

The Talent Development Imperative: Developing Faculty & Staff to Fuel Student Success

2025 Institute for Chief Academic Officers

November 2, 2025



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Introductions



Introductions



Joretta Nelson

Vice Chairman & Founder of
Moving the Needle (MTN)

Co-Facilitator



Alex Kappus

Senior Director, Client Success
Carnegie Higher Education

Co-Facilitator



Suzanne Blum Malley

Executive Vice President and
Provost, Methodist University (NC)

Panelist



Peter Holbrook

Provost and Chief Operating
Officer, Tiffin University (OH)

Panelist



Alvin Sturdivant

Vice President for Student
Affairs and Inclusive Excellence,
University of Portland (OR)

Panelist



Institutional Strategy: Carnegie + Credo

Carnegie's 2025 acquisition of Credo united two trusted higher education partners with one shared mission: to help colleges and universities thrive. **Together, we deliver a powerful combination of strategic insight, organizational expertise, and student-centered innovation—ensuring every plan translates into meaningful, measurable results.**



A Holistic Approach

Through Credo, Carnegie now delivers a multidimensional perspective on institutional vitality—integrating strategy, finance, technology, and culture to strengthen performance across every level of the organization.



Student Success as Strategy

Credo's nationally recognized student success approach is fully embedded within Carnegie's offerings, enabling institutions to design systems to enhance retention, graduation, and the overall student experience—ensuring strategy is always grounded in student impact.



Data-Driven Transformation

By combining Carnegie's analytics and research expertise with Credo's deep implementation support, we help institutions prioritize resources, streamline processes, and sustain progress over time—turning bold strategic goals into measurable, lasting outcomes.

CARNEGIE

North Star

Partner with institutions to solve their most important problems through outcome-oriented experts, data and technology.

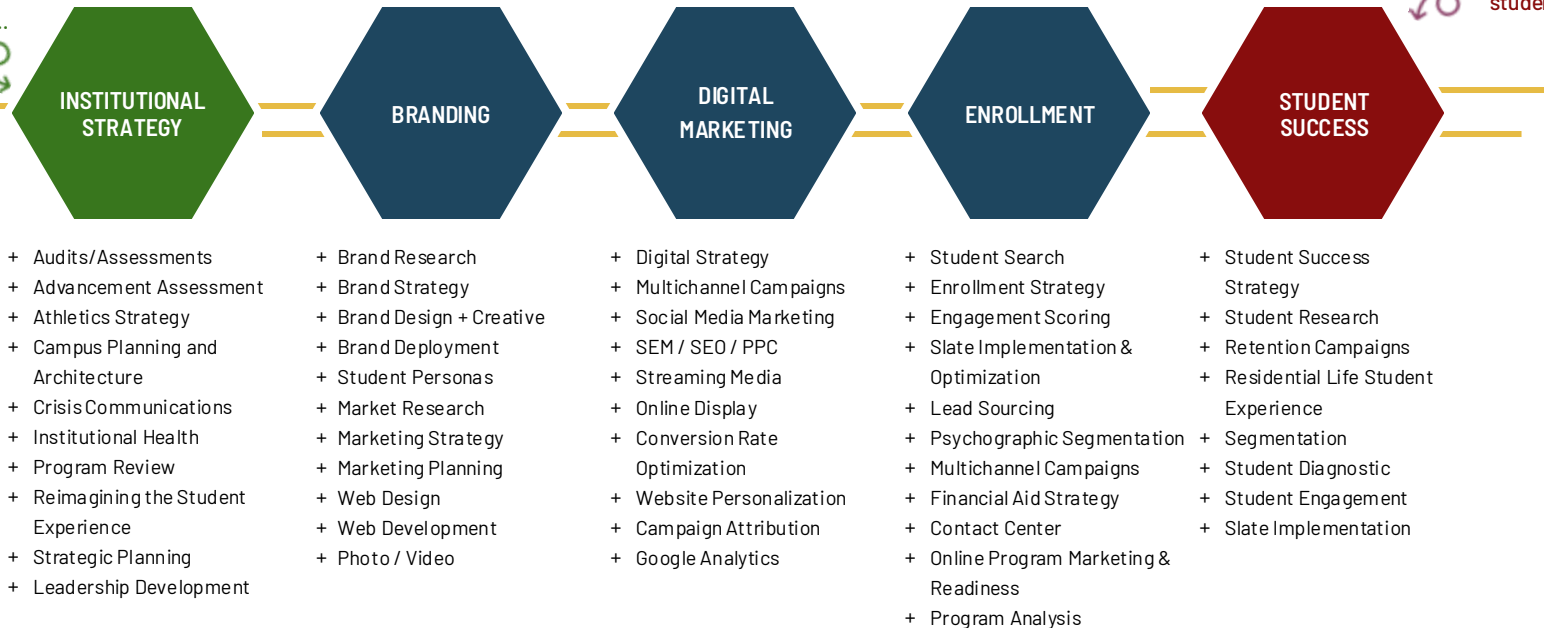
*Proven through 40 years
and 700+ campus partnerships.*

Our North Star in Action: A Portfolio for Institutional Transformation

Guided by Our North Star, Carnegie helps institutions align people, processes, and technology for greater efficiency and impact. With decades of experience and hundreds of partnerships nationwide, we turn data and insight into action that elevates the student experience.

We always
start here...

And lead through a
steadfast focus on
student success



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Session Framing: Talent Development Imperative





The CUPA-HR 2025 Higher Education Employee Retention Survey

"Results confirmed that employee retention remained a critical concern across higher education post-pandemic, with **one in three staff members likely to seek other employment**. Many employees cited pay as their primary reason for considering a move; however, the data **revealed that feeling valued and having a sense of belonging (both indicators of job satisfaction and well-being)** were more important predictors of retention than pay."

<https://www.cupahr.org/resource/higher-ed-employee-retention-survey-findings-september-2025>



2025 NEOED Top Trends for HR in Higher Education

“Staffing shortages continue to challenge nearly 60% of institutions, putting significant strain on existing staff.”



<https://info.neoad.com/resources/2025-trends-report>



2025 IHE Provost Survey



Top Reasons for Faculty Departure

- Competitive offers elsewhere: 76%
- **Burnout: 46%**
- Natural career progression: 44%
- Insufficient resources for the demands/expectations of the job: 39%

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/academic-freedom/2025/09/16/survey-provosts-focused-funding-cuts-academic>

Fostering campus talent remains a critical strategy for **advancing a culture of student success and belonging**.

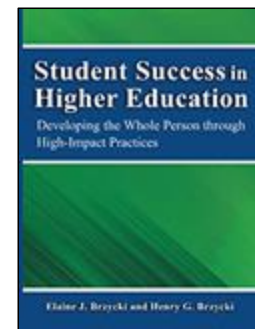


The Problem: Research ≠ Practice

“There is **no shortage of empirical studies** and conceptual examinations related to student success...

Yet, institutions do not faithfully and effectively **implement** the kinds of promising **policies and practices that seem to work elsewhere and in ways that are appropriate** for their campus context and students.”

Jillian Kinzie & George Kuh, Center for Postsecondary Research and National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Institute at Indiana University, (2017)





A National Snapshot of Student Success Measures

76.5%

The national rate for fall 2023 first-time students returning for a second year to **any institution**

68.2%

The national rate for fall 2023 first-time students returning for a second year to their **initial institution**

64%

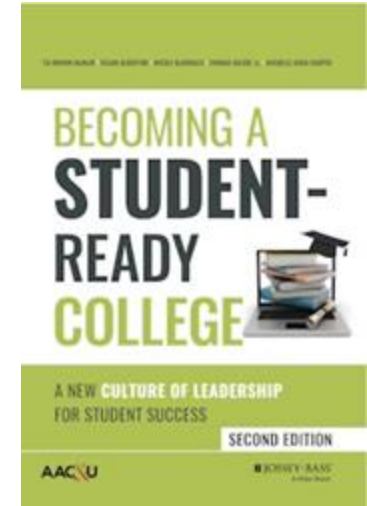
The national rate for **6-year graduation rates**.

Persistence and Retention. (2024, June). National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Retrieved October 2024 from nscresearchcenter.org/persistence-retention



Becoming a Student-Ready College... LEADER

- + They know who their students are, how they are doing, and what they need to succeed.
- + **They build and strengthen people capacity to achieve student ready goals.**
- + They observe, act, innovate, and prioritize accountability.



McNair, T. (2025) Transformational Leadership: Being Student Ready to Advance Student Success. Presentation slides: <https://cpe.ky.gov/studentsuccess/2025/slides-mcnair.pdf>



5 Key Skills Essential for Mid-Level Managers

1. Using Data Effectively to Engage and Motivate
2. Building Trust with Faculty and Staff
3. Forging High Functioning Relationships with Senior Leaders
4. Facilitating Effective Cross-Functioning Teams
5. Managing Projects to Foster Continuous Improvement

Ellis, M. & Kadlec, A. (2024). Strong Start to Finish. Faculty & Staff: A Toolkit for Mid-Level Managers. Retrieved from: https://strongstart.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SSTFToolkit_SOVA_Executive-Summary.pdf

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Panelist Spotlight Stories:

Share about a breakthrough you experienced in fostering talent development.



Breakthroughs in Talent Development



Suzanne Blum Malley

Executive Vice President and
Provost, Methodist University (NC)

Panelist



Peter Holbrook

Provost and Chief Operating
Officer, Tiffin University (OH)

Panelist



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Promising Practices





Hearing from You

Turn to someone near you and discuss:

- + How does your institution currently support the development of your faculty and staff?
- + What efforts feel successful or promising?

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Barriers & Possibilities



Model for Complex Change



Vision: Directional clarity and a clear and compelling “why”

Skills: The observable abilities of the people in an environment to take action toward the vision

Resources: The human, capital, intellectual, and time resources to take action toward the vision

Action Plan: Clear pathways mapped to move from the current reality to the desired future

Incentives: Clear connections to stakeholder motivations

Trust: The expectation that others’ behaviors, motivations, and competence levels will result in positive outcomes

Lippitt, M. (1987). *The managing complex change model*. Enterprise Management, Ltd.

Model for Complex Change



Lippitt, M. (1987). *The managing complex change model*. Enterprise Management, Ltd.

Resources

Human	<i>Leadership</i> <i>Employees</i> <i>Org Structure</i>
Financial	<i>Budget</i> <i>Money/Capital</i>
Physical	<i>Infrastructure</i> <i>Built Environment</i>
Intangible	<i>Culture</i> <i>Reputation</i> <i>Ability to Innovate</i> <i>Expertise</i>



Incentives

Monetary

- + Budgets
- + Professional development
- + Course releases
- + Stipends
- + Grants
- + Awards
- + Positions

Motivational (Non-Monetary)

- + Recognition
- + Mentorship
- + Purpose-driven
- + Time (from leadership)
- + Support for work
- + Gamification
- + Experiencing positive results
- + Intrinsic rewards

Overcoming Obstacles to Talent Development



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Closing Reflections



Putting On Your Radar...



www.aacu.org/event/leadership-institute

Resources

Executive Coaching with Credo

[Credo's Leadership Accelerator](#)

Moving the Needle Talent Development

[Talent Development Program](#)

Student Ready Leaders

[McNair, T. \(2025\) Transformational Leadership: Being Student Ready to Advance Student Success](#)

5 Key Skills Essential for Middle Managers

[Ellis, M. & Kadlec, A. \(2024\). Strong Start to Finish. Faculty & Staff: A Toolkit for Mid-Level Managers](#)

Life as a Middle Manager: Chronicle Article

[How to fix a system that sets up midlevel leaders to fail](#)



Thank You!

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