



SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

Pre-Practicum Keynote **Transforming Institutional Cultures:** **Holistic Approaches to Student Success**

January 30 | 12pm (CT)



moderated by
Veronica Womack
Black Studies
Searle Center for
Advancing Learning & Teaching

featuring
Jillian Kinzie

Indiana University, School of Education
National Survey of Student Engagement



We invite you to...

Actively engage in this program that brings together colleagues across academic and professional disciplines, instructional contexts, and levels of pedagogical training with a **beginner's mind**

Participate in ways that challenge *and* encourage our individual and collective growth in knowledge and skills

Participating today can count towards earning a digital badge to reflect your commitment to supporting student success

Await the Open Educational Resource (OER), including a recording of today's live event



Participation Guidelines

- ✓ Assume positive intent, and take accountability for what you do and say.
- ✓ Be aware of your assumptions, expectations, and judgements.
- ✓ Choose the best way to engage for yourself, and respect the choice that others make to participate.
- ✓ Commit to curiosity over certainty.
- ✓ Identify your learning edges and push them.
- ✓ Embrace discomfort and silence.
- ✓ Listen actively.
- ✓ Monitor your time.
- ✓ Speak for yourself from your own experience and your own perspective.
- ✓ What is said stays; What is learned leaves.



Transforming Institutional Cultures: Holistic Approaches to Student Success



Jillian Kinzie, National Survey of Student
Engagement, Center for Postsecondary
Research, Indiana University Bloomington

Northwestern

2025 Supporting Student Success
Pre-Practicum Keynote

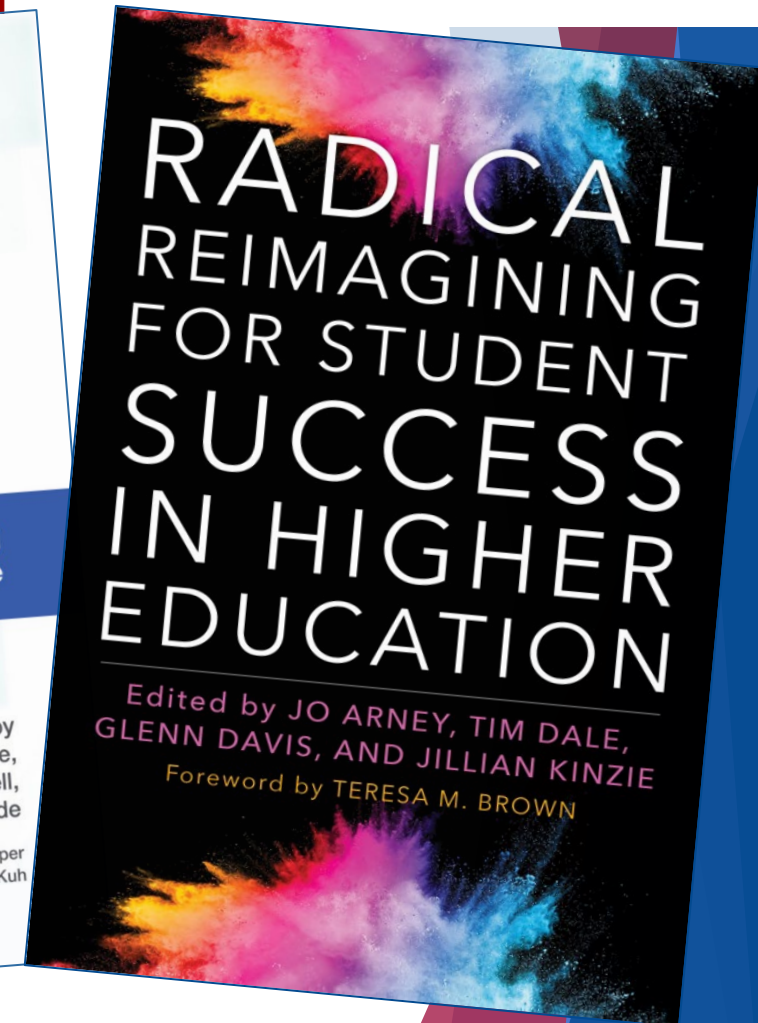
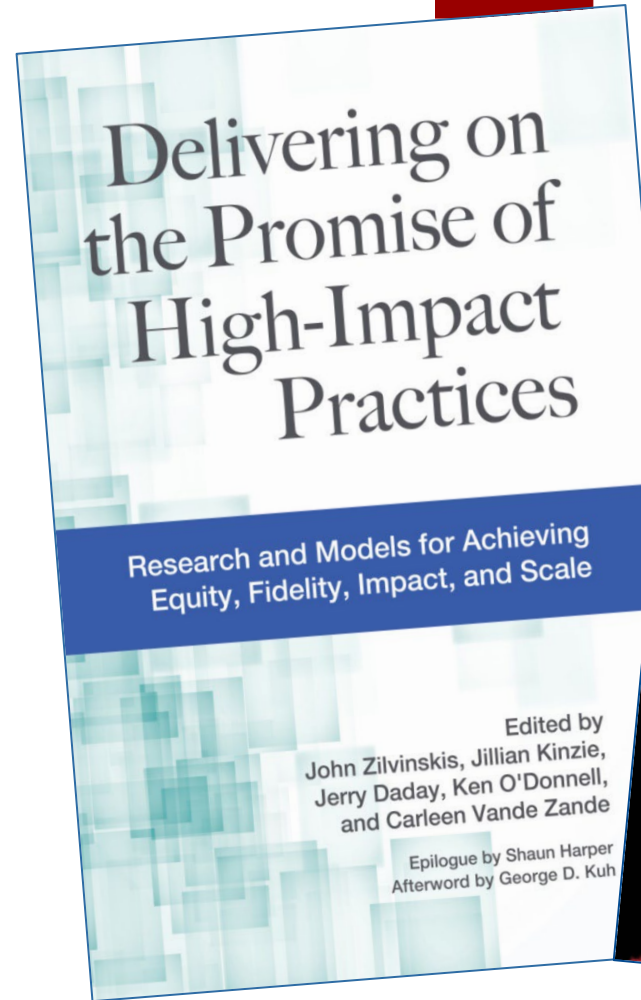
My points of view: Higher education scholar of student development & success, assessment practice, quality improvement, and teaching & learning



INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON



24 Year Survey Project
6.5 million students @
1,700 4 yr. institutions



**Ensuring
student
success is a top
priority for
universities
and colleges
worldwide.**

A young woman with long brown hair, wearing a black graduation cap with a red tassel and a blue gown, is smiling. In the foreground, there is a small, colorful globe. The background is blurred, showing other graduates and a rainbow flag. The image is overlaid with geometric shapes in blue, yellow, and red.

**TOP SCHOOLS INVEST
IN STUDENT SUCCESS**

What is Student Success?

**“Student success”- in its simplest form
- is getting students into and through
college to a degree or certificate**



Historically, student success was viewed through the lens of retention, attrition, and enrollment data



21st Century Student Success Goal

More students completing the degree they start, in an equitable, high quality educational experience that prepares them for 21st century workforce.



Student Success

Mindset Shift in 2010s

“Student failure” to succeed in college seen as a student shortcoming



From ---- To

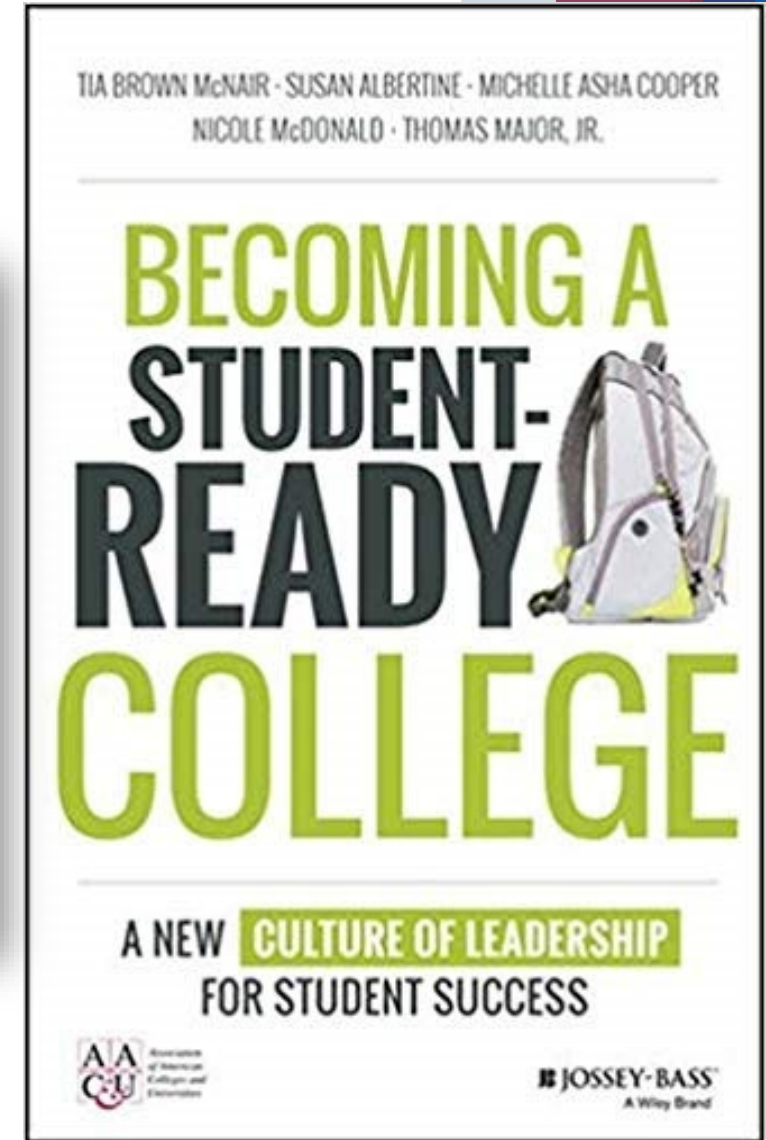
Student success is an institutional responsibility



A New Culture for Student Success (2016)



“Student-Ready Colleges”



Emergence of Student Success Units, Professionalization of Roles

NOW HIRING!

Dean of Student Success

Student Success Coach

Student Success Advisor

Campus Coach Student Success

**Success Coach for Underrepresented
Student Achievement**

Director of Student Success

Assistant Director Student Success

**Director of Student Success &
Assessment/Retention**

Assistant VP for Student Success

Vice Chancellor of Student Success

Vice President for Student Success

Disparities in educational outcomes between different groups of students are not “equity gaps” – rather, **they are “institutional performance gaps.”**

Bensimon & Spiva (2022) The End of “Equity Gaps” in Higher Education? *Diverse Higher Education magazine*



What a 'Holistic' Student Experience Actually Means

How colleges can integrate learning and personal growth

Drive to More Holistic Student Support

Educators focus on both academic and personal success, and the steps being taken to help all students thrive.

Trend is toward more support, personalization, and touch points over the student life cycle...cultivating students' sense of belonging & well-being, while expanding resources for issues such as mental health, hunger, and homelessness.

Enduring effects of the pandemic (“Gen P”)

- Disconnection
- Learning loss
- Elevated anxiety
- Mental health concerns
- Dwindling help-seeking
- Emphasis on humanizing education & work
- Compassionate flex
- Focus on practical value



Why Are Students So Disengaged?

By Johanna Alonso • Published February 13, 2023

Global Student Success: Embrace the Whole



**“Whole-of-institution” approach
and a
“Whole student” orientation**

**Highlights the role students play in their own
– *and their peers*’ – success, honoring student
agency with institutional responsibility**

*Kift, S. et al., (2021) Student retention and success in higher
education: Institutional change for the 21st century. Palgrave*

How well do these conceptions of student success
resonate for Northwestern?

How do you define student success?



Student Success

**Our students are prepared to achieve
their goals after graduation**

Transformation Framework: Engaged Learning for Equitable Student Success

Institution

- Campus culture
- Student-first policies
- Data & analytic strategies

Student Experience

- Engaged pedagogies
- Student thriving & challenge
- Relationship-rich education
- Supporting committed educators

Engaged
Learning
for
Equitable
Student
Success

Creating a Campus Culture for Student Success

A positive and supportive environment that fosters a sense of belonging, encourages active engagement in learning, provides access to resources, and promotes healthy student well-being, ultimately contributing to higher rates of student learning and success

Culture change requires a different way of thinking and operating

FROM

How can I change a system or program in my office so my department can be successful?

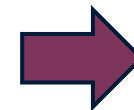
TO

How does my office or program play a role in ensuring our students have a successful, cohesive experience?

Culturally Engaging Campus Environment (CECE) Model (Museus, 2014)

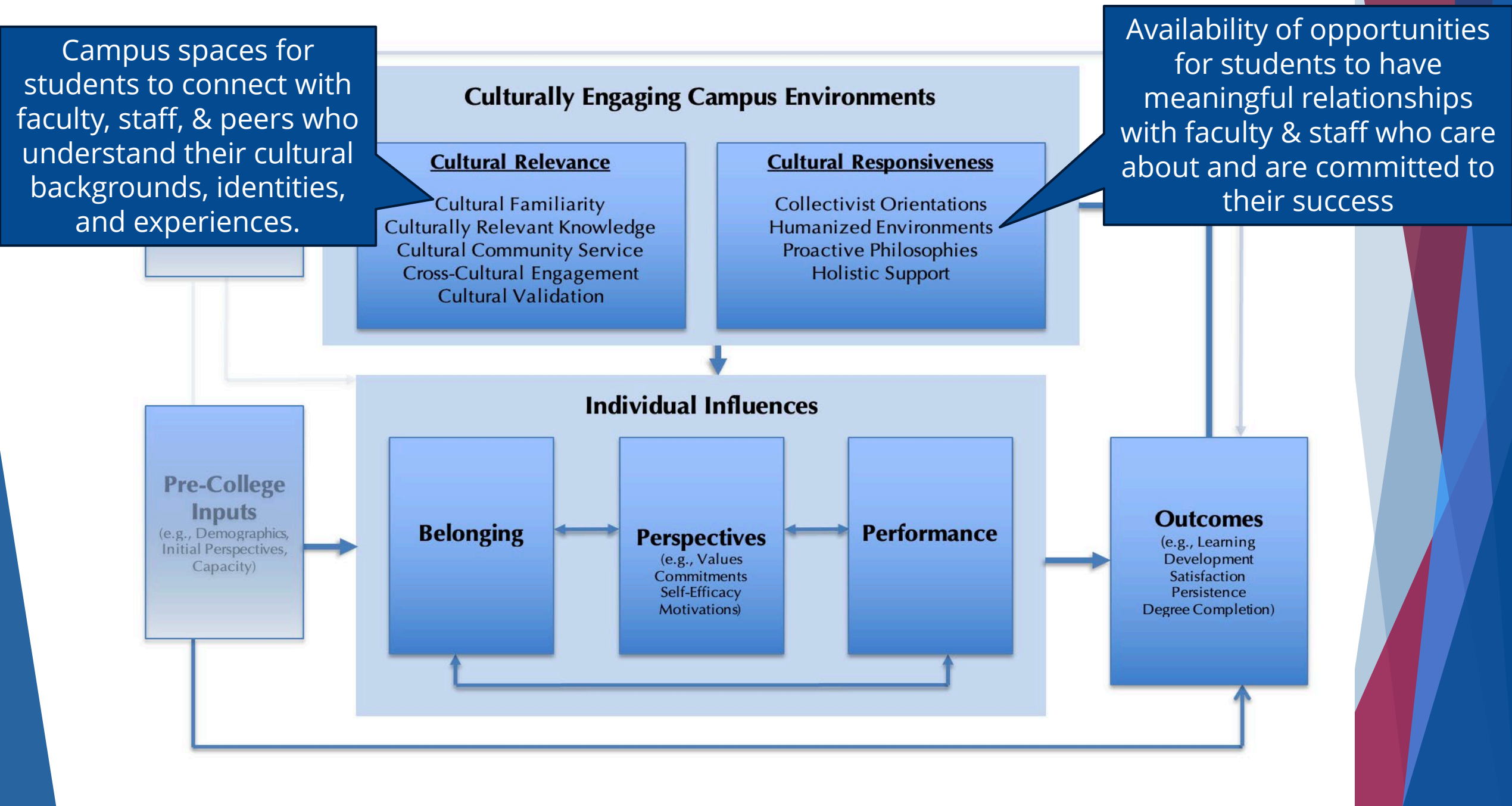
- ▶ An asset-oriented approach
- ▶ Uses the voices of students from culturally diverse backgrounds as the platform to catalyze inquiry and analysis of 9 defining characteristics of optimally inclusive & equitable environments:

- ▶ cultural familiarity, culturally relevant knowledge, cultural community service, meaningful cross-cultural engagement, culturally validating environments, collectivist cultural orientations, humanized educational environments, proactive philosophies, and holistic support



indicators of
college
environment
that can
foster
success

Figure 1. The Culturally Engaging Campus Environments (CECE) Model of College Success





CREATING A CAMPUS-WIDE CULTURE OF STUDENT SUCCESS

AN EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH TO SUPPORT
LOW-INCOME, RACIALLY MINORITIZED, AND
FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

Culture of Ecological Validation (Hallett et al., 2023)

- ▶ A culture of ecological validation focuses on how daily work is done by staff, faculty, and leaders—*not building new programs or initiatives*
- ▶ Practical approach to building a student-centered campus culture
- ▶ Encourages the embodiment of norms of ecological validation within the institutional context to create a student-centered culture

TABLE 1. CREATING A STUDENT-CENTERED CULTURE: NORMS OF ECOLOGICAL VALIDATION.

Interactions with Students	Interactions between Educators
<p>Strengths-oriented—centering the cultural assets, skills, successes, and personality traits that students bring to college rather than deficit assumptions about perceived limitations that students may possess and difficulties they may face.</p> <p>Holistic—considering all aspects of a student’s personality, identities, background, goals, and academic and interpersonal experiences when connecting students with resources and opportunities.</p> <p>Proactive—taking responsibility for reaching out to students on a regular basis to build relationships, identify opportunities, and address challenges.</p> <p>Identity-conscious—being aware of students’ multiple identities that influence their experiences with specific attention to the identities of at-promise students.</p> <p>Developmental—creating a cohesive, connected and sequential experiences that consider all aspects of a student’s educational journey from admission through graduation.</p>	<p>Reflective—creating consistent opportunities for educators to engage in reflective practice, which involves continually considering how students, staff, leadership and other educators experience campus in order to make adjustments needed to improve student success.</p> <p>Collaborative—building connections with other educators who work in various offices and programs across campus in order to create validating experiences for students that are integrated and reinforced. Organizing opportunities for stakeholders to engage in collaborative, cross-functional work across multiple offices, departments, programs, support services, and other aspects of student affairs and academic affairs with a focus on learning about and improving at-promise student experiences and outcomes.</p>



**CREATING A
CAMPUS-WIDE CULTURE
OF STUDENT SUCCESS**
AN EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH TO SUPPORTING
LOW-INCOME, RACIALLY MINORITIZED, AND
FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

RONALD E. HALLETT, ADRIANNA KEZAR,
JOSEPH A. KITCHEN, and ROSEMARY J. PEREZ



REFRAMING STUDENT SUCCESS IN COLLEGE:

Advancing Know-What and Know-How

By Jillian Kinzie and George Kuh

In Short

- The phrase “student success” broadly refers to students reaping the promised benefits of the postsecondary experience and a combination of institutional and student actions to realize the desired outcomes.
- 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.
- The student success agenda must be guided by a conceptual structure emphasizing how student success will be achieved. Drawing from the improvement science literature, we suggest using “driver diagrams” to build and test theories for improvement and to clarify what is needed to achieve the student success goal.
- A re-envisioned framework for student success incorporates greater attention to institutional responsibility for student success, promotes equity-minded practice and educational quality, and focuses more squarely on the critical elements regarding how increased student success will be achieved.

Jillian Kinzie is associate director Center for Postsecondary Research and National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Institute at Indiana University

George Kuh is a senior scholar at the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment and Chancellor’s Professor of Higher Education Emeritus at Indiana University.

To realize improved student success outcomes, a re-envisioned student success framework is needed, one that is grounded in evidence-based policies and practices that explicitly recognize diverse institutional missions, educational purposes, and organizational arrangements.

In this article, an abridged version of a much longer analysis (www.cpr.indiana.edu), we briefly review what is a vast, rich literature bearing on the topic. We then describe a set of propositions and an approach to building a solution framework representing a comprehensive effort to foster greater levels of student success.

“STUDENT SUCCESS”

“Student success.” In popular parlance, the phrase broadly refers to students reaping the promised benefits of the postsecondary experience. The phrase also can encompass a combination of institutional and student actions and outcomes. For example:

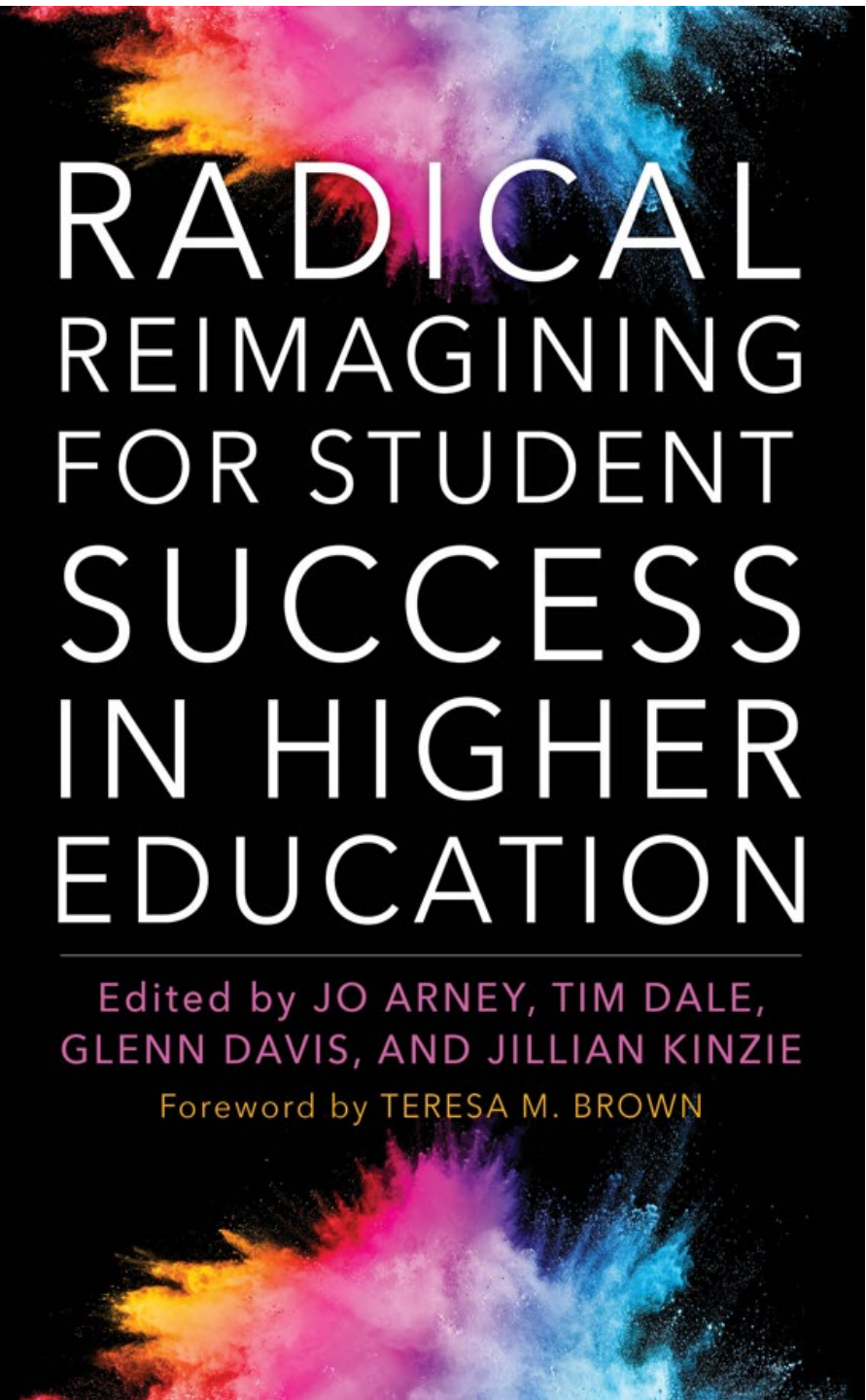
- Student success sometimes represents what institutions can or should do to assist students in attaining their postsecondary aspirations.
- Student success can indicate individual or group achievement levels.
- State and federal policymakers typically use the term to mean access to affordable postsecondary education, metrics of degree completion in a reasonable time frame, and post-college employment and earnings.
- For institutional leaders, faculty and staff, student success connotes, among other things, first-to-second-year persistence, degree completion, acquisition of content knowledge, proficiencies such as analytical reasoning and quantitative literacy, and engagement in educationally effective activities.
- Student success also is increasingly tied to equity-minded policies and practices that ameliorate postsecondary achievement gaps.

Drivers of Student Success



1. Development of a comprehensive, integrated approach to student success.

An integrated approach requires the identification and elimination of scattershot, isolated, or boutique programs for student success and the bringing together of stakeholders and efforts to ensure collaboration for equitable student success.



RADICAL REIMAGINING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Edited by JO ARNEY, TIM DALE,
GLENN DAVIS, AND JILLIAN KINZIE

Foreword by TERESA M. BROWN

***The student success
movement needs bolder,
more radical action***

Transformation for student success is not about pursuing the latest solutions and implementing numerous initiatives. Rather, it demands change in the culture for student success.

Culture Change

Encouraging leaders at all levels to adopt a change mindset and embrace risk as a legitimate strategy to empower individuals to remove barriers and transform structures

How to approach change:

1. Adopt a culture change model
2. Practice by fostering a unified, overarching approach to a specific initiative – example: *student sense of belonging*
3. Enact a structural alignment of student success outcomes





Come to think of it, kicking off our well-being program with a croissant-cigars-and-cognac social was a bad idea.

[Image source: The Happy, Healthy Nonprofit by Beth Kanter, Aliza Sherman, Vu Le](#)



Reflection on culture and your definition of student success

- ▶ **How much does Northwestern's culture emphasize student success?**
 - ▶ **Response options: Very much (VM), Quite a bit (QAB), Some (S), Very little (VL)**
- ▶ **How well are student success outcomes aligned?**

Student-first Policies

Identifying policies, procedures and barriers that silently thwart success through institution-wide audits

Adopting inclusive, strength or capacity theories like *growth mindset, belonging, cultural wealth, asset vs. deficit paradigm*— can breathe their perspectives into policies, practices

ASK: What do your policies and practices say about the culture, or the view of students, faculty, and staff's abilities, relations, and expectations?

Student-first Policies

Identifying policies, procedures and barriers that silently thwart success through institution-wide audits

Simpler processes: Revising policies and practice to create simpler, clearer and more rational processes for students as they move forward in their programs

“~~Probation~~” letter reframe: Replace with “academic notice” describe as “a process, not a label” ; “not the only one”, and “hope for returning in good standing”

Data & Analytic Strategies

Rethink how we collect data, measure, and improve in a data-informed culture

What's your student success number?

**“Know your numbers. No excuses.
No exceptions. No escape.”**

The Power of Student Voice

Students have an authentic and valuable voice in decisions that impact their educational experience

- ☐ Inclusive representation
- ☐ Partnership on educational efforts

What do *your* students have to say about student success?





Pause for reflection...What Northwestern student success data do you rely on? What do you need?

95%

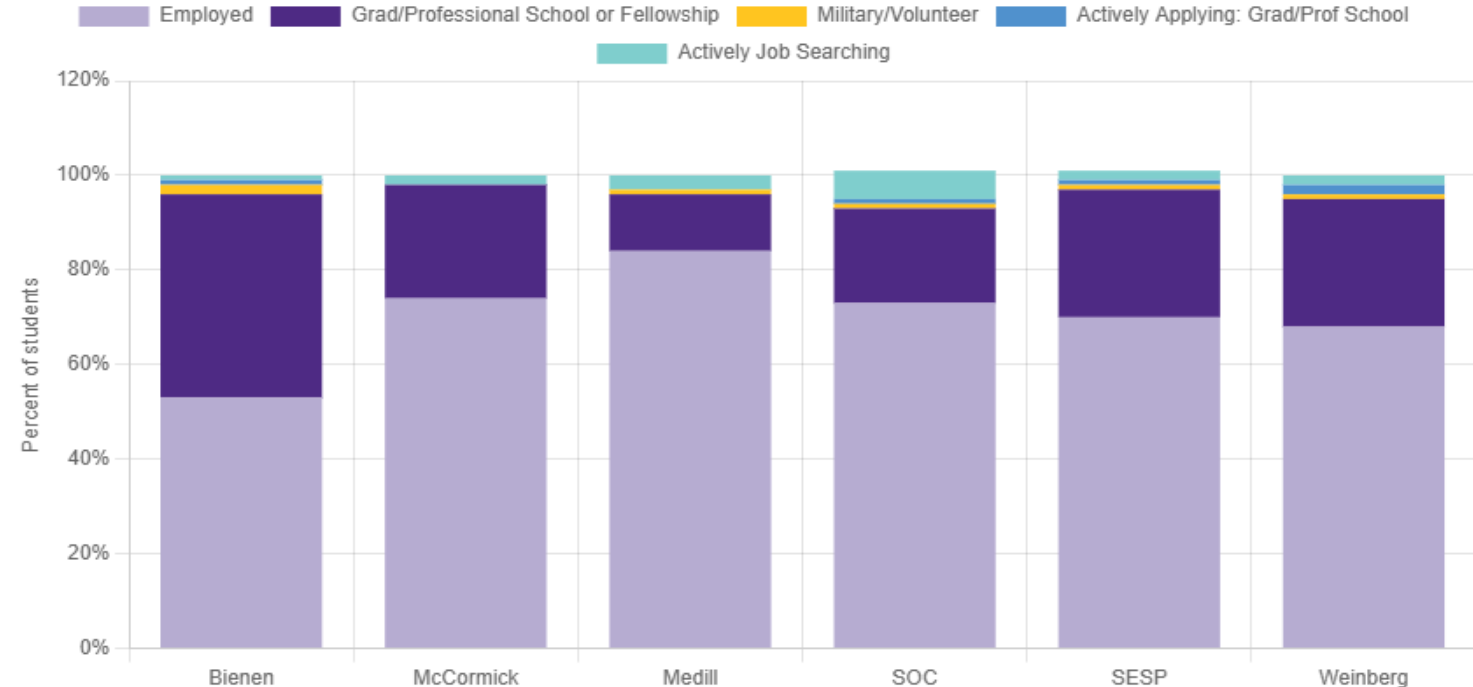
6-year graduation rate for Northwestern undergraduates

71%

are employed

Explore Post-Graduate Activity by School

The table below draws data from the Post-Graduation Survey administered by Northwestern Career Advancement. The students surveyed include 1,666 members of the class of 2023.



Transformation Framework: Engaged Learning for Equitable Student Success

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- Data & analytic strategies

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Engaged Pedagogies

Every college student should learn by doing – experimenting, discussing, building etc. – in an integrated way, with purpose & with others



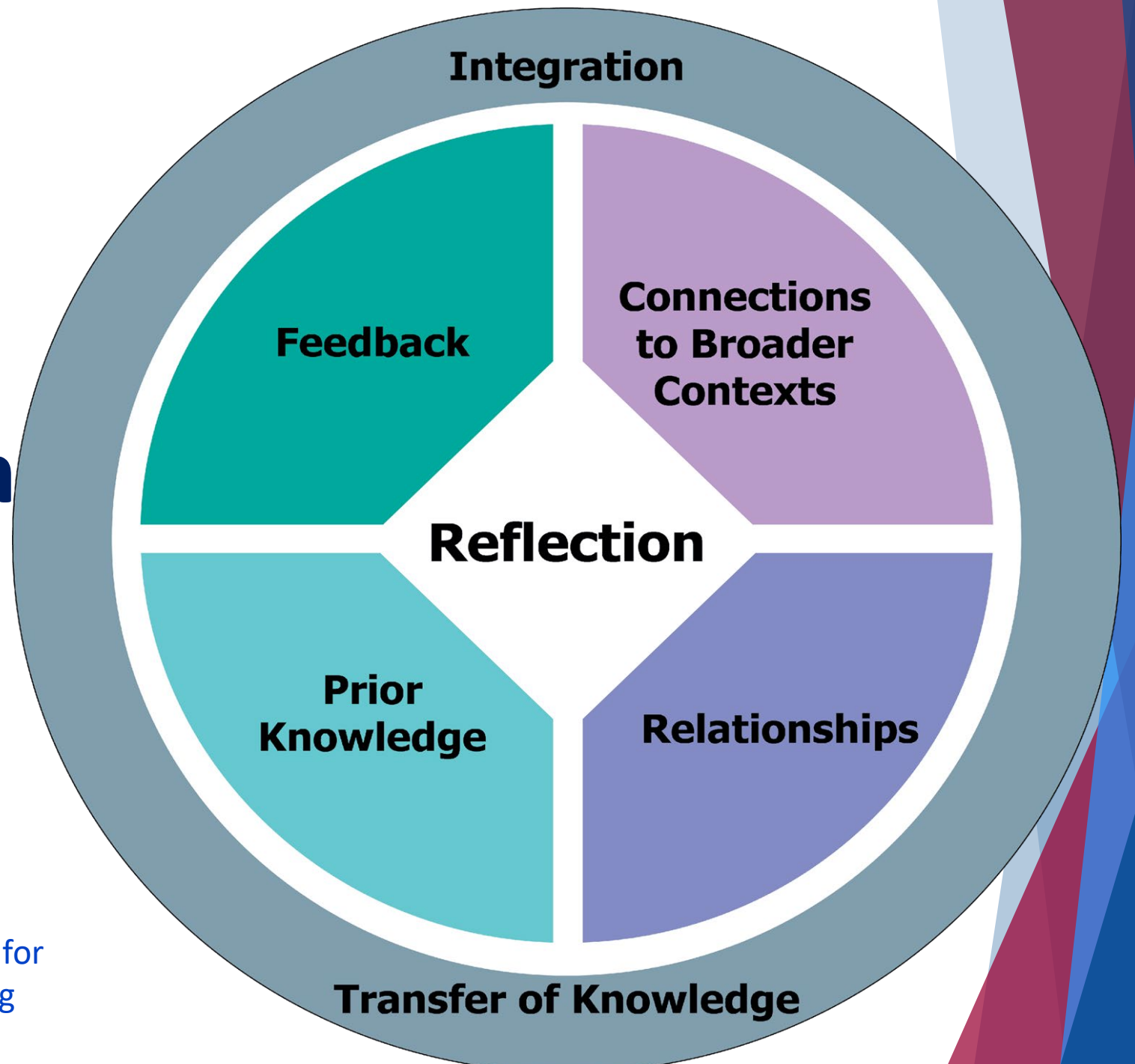
Engaging Pedagogies

- ❑ **Purpose driven** (program, course, assignment, co-curricular)
- ❑ **Active & Experiential**
- ❑ **Authentic**
- ❑ **Collaborative learning**



Woven across the curriculum, courses, co-curriculum

Key Practices for Fostering High-Quality Engaged Learning in Higher Education



Moore, J. (2023) Key Practices for Fostering Engagement Learning

Student Thriving & Challenge

- ▶ Thriving = student is fully engaged intellectually, socially and emotionally in the college experience (Schreiner, 2020)
 - ▶ 5 dimensions: energized by learning; goal-directed; positive and able to reframe negative event into learning; socially connected; openness to difference



Providing a Supportive, Yet Challenging Learning Environment

- ▶ **Rigor as Compassionate Challenge.** A safe learning environment where students feel a sense of belonging, engage in practices associated with confronting fears, and take intellectual risks in meaningful ways— helps advance learning.



Sarah Rose Cavanagh (2023)

Principles of Inclusive Rigor

- ▶ Rigor is not hard for the sake of being hard; it is **purposeful** and **transparent**.
- ▶ **Inadequate definitions** of rigor produce poorer learning outcomes, particularly for underrepresented and/or underserved students.
- ▶ Rigor, when defined apart from a deficit ideology, is **necessary** to teach more inclusively.

(McGurk & Brooks, 2021)

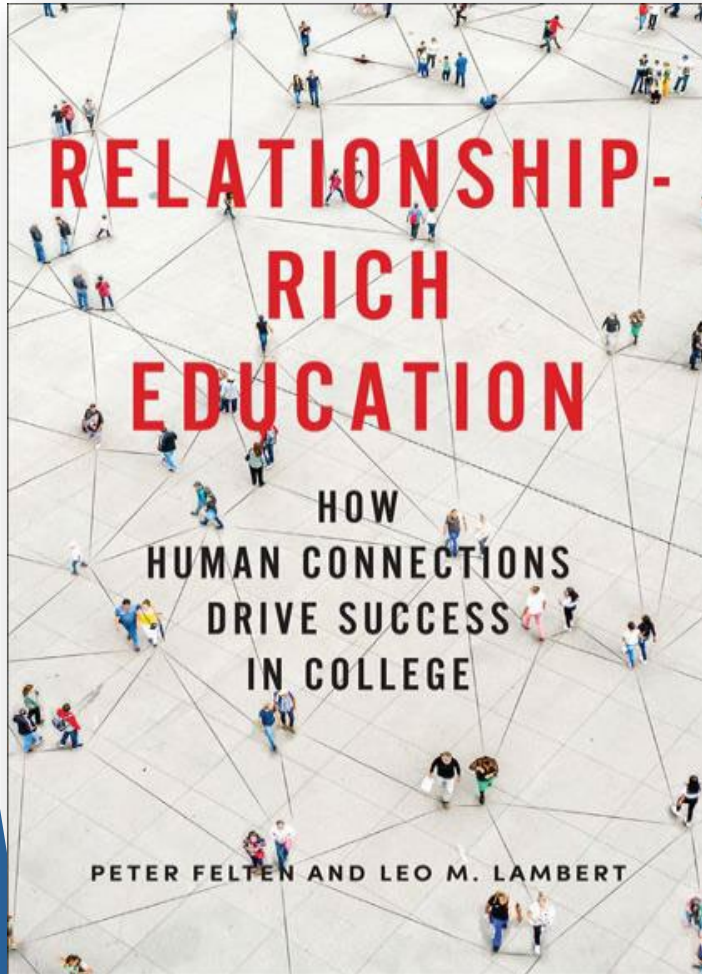
Support and an Asset-Based, Community Cultural Wealth Approach

Yosso, T.J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? Race, Ethnicity and Education, 8(1), pp. 69–91.



CATEGORY	QUALITIES, ATTRIBUTES, STRENGTHS
Aspirational	courage, determination, hope
Linguistic	multilingual, expressive, communicator
Familial	community-focused, connector, loyal
Social	resourceful, adaptable, versatile
Navigational	strategic, creative, tenacious
Resistance	advocate, resilient, justice-minded

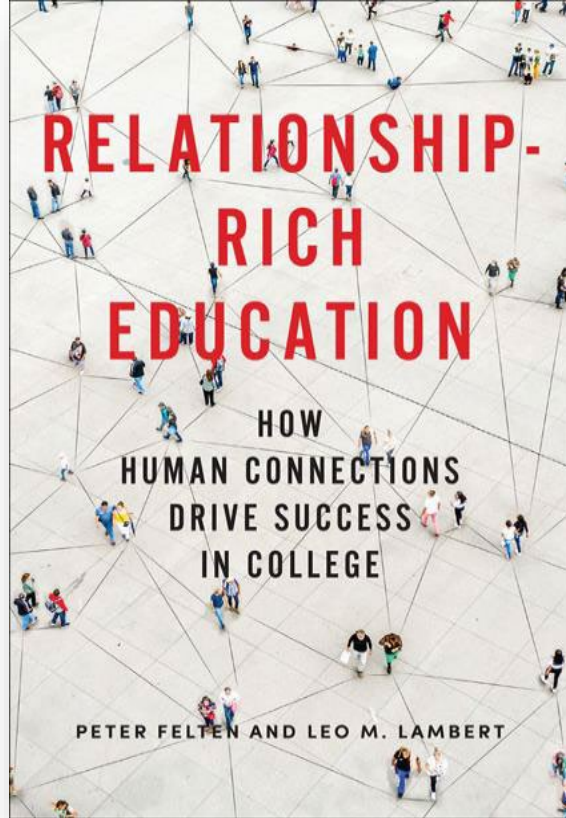
Relationship-Rich Education



**Relationships make higher education work.
At all institutions, the simple act of a professor asking a student how they are doing can have a tremendous impact on the student's success.**

-- Felten & Lambert, 2020

Faculty and student affairs educators must be collectively grounded in the 4 principles of relationship-rich education:



Felten & Lambert, 2020

- All students must experience **genuine, relentless welcome and deep care**
- Relationships are a powerful means to **inspire all students to learn**
- All students must develop **webs of significant relationships**
- All students need meaningful relationships to help them—and to challenge them—to **explore the big questions of their lives**

Thinking about the Student Experience...

- ▶ Share one of your best engaging pedagogies, thriving & challenge and or relationship-rich, practices.
- ▶ What does it mean to invest in support and rigor simultaneously?

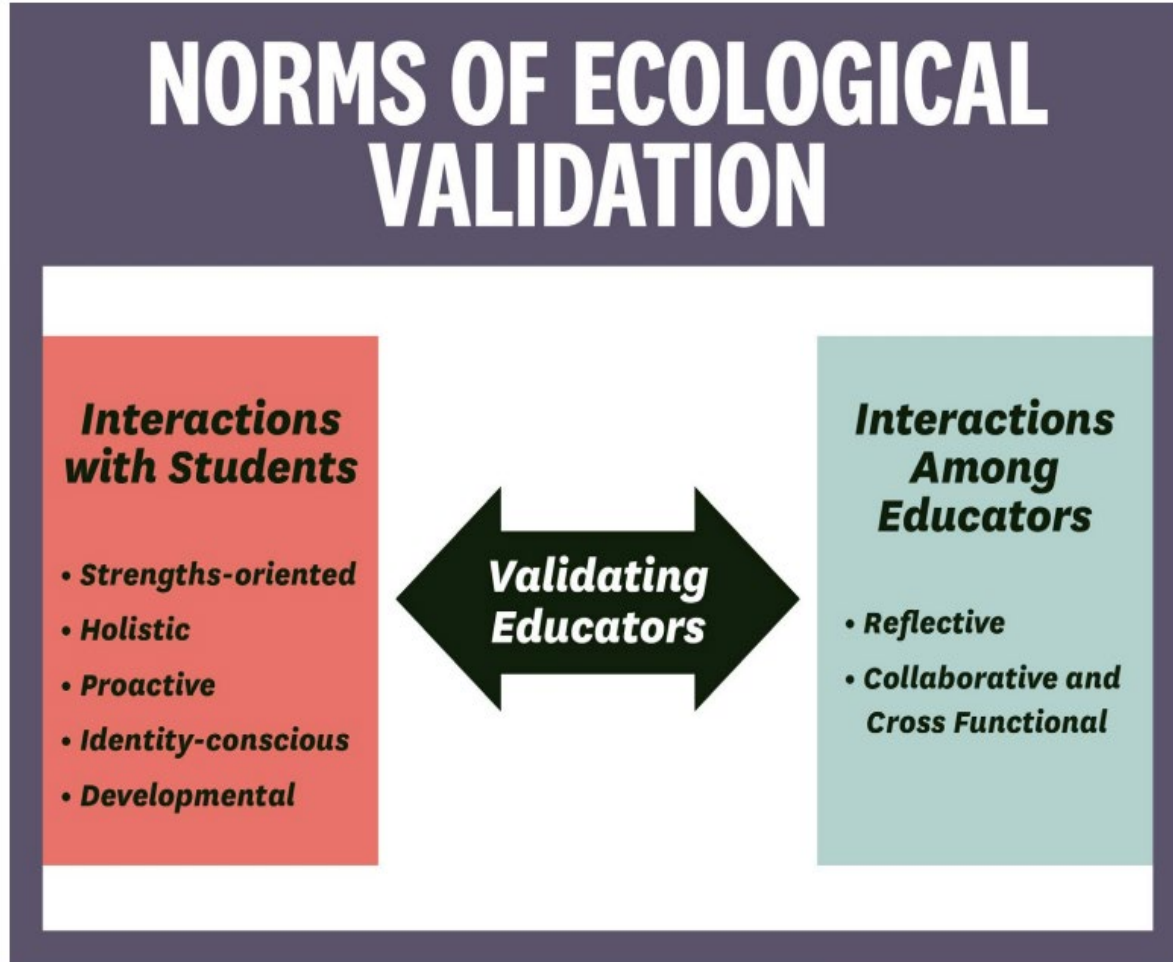


Supporting instructors & staff committed to student success

Change personnel processes to support student success – hire, reward, promote with a priority on student success



Support Validating Agents



“Validating agents/educators” recognize students’ multiple identities, assets, strengths, and innate capabilities for success in a web of coordinated student supports

Hallett, R.E., Kezar, A., Kitchen, J. A., Perez, R., Corwin, Z. B., & Nagbe, M. (2022). Creating a culture of ecological validation to improve at-promise student experiences and outcomes.

Partnerships to Enhance Student Success

Student Success, as a desired outcome of higher education, is more likely to result from institutional environments characterized by *strong partnerships* that link academic and student affairs professionals, faculty and students.



Importance of teams, collaborative leadership, to drive holistic, cultural change

- ▶ Teams to share and discuss data about student success
- ▶ Structure and space to facilitate a shared understanding of the problem and to begin to reimagine
- ▶ Thoughtfully composed teams, those that involve educators and staff (& students) who can articulate student concerns, and the consideration of student outcome data, are needed to fully understand the problem the institution is trying to solve
- ▶ Support to try something and assess impact



Our rigorous yet empathetic academic environment provides a robust mixture of theory and practice, with an emphasis on top-tier research, new knowledge, creative expression and practical application.



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*Discussion about
the Transformation
Framework and
student success at
Northwestern*

*Which topics needs
more attention
right now? why?*

- ☐ Are policies student-first?
- ☐ Does data help focus on student success?
- ☐ What engaging pedagogies do you use?
- ☐ What are your students challenges and how do you support them?
- ☐ To what extent do you prioritize student success and are you supported in doing so?

Thank you!

Dr. Jillian Kinzie, Center for Postsecondary Research,
School of Education, Indiana University and the National
Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
jikinzie@indiana.edu



**WE WANT YOUR
FEEDBACK!**

Post-Keynote Survey

Please complete the survey



**MORE OPPORTUNITIES ON
SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS**

TODAY'S RECORDING AVAILABLE SOON

PARTICIPATE IN THE PRACTICUM

2025 Winter (February) | 2025 Spring (April)



Scan to register or visit
https://bit.ly/SSSP_Register

OER AVAILABLE THIS SUMMER

Questions?

Contact practicum@northwestern.edu

than

UNIVERSITY



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