Hidden in Plain Sight:
Understanding Part-time Students
Achieving the Dream
Data and Analytics Summit
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Presenters

Donna McKusick
Data Coach, Achieving the Dream

Terry Hirsch
Senior Director, Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Community College of Baltimore County
1. Part-time students from a data/research perspective
2. Challenges part-time students face
3. Addressing the needs of part-time students

Bombardieri, Marcella. (September 2017). *Hidden in Plain Sight: Understanding Part-time College Students in America.* Center for American Progress
What are characteristics of part-time students?
Part-time Students: What does the research say?

- Enrolled in up to 11 credits
- Working adults
- Parents or primary caregivers
- Multi-taskers
- Multi-challenged
- Diverse
- Often under-prepared
How are part-time students different from full-time students?

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<tr>
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<th>FULL-TIME</th>
<th>PART-TIME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25% go to public two-year institutions</td>
<td>62% go to public two-year institutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>34% are 24 and over</td>
<td>64% are 24 and over</td>
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<td>41% are on their own financially</td>
<td>71% are on their own financially</td>
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<td>19% work 40 or more hours per week</td>
<td>42% work 40 or more hours per week</td>
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<td>23% have dependents</td>
<td>38% have dependents</td>
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<td>31% are enrolled for half the year or less</td>
<td>60% are enrolled for half the year or less</td>
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Part-time Students: What We Don’t Know (Bombardieri, 2017)

- How does part-time student completion vary by college?
- Is part-time attendance the problem or the symptom of other obstacles?
- When is it beneficial to push part-time students to take more credits? When is it not?
- How do student decisions about work/life balance affect part-time attendance?
Why we don’t we know more?

The limitations of IPEDS, NSC, and other sources

Chaotic enrollment patterns

Confounding demographics
In order to understand the solutions...

...we need to better understand the challenges that part time student’s face.
Part-time Students: What challenges do they face?
Part-time Students: What are their challenges?

- Multiple responsibilities
- Irregular work schedules
- Schedules and time constraints
- Access to information
- Access to activities and support
- Financial aid
Listen and learn from the students

Conduct

Conduct focus groups and provide opportunities for student feedback

Analyze

Analyze data and enrollment trends

Share

Share data and information with institutional staff and faculty (including adjuncts) to understand the needs of part-time students

Address

Address misconceptions about part-time students
Look through the lens of the student

- Provide accessible student services
- Childcare and emergency/drop in childcare
- Transportation enhancements
- Online Educational Resources (OER)
- Financial aid/scholarships
- Guaranteed class schedule (double check terminology)
- Term length options
- Offer prerequisite courses frequently
Look beyond the surface...

- Provide more flexible learning options
- Online learning with virtual student supports
- Embedded tutoring, academic advisement and mentoring
- Mapping out the student’s academic journey
- Accelerated options for developmental education
- After hours and mobile resources
- Credits for Prior Learning
- Expanded First Year Experience orientation options
What are you doing to serve your hidden students?
Questions?

Contact information

Terry Hirsch
thirsch@ccbcmd.edu

Donna McKusick
dmckusick@icloud.com