CONVERSATIONS ON
STUDENT SUCCESS
WITH
DR. AMY SALAZAR
LEARNING LOSS & STUDENT SUCCESS
GRAPPLING WITH LEARNING LOSS: A BLUEPRINT FOR FACULTY AND STUDENT SUCCESS

Dr. Amy Salazar, Associate Vice Provost, Student Success
Sam Houston State University
OVERVIEW

Impetus for the Work

Learning Loss Forums

Outcomes of Research

Implementation Examples

Future Directions
WHAT IS LEARNING LOSS & WHY DO WE CARE?

Establishing the context and impact for Learning Loss
LEARNING LOSS

• Learning loss can be described as “unfinished learning”
  • Missed learning from disruption of the academic year
  • Attrition of previously acquired learning
  • Disengaged learning

• Students lost five months in math and four months in reading (K-12)
• Not just academic knowledge, but also skills, behaviors, and mindsets
  (McKinsey Report, 2023)
WHAT IS THE IMPACT?

• Chronic absenteeism up 12% in 8th-12th graders; 42% of those classified as “chronically absent” are not attending school at all
• Significantly impacted mental health: dealing with social isolation, caregiving responsibilities, anxiety, loss of loved ones, etc.
• Lower levels of engagement, motivation, and loss of community of learning that is critical for student success
• Widened pre-existing opportunity gaps by hitting disadvantaged communities the hardest
• National economic impact: $128-188 billion every year as the cohort enters the workforce (lower college-going rates, lower academic achievement, depressed earnings, higher mental health)

(McKinsey Report, 2023; Marlier, Durham, Brooks & Kerr, 2020; Besser et al., 2020)
HOW DO WE KNOW?

Data and indicators at every level show Learning Loss impacting our students and institutions
ACT test scores fall to lowest levels in 32 years

2023 Cohort were HS freshman when the pandemic began

4 in 10 graduating seniors did not meet ACT college readiness benchmark

Compounding factors:
- Who is taking it?
- Test optional impacts
Impacts of COVID-19: Preliminary STAAR Data Analysis

The negative impact of COVID-19 erased years of improvement in reading and math.

- Reading: % Met Grade Level or Above
  - 2012: 44%, 2019: 44%, 2021: 33%

- Math: % Met Grade Level or Above

Source: Division of 2021 TEA Audit

STAAR results showed a decrease in academic performance with a larger decline in math than reading.

- Reading: % Met Grade Level or Above
  - 2019: 47%, 2021: 43%

- Math: % Met Grade Level or Above
  - 2019: 50%, 2021: 35%
HOW DO WE KNOW?
INSTITUTIONAL-LEVEL INDICATORS

TSI STATUS OF INCOMING FRESHMEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Met</th>
<th>Non Met</th>
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<td>579</td>
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<td>Fall 2021</td>
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<td>1266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2022</td>
<td>1817</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
HOW DO WE KNOW?

STUDENT SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Decreases in retention and persistence rate
- Widening of the gap between college-ready and not college-ready students
- Increases in academic warning/insufficient SAP
HOW IS THIS IMPACTING OUR INSTITUTIONS?

- Declining performance indicators
  - Recruitment, Retention, Course Completion, Persistence, Graduation

- Loss of revenue
  - Incoming students and persisting students

- Faculty & Staff fatigue/burnout
  - Closing the skill gaps for students along with disciplinary content
  - Loss of community in the discipline/college/profession
WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT IT ON OUR OWN CAMPUS?

Leaning in to learn about Learning Loss
LEARNING LOSS FORUMS

100 faculty across the colleges participated in focus groups in Spring ’23 with four guiding questions:

Objectives:

• Understand the faculty experience related to learning loss
• Identifying patterns and needed support for our students
• Discussing solutions and develop strategies for addressing learning loss as an institution
“This is a new iteration of student, and I am vastly underprepared.”

– College of Education faculty member
FACULTY EXPERIENCES OF LEARNING LOSS

- Lack of Engagement
- De-prioritization of School
- Product over Process
- Expectations of Continuous Flexibility
- Student Life Changes
LEARNING LOSS RELATED SKILLS GAPS IN STUDENTS

“Students just don’t know how to ‘do’ school anymore.”

– College of Education faculty member
SKILL GAPS OF STUDENTS

Life Management
- Time Management
- Prioritization
- Resilience
- Self-Efficacy/Self-Advocacy

Academic
- Critical Thinking
- Writing
- Self-Directed Learning
- Information Fluency

Professional
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Career Direction and Goal Setting
FACULTY INNOVATIONS

“…it’s messy and uncomfortable, and that’s OK.”

– College of Health Sciences faculty member
FACULTY INNOVATIONS

Pedagogical Strategies

• Assessment of learning
• Increasing group work/peer-to-peer engagement
• Relevancy of the content
• Power of the peer
  • Role modeling and peer feedback
• Role of technology

Building Community

• Connection to the faculty member
  • “Bringing humanity into instruction”
    • Newton Gresham Library faculty member
• Connection to each other
  • “Two people who do not know what they are doing is better than one.”
    • College of Arts & Media Faculty Member
HOW THE INSTITUTION CAN SUPPORT FACULTY

“The role of the faculty member is different than in the past… it’s so much more.”

– College of Education faculty member
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
“If you are going to tell me to meet them where they are, then I need you to teach me how to meet them there.”
– Newton Gresham Library faculty member

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS OF STUDENTS
“I am overwhelmed as a faculty member by their need for emotional support, and I cannot even get to content.”
- College of Humanities and Social Sciences faculty member

REVIEW OF FACULTY WORKLOAD
“I need time to learn and innovate to deal with [learning loss], and I don’t have that time right now.”
– College of Health Sciences faculty member

RESOURCE AWARENESS AND NAVIGATIONAL ASSISTANCE
Faculty shared that they knew the institution offered many things to support student success, but navigating those resources was time consuming, and they did not have the time to keep up with changes when they wanted to refer students.
INSTITUTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Faculty Support

- Mental Health Training and Support Resources
- Focused Professional Development
- Student Success Modules for Optional Course Adoption
- Student Success Resource Hub
- Review of Faculty Workload

Student Support

- Revision of UNIV 1101 BearkatU to Address Learning Loss Skill Gaps
  - Professional Communication
  - Writing skills
  - Academic planning/goal setting
  - Resiliency
- Integration of Career Readiness across the Curriculum
- Expansion of Academic Support Services
  - Academic Coaching
  - Embedded Tutoring
MAIN TAKEAWAYS

For students, the cognitive impact is important, but the academic behaviors possibly more so.

Both faculty and students need rebuilding of community and support.

Successful strategies must address both faculty and student success simultaneously.
WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

Designing an institutional approach to studying and addressing Learning Loss
INTERVENTIONS

- Student Success Modules
- Student Success Hub Website
- Professional Development Workshop Series
- Majors Fair
- Course Revisions to UNIV 1101 BearkatU
- Growth of Learning Coach model with intrusive/proactive outreach
STUDENT SUCCESS
LEARNING MODULES

- Use of LMS to host a sandbox of modules for faculty to adopt into their courses

- Topics addressed:
  - (8) Career based on NACE Career Competencies
  - (2) Academic Skill Building
    - Course Success Plan
    - Project Management
  - Professional Communication
  - Self-Advocacy
  - Get the Grade You Want
    - More intensive student success skill building
Centralized Website for faculty to find resources to support students
Based on student need and then referrals to applicable resources
Postcards with QR code mailed to everyone on campus
www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/student-success-resource-hub/
FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

• Topics center on findings from Learning Loss Forums
  • Profile of the student in the classroom and teaching innovation
  • Navigating the Mental Health of our Students
  • Teaching with Empathy
  • Role of the Peer in the Classroom

WORKSHOP SERIES
Addressing Learning Loss at SHSU

- Sept. 6
  Profile of Students in Our Classroom:
  Practical Tips for your SHSU Classroom Today
  Presented and recorded by PACE
  2:00 pm  CHSS C090

- Sept. 20
  Navigating the New Normal:
  Intersectionality of Student Mental Health and Learning Loss
  Presented by the Counseling Center
  12:00 pm  LSC 324

- Oct. 5
  Teaching with Empathy
  Presented by Dr. Shelly Cleverger
  2:00 pm  LSC 324

- Nov. 2
  Role of the Peer Mentor in the Classroom and Student Success
  Presented by Dr. Scott Miller
  12:30 pm  LSC 241A

Register in Talent Management using the QR code below:

For more information, please contact Amy Salazar
asalazar@shsu.edu

*Lunch will be provided

Workshops developed in partnership with PACE, the Counseling Center, and CHSS

Dr. Scott Miller
CAREER DIRECTION: MAJORS FAIR

• Earlier exploration of majors/pathways; student organizations; internship opportunities; undergraduate research
• Opt-in for departments= 100% participation
• 860+ students; 125+ faculty participated
EARLY INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

2000+ students impacted by the Student Success Modules

Over 100 faculty in attendance at Learning Loss Professional Development sessions

Embedding career exploration into the curriculum = MAJOR success!
WHAT’S NEXT?

• Student-facing Learning Loss Focus - future report
• Continue measuring adoption and impact of interventions
• Developing a faculty community for continued research and potential Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) publications
THANK YOU!

Please feel free to reach out if I can support you or your work.

Amy Salazar
People-focused | Strategic Thinker |
Driven to Advance Educational Equity
Sam Houston State University | University of Alabama

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