
Transfer in Crisis

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Background



- 3 weeks before NETA conference: Mount Ida College (MA) suddenly announces closure
- Added presentation to address
- Thanks to co-presenters:
 - Dawn Bryden, Bay Path University
 - Annie McDonough, Salem State University
 - Jill Reitzell, Lasell College

Overview

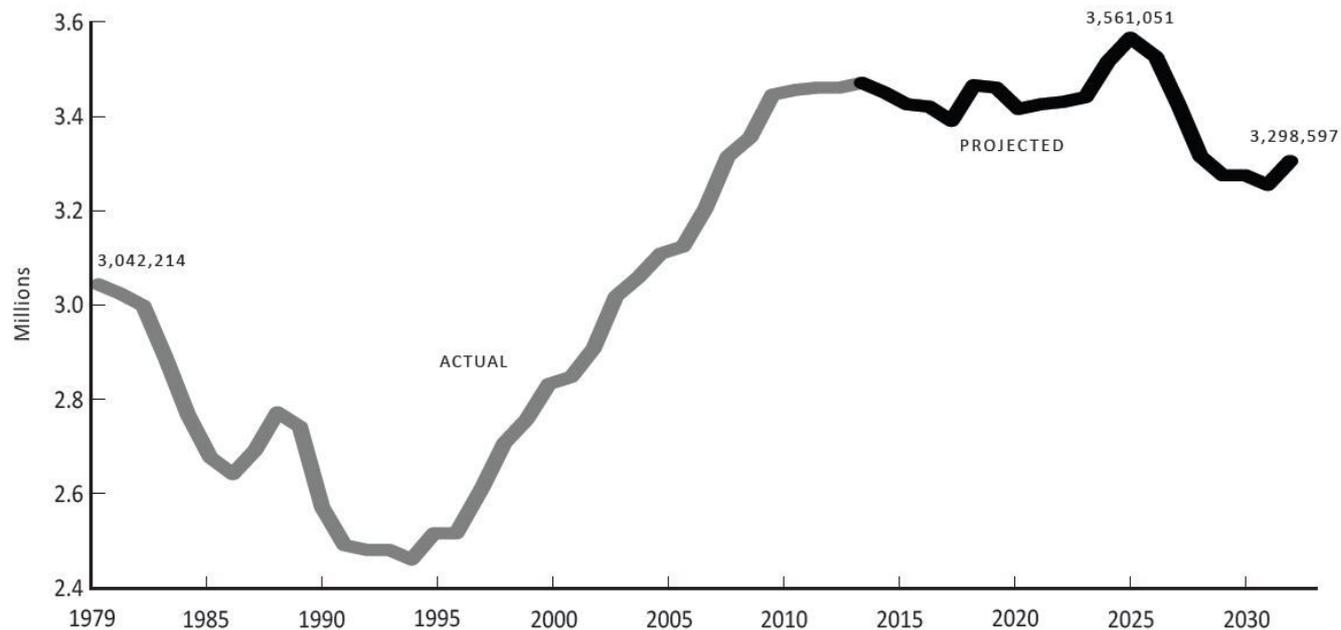
- Why are these crises occurring?
- What types of transfer crises are there?
- What have NETA schools done to help during these crises?
- What are best practices for the next crisis?
 - Focus on admission/ Registrar

Enrollment in Crisis

- Clayton Christensen, Harvard Business School: 2011 prediction that half of all US colleges would close or go bankrupt in 10-15 years
- Thomas Frey, futurist: 2013 prediction that 30% of colleges will collapse by 2020

Enrollment in Crisis

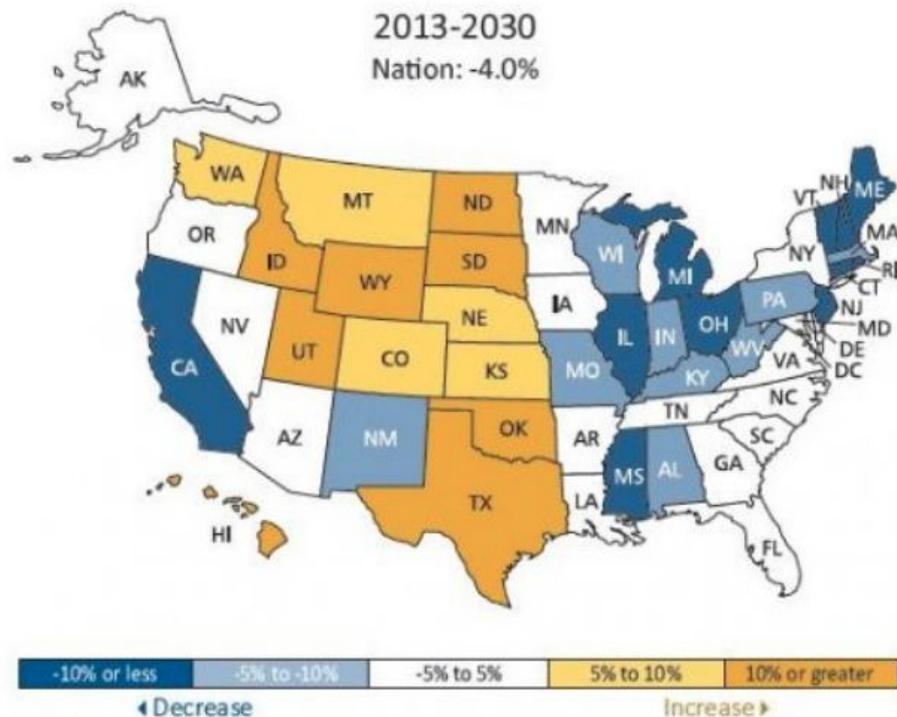
Figure 1.1. Total U.S. Public and Private High School Graduates (Actual and Projected) 1979 to 2032



Source: William J. Hussar and Tabitha M. Bailey. "Projections of Education Statistics to 2024: Forty-Third Edition."

Enrollment in Crisis

Projected US high school graduates by state



Inside Higher Ed Headlines

February 22: Atlantic Union College Will Close

February 23: Small Black College Will Close

April 2: Denmark Tech Struggles to Hang On

April 6: Mount Ida College to Close, With Campus Going to UMass

April 26: New Report Recommends Mergers in Pennsylvania

April 30: Another Small College on Brink of Closure

May 18: Oregon's Marylhurst University to Close

The Cases

1. Students at colleges in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria
2. Sweet Briar College announces closure... but stays open
3. Marian Court College's sudden closure
4. Wheelock College merges into Boston University
5. Lasell College and Mount Ida College explore merger, but don't... Mount Ida then closes

The Crisis: Hurricane Maria

- 230,000 students in 100+ colleges in Puerto Rico
- September 20, 2017: Hurricane Maria makes landfall in Puerto Rico
- Buildings destroyed so extensively that some colleges cannot afford 2% insurance deductible
- Months of power outages
- Recovery is ongoing

Actions

- Springfield Technical and Holyoke Community Colleges offer in-state tuition
- Smith College, Mt. Holyoke College, American International College and Bay Path University offer assistance
 - Example: Bay Path scholarship of \$25,000 per year
- DoE emergency relief \$ available to colleges enrolling 20+ affected students

The Crisis: Sweet Briar College

- March 3, 2015: Sweet Briar announces it will close at the end of the semester
- March 4, 2015: inquiries from Sweet Briar students
- March 10, 2015: invitation to 2-day transfer fair event (March 18-19)
- June 20, 2015: court ruling to keep Sweet Briar open

Actions

- Rearrange travel schedule to attend fair
- Place ad in 3 local papers
- Outreach to past withdraws at Sweet Briar
- Expedite TCEs, waive 80 transfer-credit limit, accept gen eds
- Expedite app review
- Accept HS transcripts + standardized testing from SBC admission office
- Offer in-person and phone meetings with faculty, coaches, and students
- Match cost of attendance



To The Sweet Briar College Community

Three weeks ago, we at Simmons College learned the surprising and sad news that Sweet Briar College plans to close on August 25, 2015. Our hearts are heavy and our thoughts are with everyone in the Sweet Briar community—students, faculty, staff, alumnae, and the cities of Sweet Briar and Lynchburg, Virginia.

The mission of Sweet Briar is as important and relevant today as it was more than one hundred years ago when the college was founded in 1901. As a sister women's college, we believe our collective work in preparing women for positions of leadership in communities and in the world is critical.

We salute and honor the traditions of Sweet Briar, the accomplishments of thousands of Sweet Briar alumnae, and the contributions of faculty and staff who support the dreams of Sweet Briar students to "build and reshape their world however their passions lead them."

Helen G. Drinan
Helen G. Drinan, President
Simmons College
Boston, Massachusetts



The Crisis: Marian Court College

- Marian Court was founded in 1964 as a two-year secretarial school for women, in 1984 they began to offer associate's degree programs, in 2012 they began offering 4 year degrees in business and criminal justice.
- Enrollment dropped by about one-third in a decade.
- 3 PM Monday, June 15, 2015 - Email goes out to students, faculty and staff announcing the closure of campus due to financial problems stemming from generally declining enrollment.
- June 16, 2015 - Salem State University announces that current Marian Court students will be allowed to matriculate. Boston Globe publishes the announcement that morning.
- June 30, 2015 - School officially closes.

Salem State University

- Salem, MA
- 7,300 undergraduates
- 1,600 graduate students
- Public, 4 year, state university
- Liberal arts institution
- Residential and commuter campus

Marian Court College

- Swampscott, MA
- 350 undergraduates
- Private, 4 year, Roman Catholic affiliation
- Liberal arts college
- The only entirely commuter Catholic college in the country

Actions

Registrar's Office

- Student group is created to track Marian Court students in Peoplesoft
- Update all transfer equivalencies
- Creation of a FERPA form to smooth the release of Marian Court records once a student has applied
- Provost to allow exemptions to normal transfer policy (gen ed exemption, SSU free elective credit)

Undergraduate Admissions

- Representatives from admissions, admissions operations, and transfer services are at Marion Court on Wed-Fri
- Marion Court students are invited to schedule individual appointments at Salem State
- Marian Court students are invited to Salem State on Saturday morning for an information session and tour
- Salem State will conduct on the spot admission review, application fee is waived

The Crisis: Wheelock College

- August 2017: announcement that Wheelock and BU were exploring merging
- October 2017: agreement signed for Wheelock to merge into BU
 - Current students able to finish their degree at BU
 - Creation of the Wheelock College of Education and Human Development
- January 2018: outreach from Wheelock to Simmons
 - No Bachelor's in Social Work at BU
 - How can BSW students earn their degree?
- February 2018: head of Simmons BSW reaches out to Undergraduate Admission
- ????????
- June 2018: merge will take effect

Simmons College

- About 1800 undergraduates
- Women-centered college
- Member of the Colleges of the Fenway consortium
- Admitted student profile:
 - HS GPA: 3.44
 - SAT mid 50%: 1150-1300

Wheelock College

- About 700 undergraduates
- Co-educational, 80% women
- Member of the Colleges of the Fenway consortium
- Admitted student profile:
 - HS GPA: 2.88
 - SAT mid 50%: 810-1060

Transitioning Wheelock BSW to Simmons

- Registrar actions:
 - Lift transfer credit limit (80 semester hours)
 - Waive residency requirement (48 semester hours) for rising seniors
 - Accept all credits, regardless of grade
 - Accept Wheelock general education requirements for ours
 - Expedite transfer credit evaluations
- Undergraduate Admission actions
 - “Transition” students, not “transfer” students
 - Schedule open house (transfer BSW major to give tours!)
 - Attend Wheelock’s transfer fair
 - No application, info imported directly into Colleague w/ permission/commitment from student
 - No enrollment deposit required

Challenges & Solutions

Simmons does not admit men; Wheelock is co-ed	BU had to find other options for men in Wheelock's BSW
Simmons housing waitlist	BU housing available
Junior/Senior course sequences are different at Simmons vs. Wheelock	Wheelock's senior BSW courses to be offered at Simmons next year
Different costs, scholarships, & other aid	Tuition and scholarships remain at Wheelock levels, billed by BU; BU pays Simmons
Making students feel welcome	Drop-in advising hours, Simmons swag, connect to current students, personal outreach from BSW chair
Difference in academic profiles	Connect to Center for Student Success early!

The Crisis: Mount Ida College

- February 2018 - Lasell College and Mount Ida College being exploration of a possible merger between the two schools
- Discussions begin on both campuses on how this would affect all students, faculty, and staff
- March 22, 2018 - BoT votes down the measure. Merger is off.
- April 6, 2018 - President Brown from Mount Ida College sends communication out via email to all staff and students that UMass will acquire Mount Ida and the school will cease operations in May 2018.
- Current Mount Ida College students are advised to enroll at UMass Dartmouth, 60+ minutes away

Lasell College

- Newton, MA
- 1,700 Undergraduate Students
- 400 graduate students
- Pre-professionally focused programs
- 80% resident student population - guaranteed on-campus housing

Mount Ida College

- Newton, MA
- 1,500 Undergraduate Students
- Pre-professionally focused programs
- 60% resident student population - housing not guaranteed
- Specialized programs in Forensic Science, Veterinary Technology, Mortuary Science

Challenges & Solutions

Timing - Prime yield season for our other admitted students. Mount Ida students have approximately 1 month to figure out a plan	All hands on deck
Transfer Open House - April 7, 2018	Adding additional staff to handle Open House and droves of walk-ins
Different scholarships & aid	Lasell agrees to match institutional-based aid (costs between the two colleges is almost identical)
Some programs not offered at Lasell OR UMass Dartmouth	Lasell takes on Forensic Science and Biology majors - hires 3 faculty members
Students in all stages of degree completion	Provide pathways for all majors to complete in the same timeline they would have at Mount Ida. Accept all completed coursework for transfer.

Actions

- Undergraduate Admission actions
 - Create “fast application” to collect only the information needed to create student record
 - Students required to report they are in good academic and judicial standing (offer conditional acceptance to all students)
 - Honor acceptance for incoming freshman who were deposited to Mount Ida for the fall
 - Communicate quickly to all constituents
- Academic Affairs
 - Quickly figure out a way to import unique programs and create pathway for graduation
 - Accept all credits, regardless of grade
 - Accept Mount Ida College education requirements for ours

Key Takeaways

- Don't seem desperate
- Be flexible and creative!
- Move quickly! Timing is critical
- Think about *all* constituents
- Put the students first
 - Remember that this is disappointing at best, grief-inducing at worst
- Onboarding is important for retention
- **Don't reach out to students if your institution can't support them**
- Communicate!
- Take your lessons learned to improve... there will be a next time

Discussion

- Does your institution have a plan to help students whose colleges are facing crisis?
- What best practices are you utilizing right now for students from colleges that are closing?