What Disruption Can Mean for Higher Ed in Prison

Dr. Christopher Cone, Th.D, Ph.D, Ph.D

President / Research Professor

ccone@drcone.com

drcone.com
agathonedu.com
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Disruption or Industry Death

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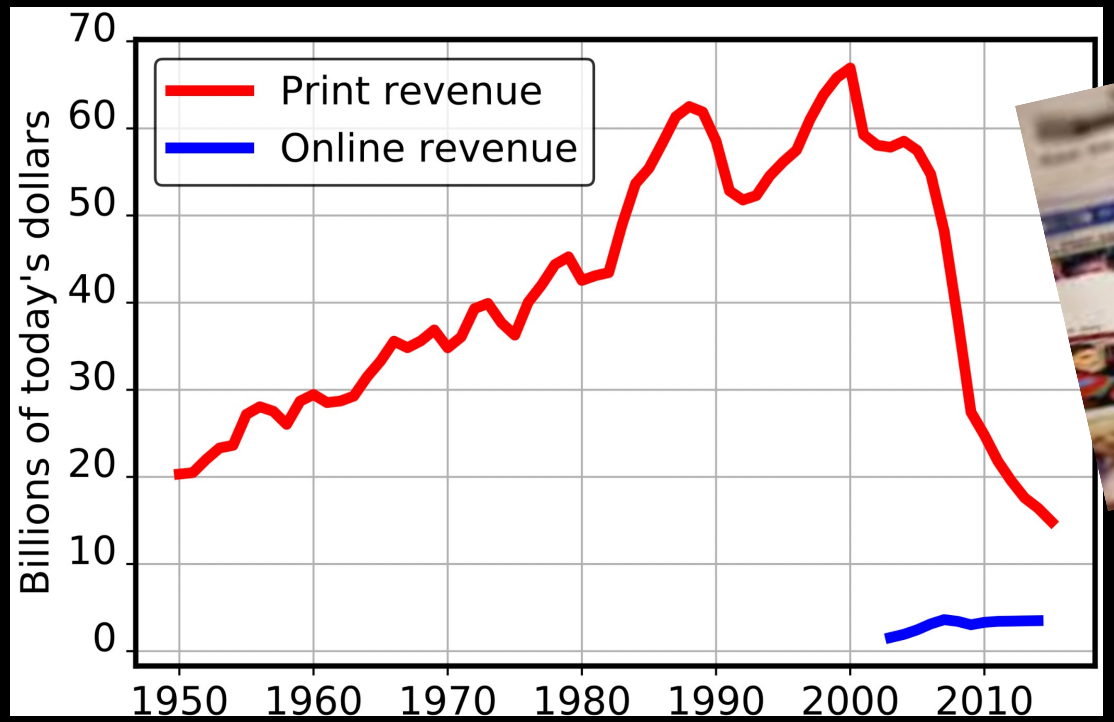

"Trends & Numbers". Newspaper Association of America. March 14, 2012. Archived from the original on September 18, 2012. Retrieved September 18, 2012.

Catalysts for Disruption

1. Regulatory Variables – identifying the customer
2. Cost Models – perception of cost up, value down
3. Customer Satisfaction – workforce-ready or not
4. Covid 19 – proof of concept and changed perceptions
5. Equity in Access – need for data, reassessing pathways
6. Demographic Cliff (2026) – supply and demand
7. Artificial Intelligence (AI) – focus, curriculum design

1. Regulatory Variables

Who is the customer?

- Govt?
- Employer?
- Learner?

Increased Federal and State Accountabilities

- Title IX
- Critical Race Theory
- Funding and Reporting

1. Regulatory Variables

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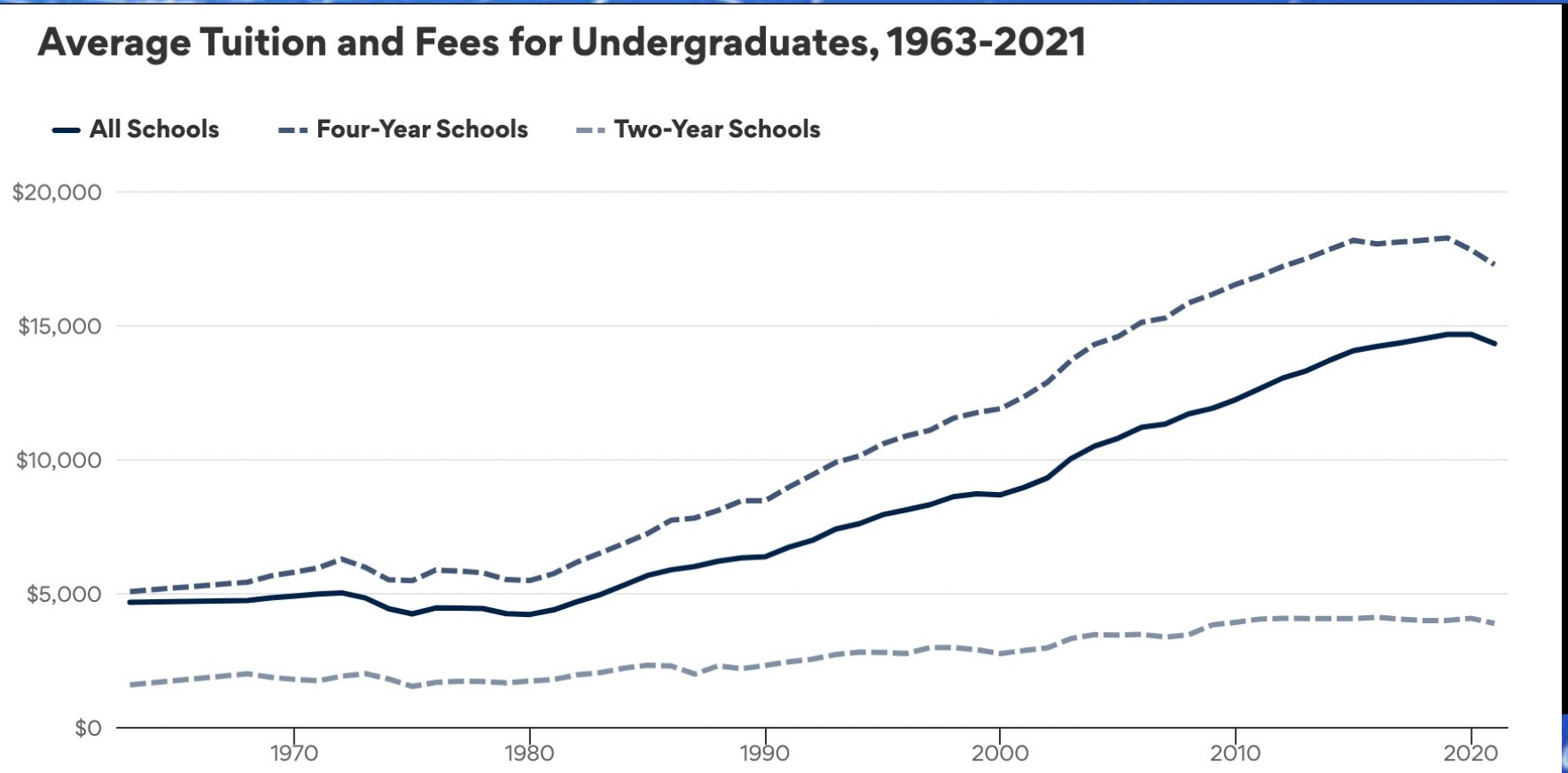
Practical Implications and Recommendations

- The institution must be convicted of its true end user and must develop operating policy to support and protect that.
- The institution must take extreme caution to maintain fidelity in communications with all stakeholder groups regarding its ultimate value proposition.

2. Cost Models



https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21_330.10.asp

2. Cost Models

- “New technology and improved methods can increase production at a steel mill, for example, but there’s not much innovation to introduce in a traditional 10-person literature seminar without sacrificing quality” –Brianna McGuran, **College Tuition Inflation: Compare The Cost Of College Over Time,May 9, 2023,** https://www.forbes.com/advisor/student-loans/college-tuition-inflation/

2. Cost Models HEP

- The most common barriers to continuing postsecondary education for students post-release, as reported by program staff completing the survey, were finances and the need to prioritize finding safe and stable housing and jobs. – Gaskill, Gould, Price, Castro, and Lerman, The Landscape of Higher Education in Prison 2020-2021, June 2023, viewed at https://assets.website-files.com/64cda0306813587b455cb50d/64cda0306813587b455cc0a7_TheLandscapeofHigherEducationinPrison-2020-2021.pdf

3. Customer Satisfaction

- Perception: high cost, low payoff, bad value, irrelevant
- Increase in employer education-providers
- Microcredentials
- The demise of liberal arts?

3. Customer Satisfaction HEP

- The most common credential pathway for students in prison is an Associate's Degree of all types, and opportunities to obtain a graduate degree were very rare. – Gaskill, Gould, Price, Castro, and Lerman, The Landscape of Higher Education in Prison 2020-2021, June 2023, viewed at https://assets.website-files.com/64cda0306813587b455cb50d/64cda0306813587b455cc0a7_TheLandscapeofHigherEducationinPrison-2020-2021.pdf

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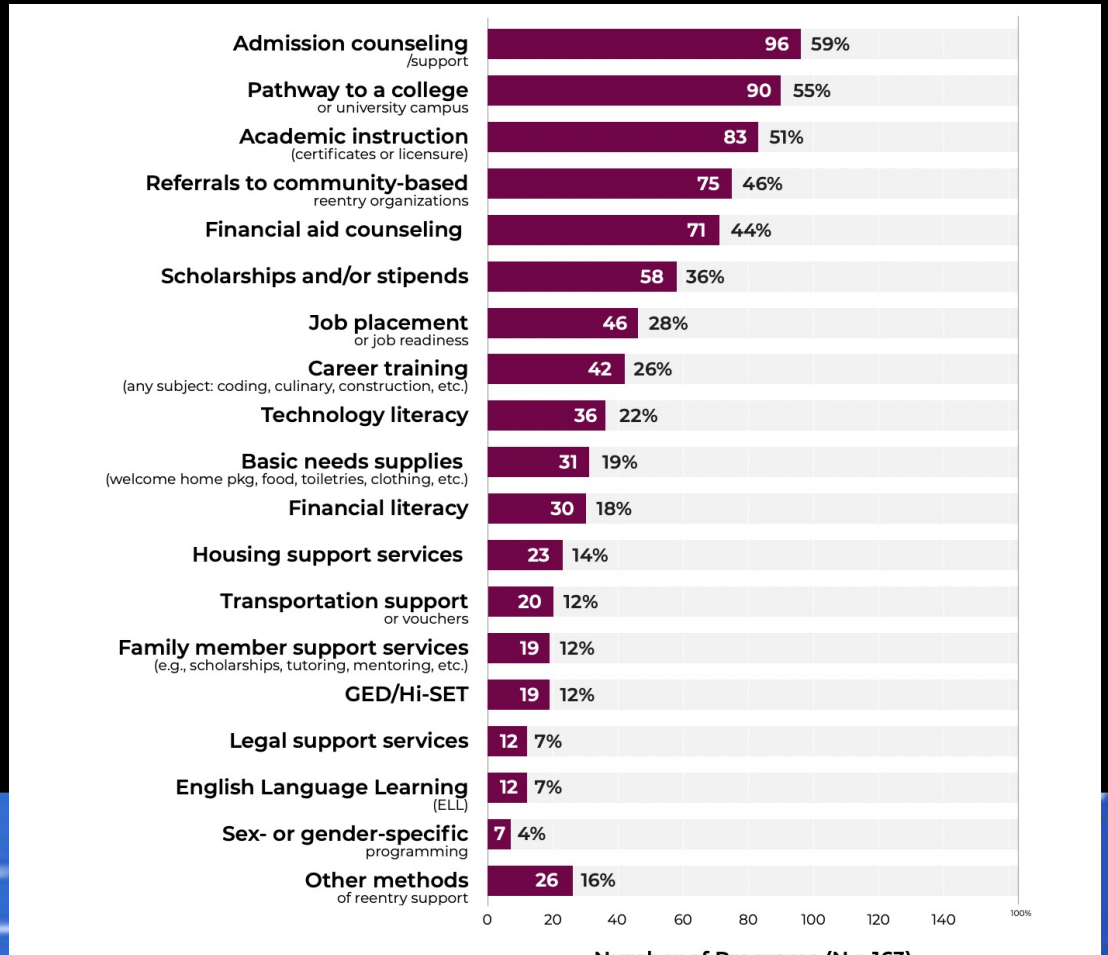

3. Customer Satisfaction

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Practical Implications and Recommendations

- Reposition general education and liberal arts, identifying value for practical workforce and economic benefit (soft-skills, critical thinking, and problem solving for example) while also helping to educate stakeholders on the social and other advantages of such skills and programs.
- Commit to continuous improvement in assessment; identify and invest in programs most directly contributing to the institutional mission, divest of those that aren't contributing. Resulting heightened institutional integrity and competitive advantage in emphasized programs can lead to expansion of stakeholder groups.

4. Covid 19

- Tech advancements and broadened usage
- Remote work normalized
- Interruption to educational progress

4. Covid 19

- “remote instruction only is being used in a range of ways during the ongoing global pandemic and by many programs that would normally provide on-site, face-to-face classes.”

– Gaskill, Gould, Price, Castro, and Lerman, The Landscape of Higher Education in Prison 2020-2021, June 2023, viewed at https://assets.website-files.com/64cda0306813587b455cb50d/64cda0306813587b455cc0a7_TheLandscapeofHigherEducationinPrison-2020-2021.pdf

4. Covid 19

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Practical Implications and Recommendations

- Partner with tech providers to include tech services and literacy tools in enrollment packages.
- Develop tech-focused advising, counseling, and tutoring to help foster tech literacy to improve college readiness.
- Formatting education modules and services to minimize the technology demands and increase access.

5. Equity In Access

- “higher education must do better than relying on recidivism reduction as the sole measure of programmatic success. Better understanding of student outcomes, academic quality, civic engagement, and soft skill development associated with HEP will help both practitioners and policymakers create the environments within which incarcerated students can thrive.”

- Michael Scott Brick & Julie Ajinkya, PhD, Supporting Success: The Higher Education in Prison Key Performance Indicator Framework, Sept. 2020, viewed at https://www.ihep.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/text_only_-_supporting_success.higheredinprison_kpi_framework_0.pdf

5. Equity In Access

- “As conversations around racial injustice in America continue, the HEP Key Performance Indicator Framework highlights the transformative impact that HEP can have on populations that have been disproportionately imprisoned by the nation’s justice system. Though it addresses just part of the problems that plague the nation’s justice system, offering strong postsecondary opportunities in prisons can help disrupt the cycle of re-incarceration. The HEP Key Performance Indicator framework helps support HEP programs in rising to the highest standards and expectations of their students, institutions, and communities to create a more equitable future for those currently incarcerated and beyond..”

- Michael Scott Brick & Julie Ajinkya, PhD, Supporting Success: The Higher Education in Prison Key Performance Indicator Framework, Sept. 2020, viewed at https://www.ihep.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/text_only_-_supporting_success.higheredinprison_kpi_framework_0.pdf

5. Equity In Access HEP

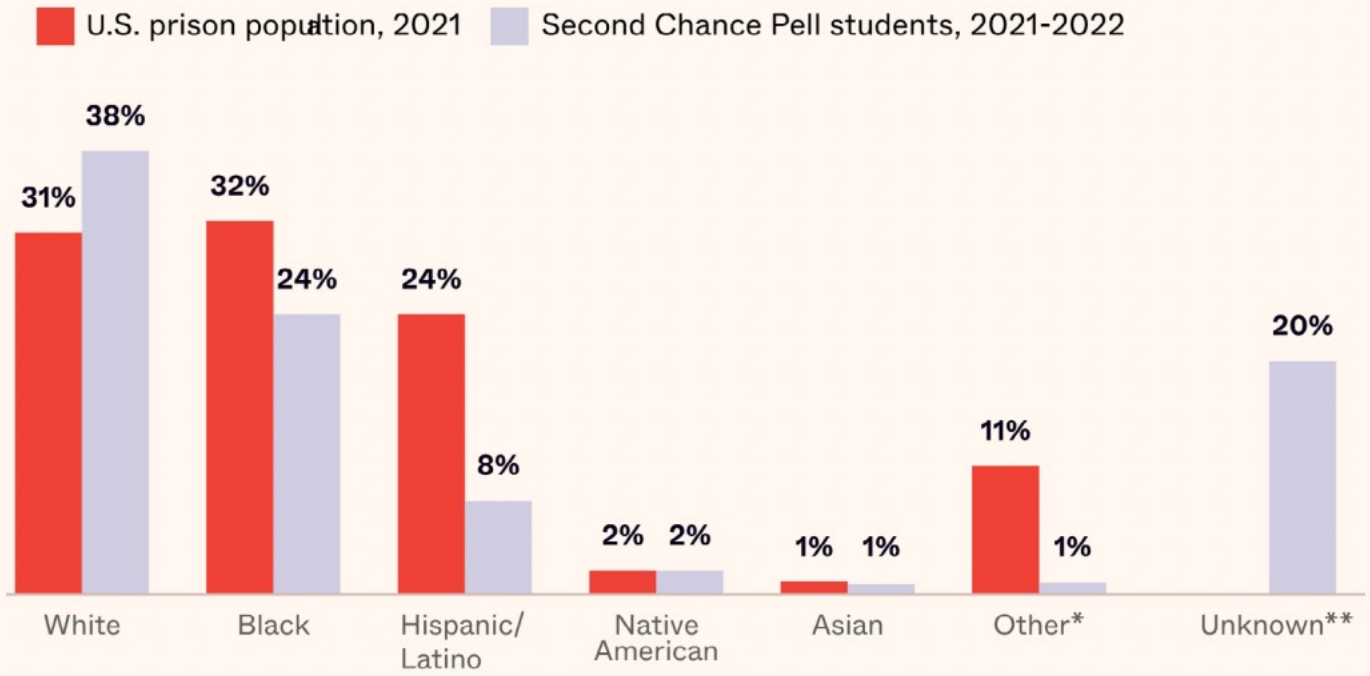
- "Although there are more than 300 prisons in the South, there are only an estimated 26 credit-bearing higher education in prison programs." – https://laughinggull.org/higher-education-in-prison/

- the South has the greatest number of colleges/universities providing postsecondary education in prison. – Gaskill, Gould, Price, Castro, and Lerman, The Landscape of Higher Education in Prison 2020-2021, June 2023, viewed at https://assets.website-files.com/64cda0306813587b455cb50d/64cda0306813587b455cc0a7_TheLandscapeofHigherEducationinPrison-2020-2021.pdf

5. Equity In Access HEP

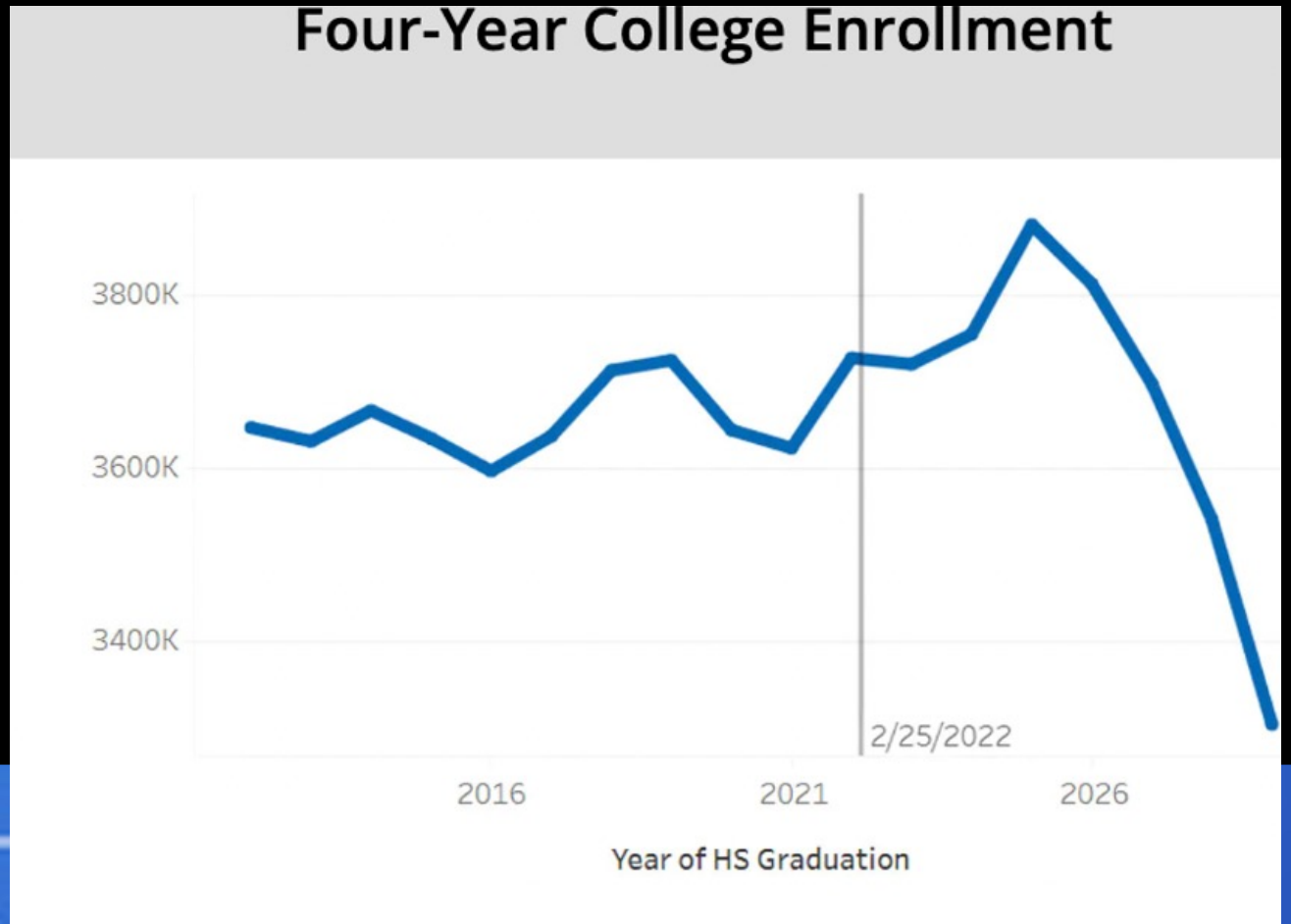
Niloufer Taber and Asha Muralidharan, Second Chance Pell: Six Years of Expanding Higher Education Programs in Prisons, 2016–2022, June 2023,viewed at: https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/second-chance-pell-six-years-of-expanding-access-to-education-in-prison.pdf

Figure 3. Race and ethnicity of Second Chance Pell students and U.S. prison population, 2021-2022



6. Demographic Cliff

https://www.synario.com/resources/blog/enrollment-cliff/



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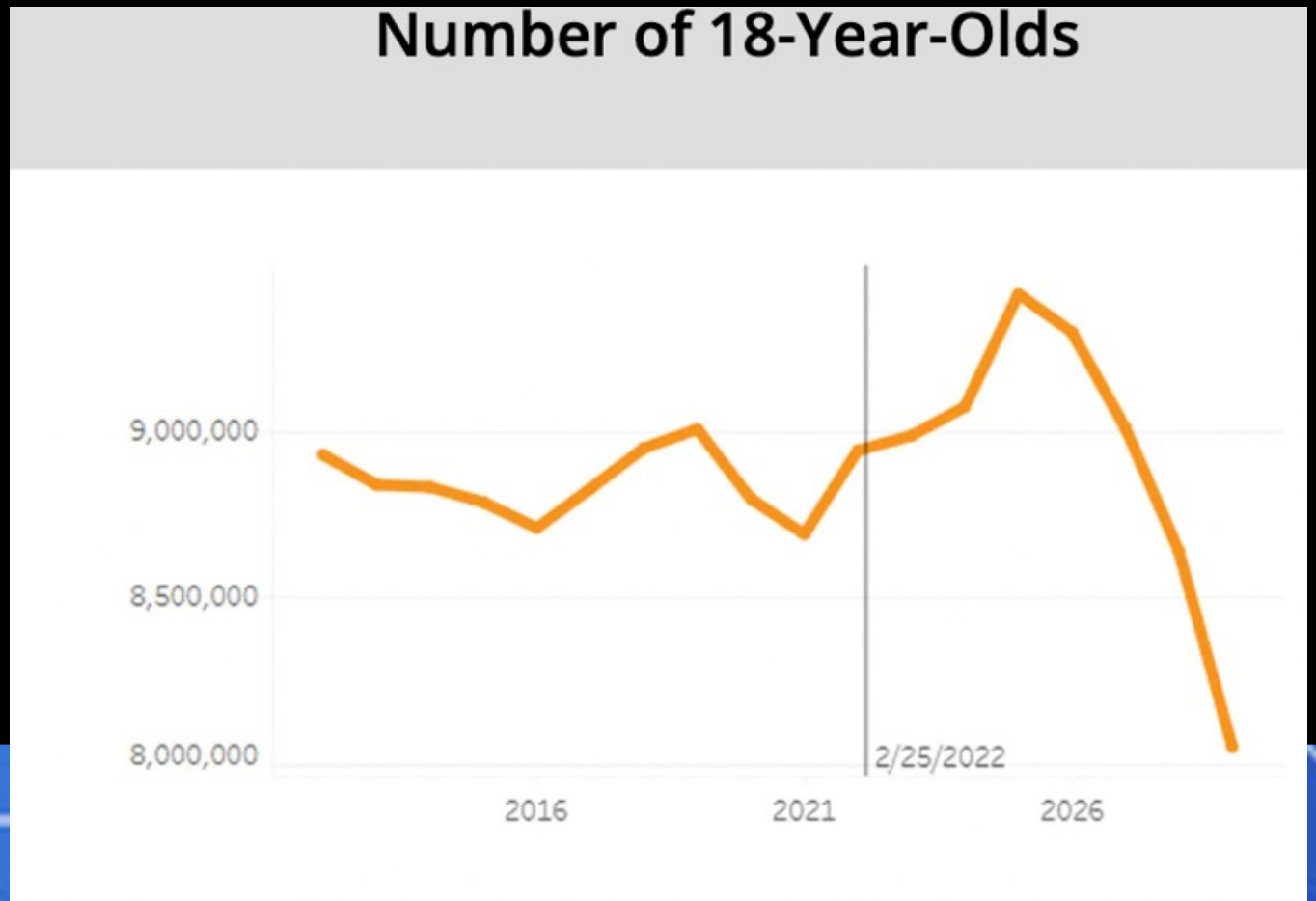

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In three years, the number of college-bound students is projected to decrease by 15% over the next decade due to a sharp decline in the number of births following the Great Recession. This decline, known as the "birth dearth," was so blunt and significant that it will lead the nation over the edge of a demographic cliff (or enrollment cliff for higher ed) after 2025. Between 2025 and 2029, the number of college-bound students will decline by over 400,000 fewer students in a span of four years, an average loss of 100,000 students per year.

–Nathan Grawe's Higher Education Demand Index

6. Demographic Cliff

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Practical Implications and Recommendations

- Educators and institutions must prioritize ways to remove obstacles to successful enrollments.
- Survey applied but not enrolled students and respond to the data.
- Provide heightened personal guidance through the recruiting, application, and enrollment processes.

6. Demographic Cliff

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Practical Implications and Recommendations

- Recognize that the enrollment journey doesn't end until the student is in the classroom (digital or otherwise).
- Identify partners and stakeholders who can contribute to costs to decrease financial burden on students while building needed programs.
    - Example: Develop academic programs in cooperation with corporations to meet their workforce needs [the corporate partner underwrites a faculty position, and provides scholarship dollars and internship opportunities, the institution prepares work-ready graduates for that specific corporation and context].

6. Demographic Cliff

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Practical Implications and Recommendations

- Maximize and leverage higher revenue/profit programs to help subsidize other important though less profitable programs.
- Develop marketing skills among all stakeholders (every faculty, for example, is an advertiser for the institution).
- Commit to learner success. The mission is accomplished (helping learners grow and succeed), while providing the helpful byproduct of maximizing current enrollments and increasing future enrollments (through alumni marketing [passive and active]).

7. Artificial Intelligence

- Generative AI
- Rapidly changing curriculum design
- Learners ahead of faculty

7. Artificial Intelligence

"It allows university teachers to focus on the most important part of their work, "teaching the students, rather than teaching a curriculum…Far from automating away our jobs, AI can automate our way into our jobs, to let us once again focus on the important, meaningful parts." – Shlomo Argamon, Associate Provost for AI, Touro University, quoted in Gil Press, Is AI Going to Transform Higher Education, and How? Forbes, February 14, 2024, viewed at https://www.forbes.com/sites/gilpress/2024/02/14/is-ai-going-to-transform-higher-education-and-how/.

7. Artificial Intelligence

"professors must prepare students to use the technology effectively in their lives and careers…Students will especially need to learn skills related to effective prompt engineering…The more comfortable that faculty become with using AI, the better they will be at teaching students how to use this skill ethically and effectively in the years to come." – Anthony Hié, Claire Thouary, How AI Is Reshaping Higher Education, October 17, 2023, viewed at: https://www.aacsb.edu/insights/articles/2023/10/how-ai-is-reshaping-higher-education

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Positive Impacts Of HEP Programs

Benefits of 2nd Chance Pell:

Personal and community development
Job training
Racial equity
Safety (public, and in prisons)
Government savings

Niloufer Taber and Asha Muralidharan, Second Chance Pell: Six Years of Expanding Higher Education Programs in Prisons, 2016–2022, June 2023,viewed at: https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/second-chance-pell-six-years-of-expanding-access-to-education-in-prison.pdf

Case Study for Disruptive Adaptation

Priorities for HEP

1. Compliance (for safety and rehabilitation)
2. Compliance
3. Compliance
4. Institutional Mission Compatibility
5. Betterment and Re-Entry Prep for Justice involved

Iowa Consortium for Higher Ed In Prison

ICHEP
Iowa Consortium for Higher Education in Prison

The Iowa Consortium for Higher Education in Prison (ICHEP) is dedicated to providing high quality and accessible educational opportunities, successful reentry of returning citizens and the restoration of personal dignity for incarcerated individuals.

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ICHEP Outcomes

1. Educational opportunities
2. **Successful reentry**
3. **Restoration of dignity**

Iowa Consortium for Higher Ed In Prison

- establish the process through which postsecondary programs are considered and approved;
- develop governance processes for the Consortium;
- provide high quality educational opportunities;
- share information between member colleges;

Iowa Consortium for Higher Ed In Prison

- increase articulation of students among the member colleges and universities and correctional institutions;
- urge legislators to continue state and federal financial support;
- identify and/or develop funding sources;
- cultivate constituency relations, and
- work to develop effective DOC policies and procedures for serving incarcerated students.

ICHEP Commitments

1. Effective processes
2. Information sharing
3. Increased articulation
4. Active in support and funding
5. Active in strengthening cooperation
6. ….

ICHEP Challenge

Policies/procedure

Serving

or

Serving

Policies/procedure

ICHEP Challenge

Developing a model for serving incarcerated learners in which policies and procedures are means rather than priority.

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