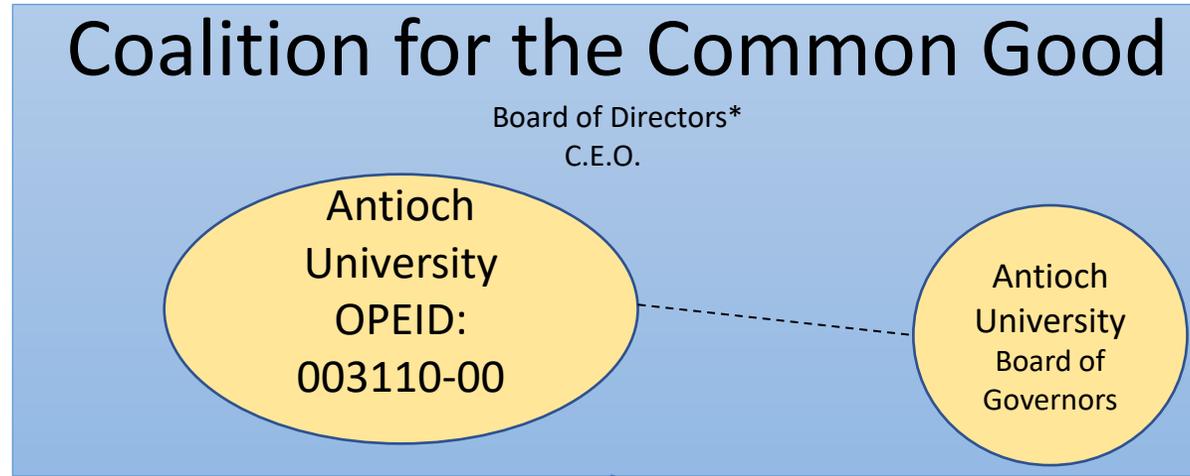


The Business Case

- Student Pipelines/
Distinctiveness
- Shared Services
- Adult Program
Expansion

CCG Corporate Structure

*System Board composed of:
4 Antioch Board appointees
4 Otterbein Board appointees
1 jointly selected independent



Otterbein University

OPEID: 003010-00
Board of Trustees (fiduciary)

**Addition of
another school**

**Support Services
Organization**

Separate SSO Board identical to System Board

Change Management

- The Burning Platform- the case for change
- The Sun, the Moon and the Stars- alignment
- Widening Circles- managing confidentiality
- Transparency vs Democracy- decision making and voice.



Q&A



Thank you for attending
this session!



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