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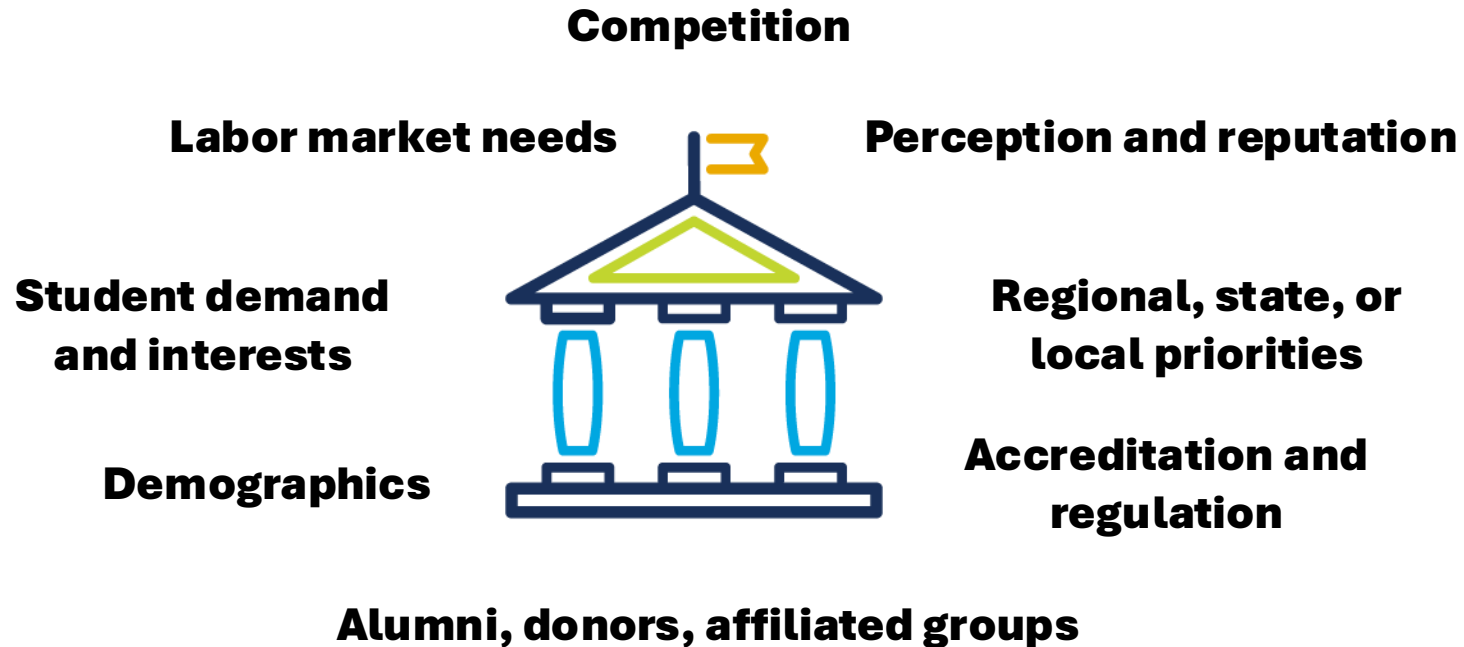
Harnessing External Influences for Strategic Advantage

Jessica Ickes, Vice President, Market and Research Services

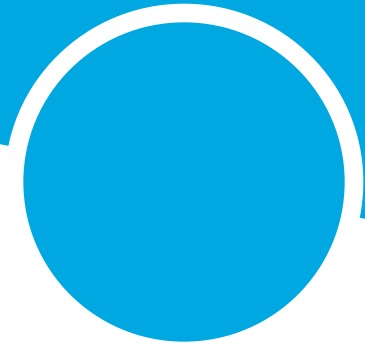
Dr. Ken Newbold, Assistant Vice President, Market and Research Services

External influences

They are all around us and can have positive and negative impacts

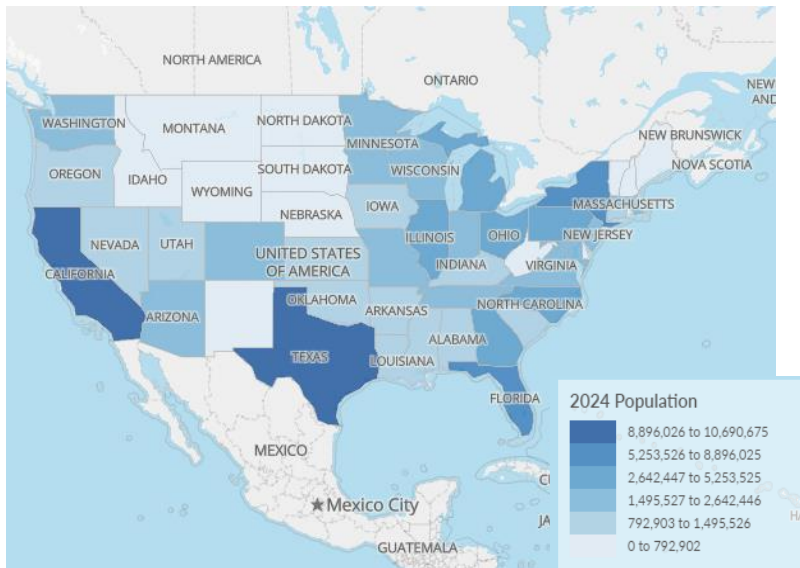


Demographics

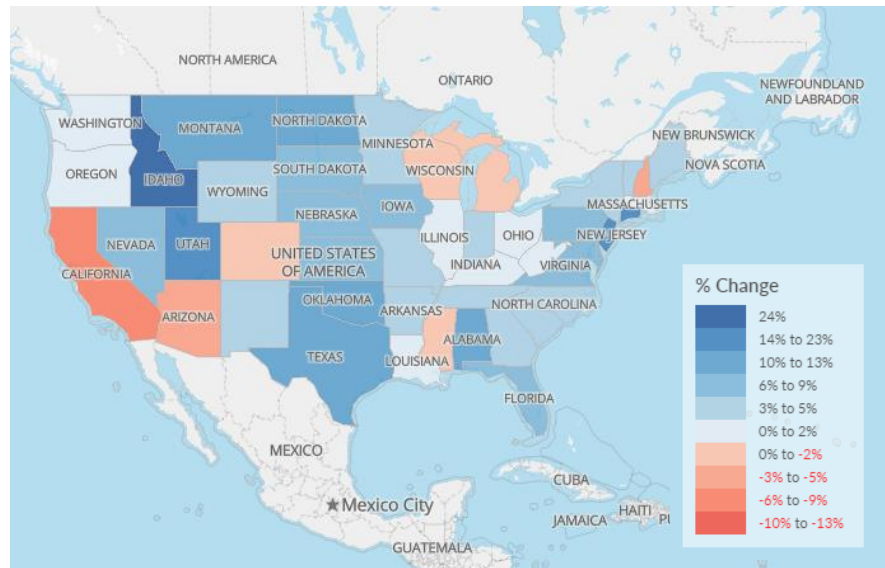


Demographic changes are more than the cliff

2024 national population aged 15-34



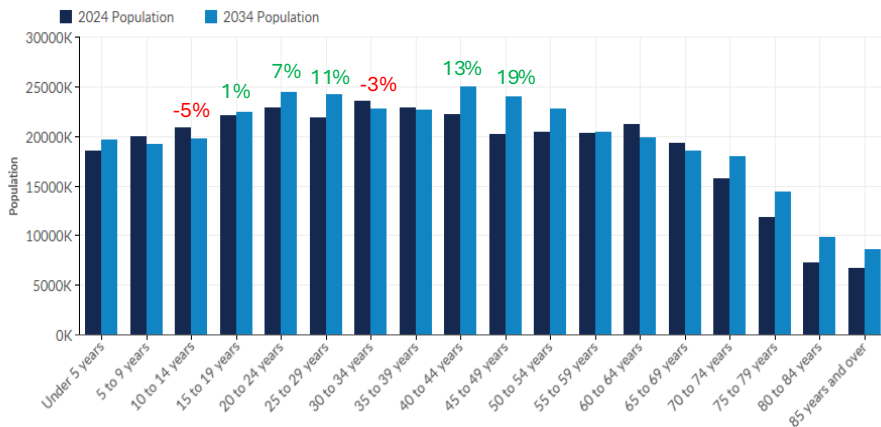
Population change to 2034 aged 15-34



Demographic changes are more than the cliff

National population increase of 6%

Population by Age Cohort



Source: Regional Demographics. Lightcast™.

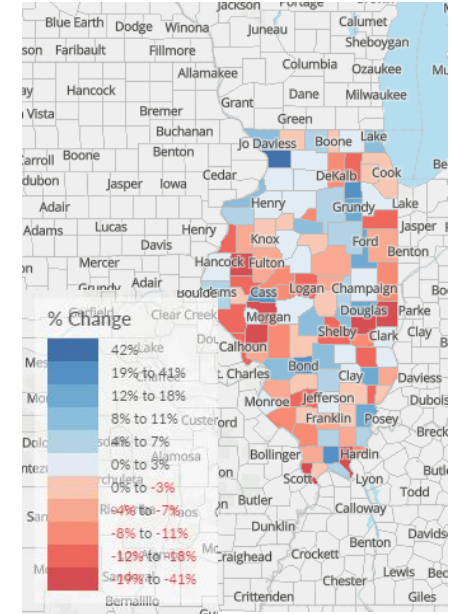
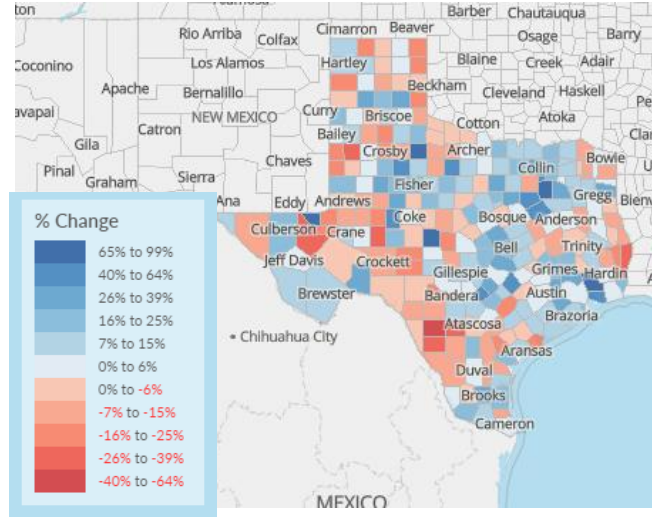
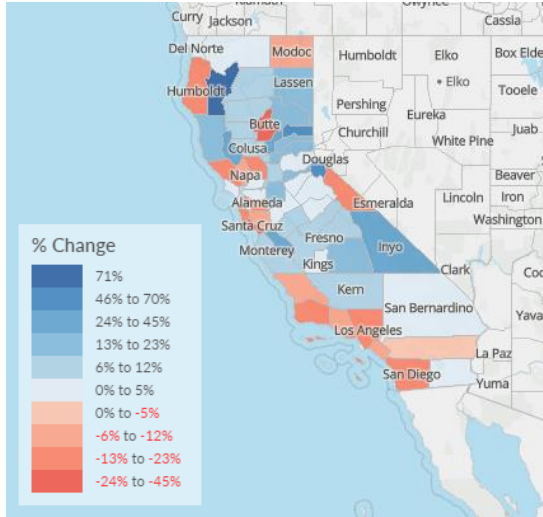


Other factors

- Region, state, locality variation
- Migration patterns— amplified by the pandemic
- Degree attainment rates
- Changes in racial/ethnic composition

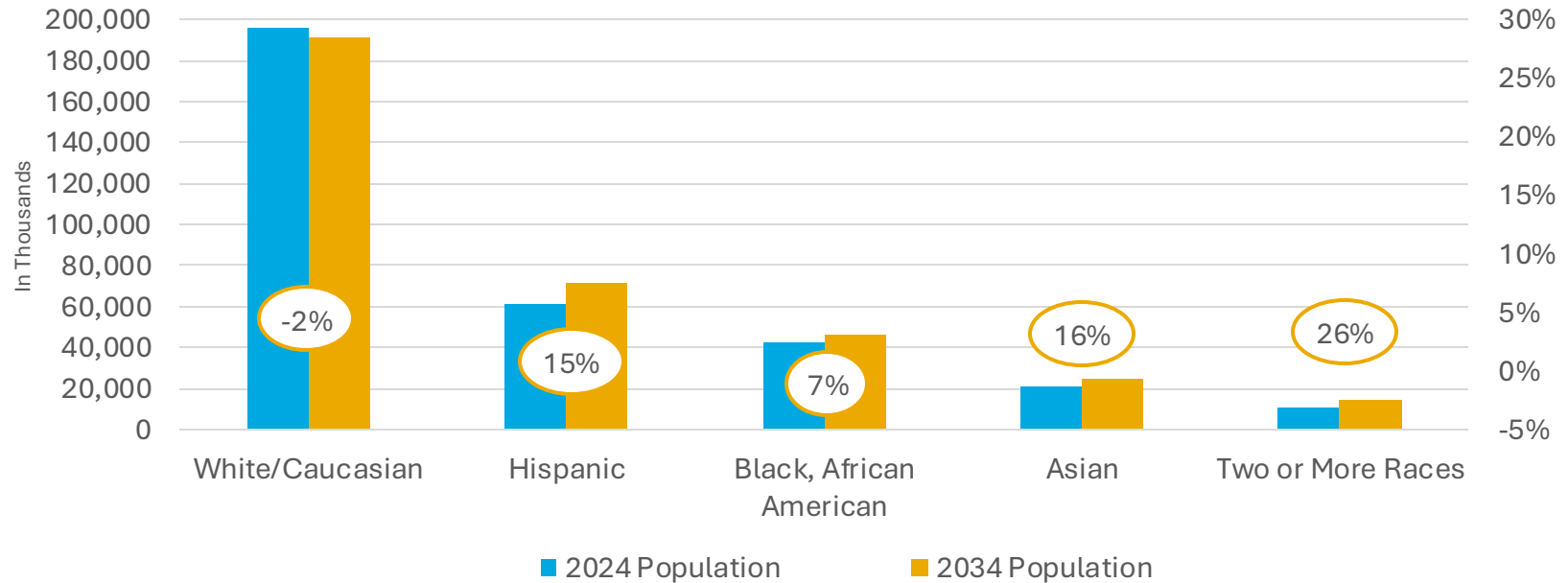
Demographic changes are more than the cliff

Population change to 2034 aged 15-34



Racial Demographic Trends 2024-2034

Projected change in racial demographics in the next decade



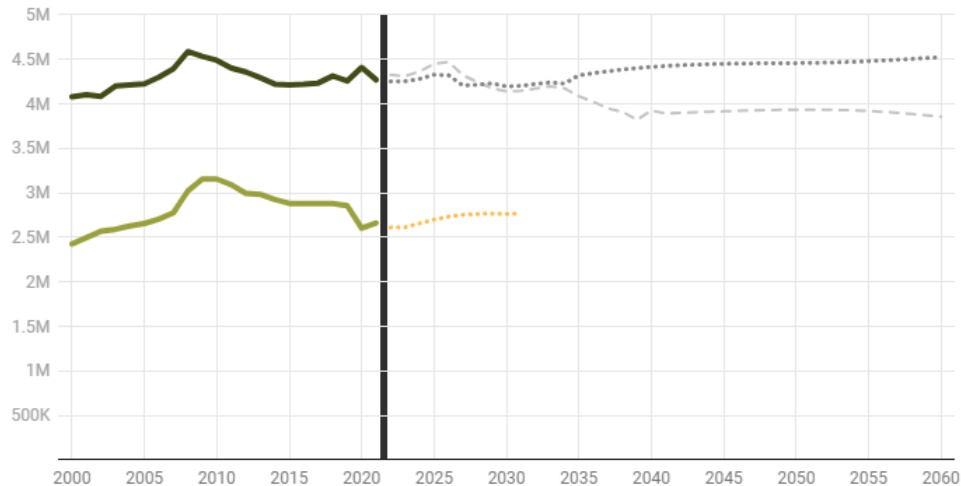
Demographics

The Cliff Part II

Population of 18-Year-Olds Is Projected to Crater

The Census previously forecast, before the pandemic, that the number of 18-year-olds would rebound after 2035.

The **darker-shaded** lines (—) are derived from [data](#) sourced from the **U.S. Census Bureau**. The **lighter-shaded** lines (—) which depict estimates of freshman enrollment, are from **U.S. Department of Education data**. The - - - line represents Census estimates of America's future 18-year-old population, as modeled in 2023. The * * * and * * * lines are derived from projections preceding that 2023 modeling.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. Department of Education • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Demographic changes are more than the cliff

What questions should you ask?

How is the population that we serve changing in the region we recruit from?

How is the population that others serve changing in regions near us that could impact us?

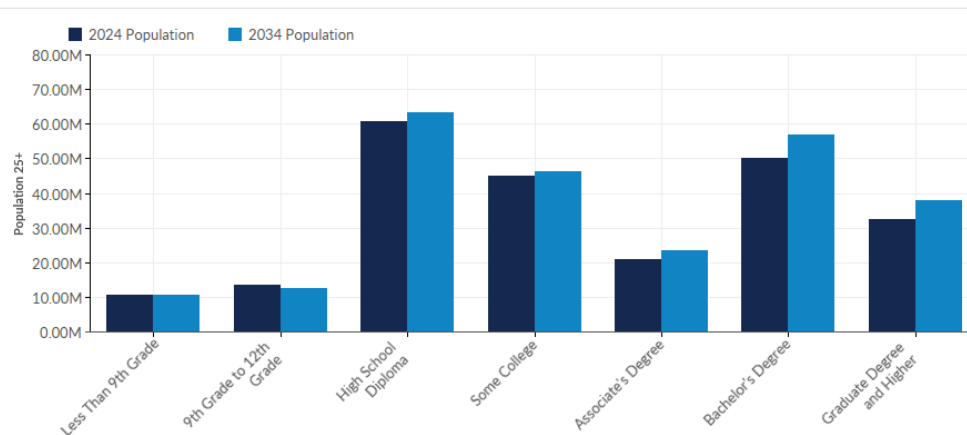
What do we know about pandemic/post-pandemic migration?

Student and Labor Market Demand

Degree Attainment Projections

What will the next decade look like nationally related to attainment?

Educational Attainment by Level



Some College No Credential Population by Current Age					
	20 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 64	Over 65
Count	2.17M	11.15M	10.24M	10.73M	4.63M
Share	5.4%	27.5%	25.3%	26.5%	11.4%
*Details do not total to 100% due to missing age not shown					

Student and labor market demand can impact academic programs



Student demand

- What programs are students interested in?
- How does that vary by traditionally aged students? Transfers? Adult learners? Online learners?



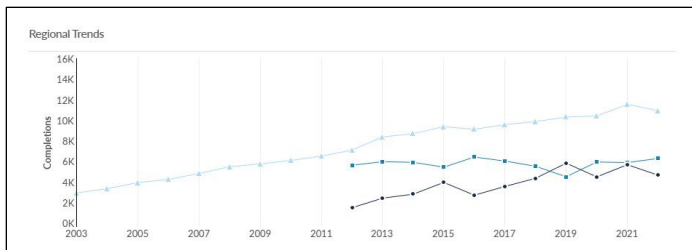
Labor market demand

- What jobs are available to your graduates?
- What fields are growing or declining? What fields are emerging?
- Do the salaries support the cost of tuition/debt a student may incur?
- Are there corporate partnership opportunities in your area?

Harness available data



Secondary data



Primary research

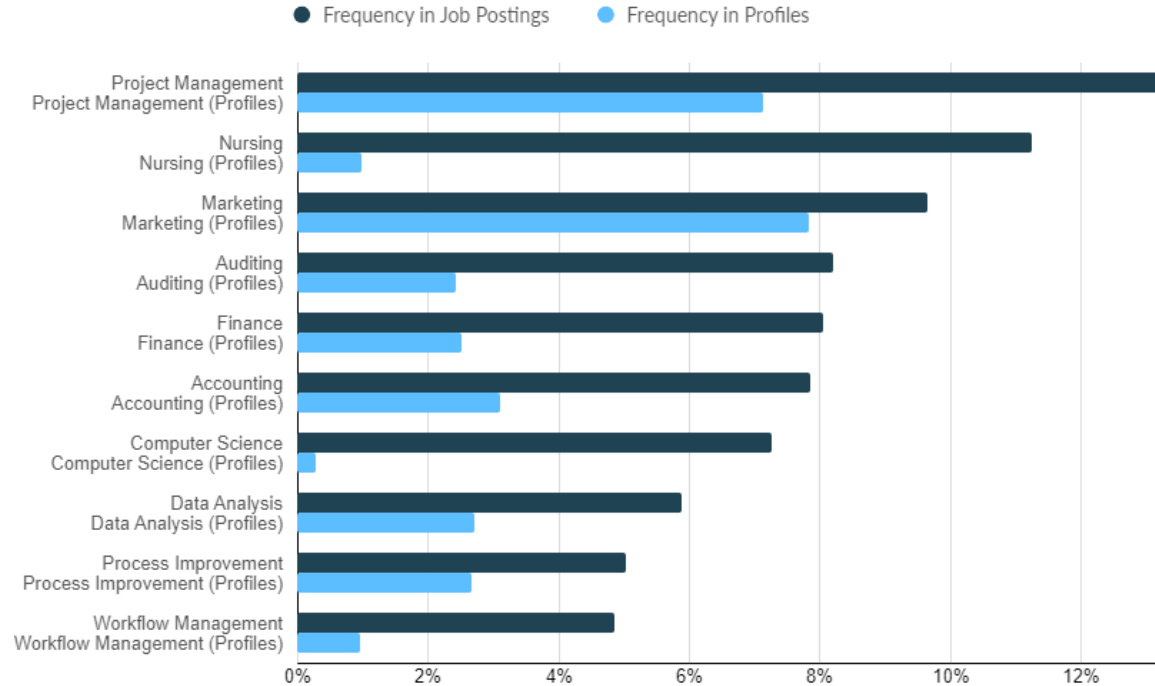
- Program preference
- Modality preference
- Likelihood to consider your institution
- Program attributes

Fastest Growing Industries 2024-2034

Industry	2024 Jobs	2034 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2024-2034)	% Change	2023 Earnings Per Worker
Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities	2,410,707	3,211,781	801,074	33%	\$31,489
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	4,930,685	5,417,677	486,992	10%	\$98,307
Home Health Care Services	1,644,462	2,069,601	425,139	26%	\$47,962
Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	5,740,016	6,122,078	382,062	7%	\$93,239
Full-Service Restaurants	5,377,821	5,753,051	375,230	7%	\$33,479
Corporate, Subsidiary, and Regional Managing Offices	2,517,874	2,870,202	352,328	14%	\$168,128
Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	2,849,799	3,176,436	326,637	11%	\$128,627
Elementary and Secondary Schools (Local Government)	7,254,105	7,569,421	315,316	4%	\$79,271
General Warehousing and Storage	1,830,521	2,141,810	311,289	17%	\$57,846
Custom Computer Programming Services	1,187,091	1,489,908	302,817	26%	\$181,683
Computer Systems Design Services	1,209,688	1,474,417	264,729	22%	\$155,524
Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools (State Government)	2,654,393	2,914,473	260,080	10%	\$76,436

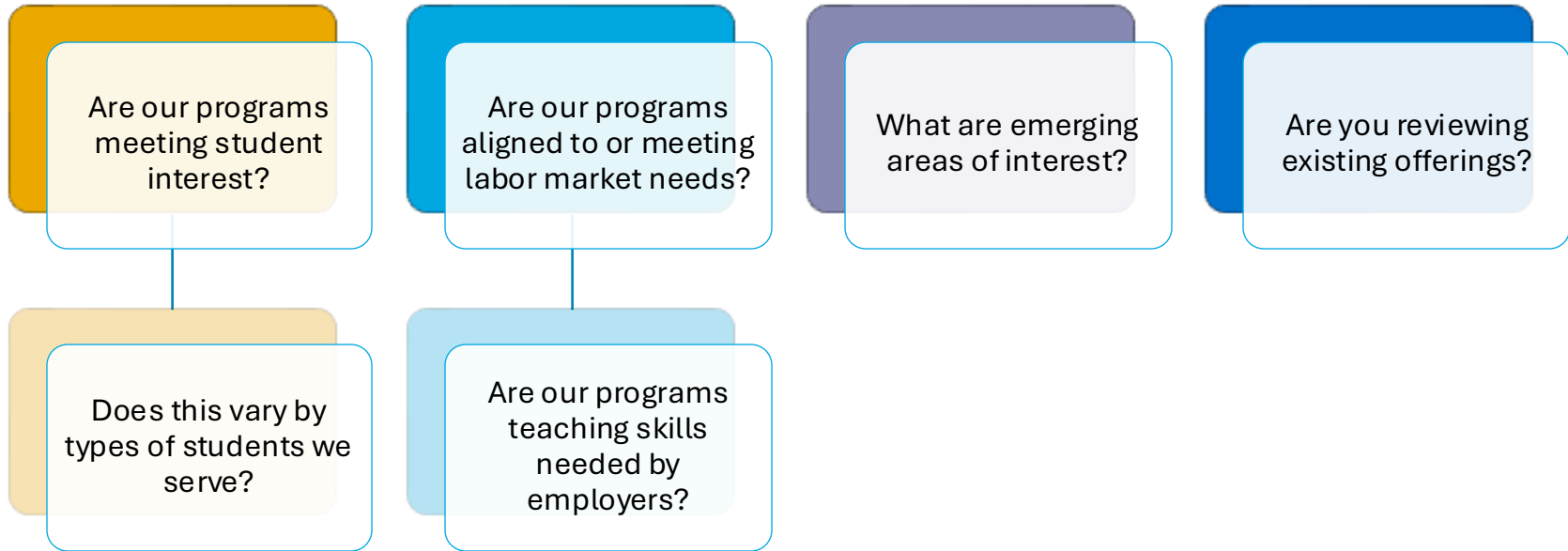
Infusing Needed Skills – Specialized Skills

Top Specialized Skills

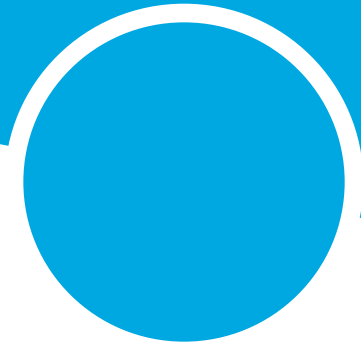


Academic programs and the market

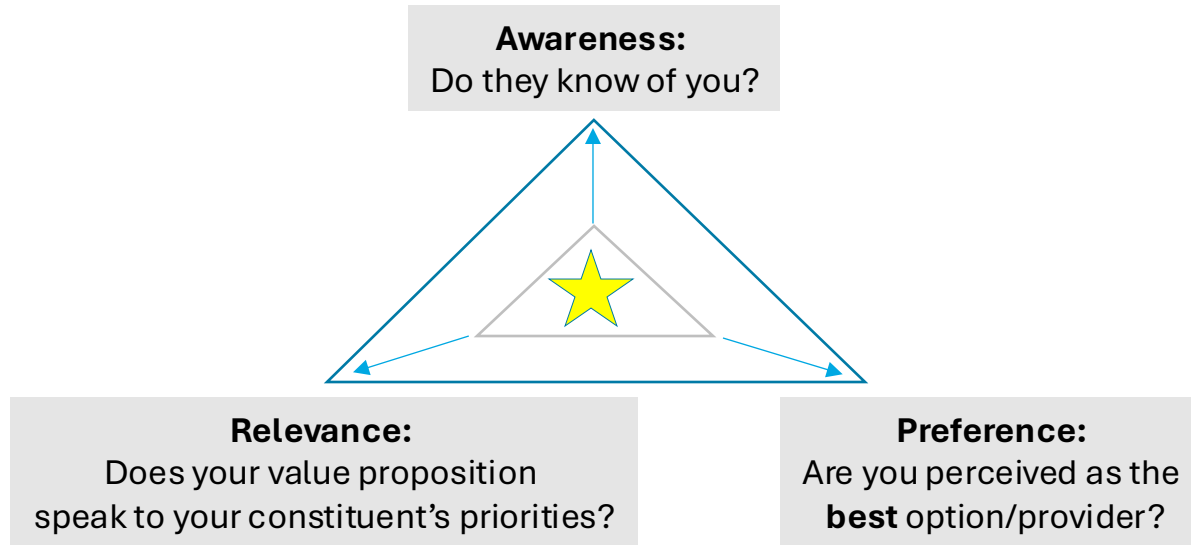
What questions should you ask?



Competition Perception Price



Perception and reputation matter



The competition has strategies too



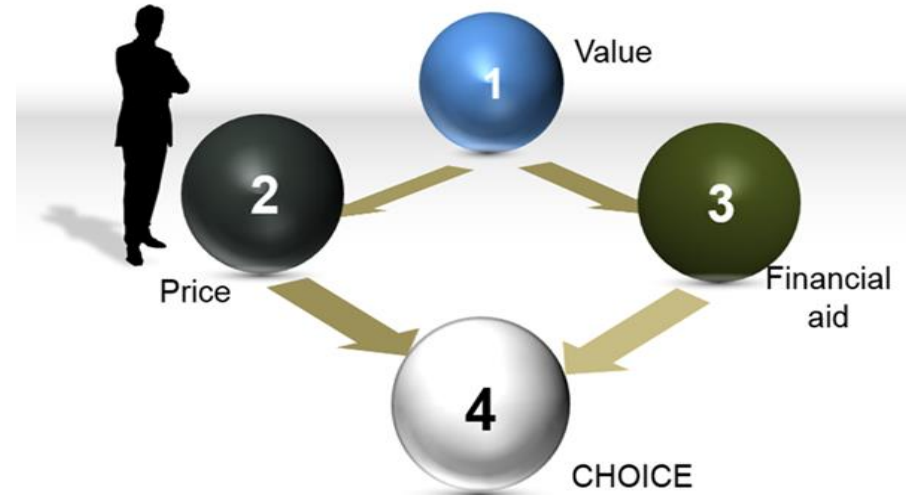
Competition

- How do you define competition? Is it stable?
Where are you competing for and in what ways?
 - Students
 - Faculty/employees
 - Resources
 - Industry partners
- How are regional demographic trends impacting competition?
- What modalities are in highest demand and how are competitors positioned?
- Are there opportunities to collaborate instead of competing?



Price sensitivity

Value, price and aid interact to influence college choice



Competition, price, and perception

What questions should you ask?

Who are our competitors?

For whom or what?

What are we competing on?

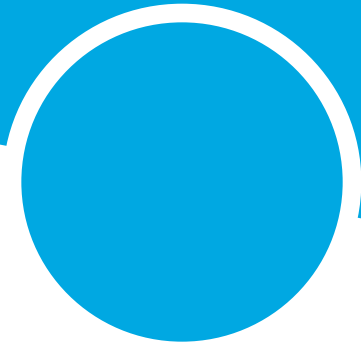
What are their strengths/
differentiators and
what are ours?

How do prospective
students and
families perceive our
college or university?

Is our price
optimized to achieve
our goals?

What are our goals?
More students? Better
prepared students?
Higher NTR?
Increased access?

Regulatory Accreditation Other Influences



And there's more ...

Other external influences



**State, regional,
local priorities or
mandates**



**Regulatory
requirements**



**Accreditation
requirements**

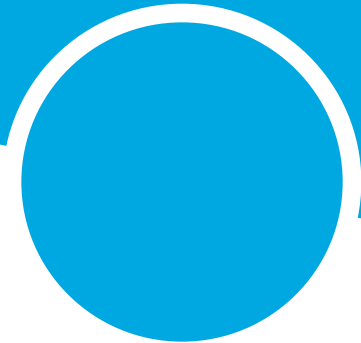


**Affiliated
groups**



Alumni and donors

Leveraging Understanding for Strategic Advantage



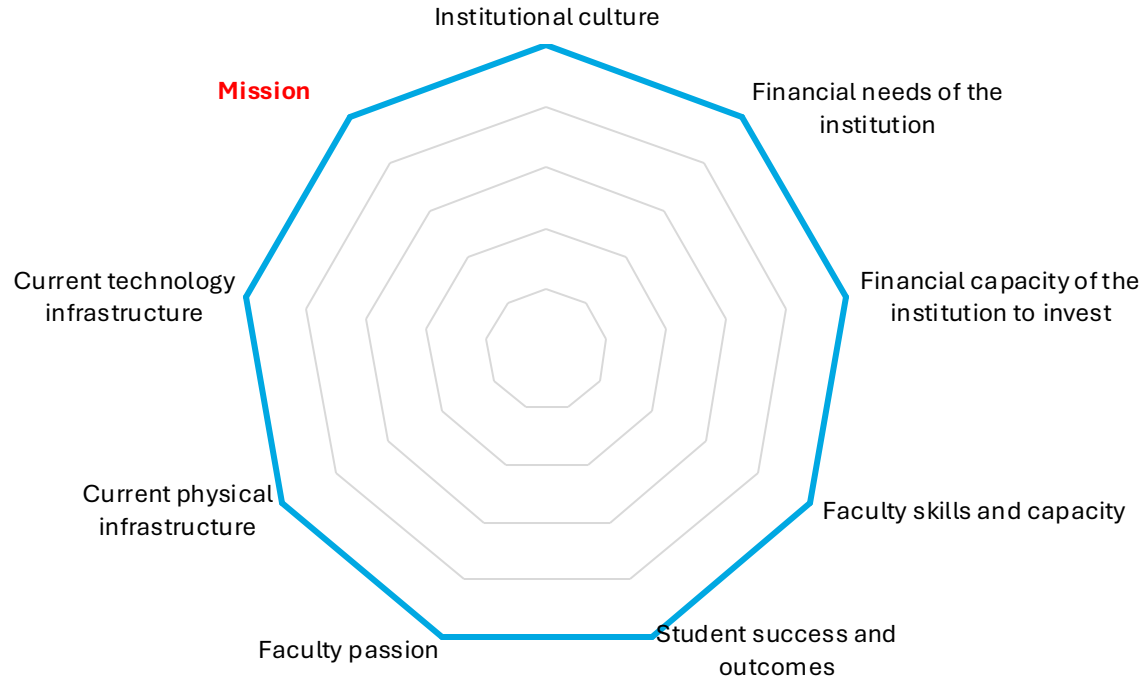
Leveraging for strategic advantage

Keys to success

- Gather and utilize data that give you insight into potential impact of external influences. Identify opportunities and threats to inform strategy development such as:
 - Using demographic data to identify new recruitment regions or expansion into the adult market.
 - Analyzing student and labor market demand to identify potential new academic programs.
 - Using perception studies to establish marketing and communication strategies around your brand and key quality attributes.
 - Developing a deep understanding of competitors in order to anticipate impacts on your college or university.
- Ensure information on external influences intersects with planning processes at your college or university including strategic planning, enrollment projections, financial modeling, academic programs, and facilities. When possible, integrate planning processes.
- Engage your college or university community in conversations regarding strategy.
- Ensure the understanding of external influence is iterative and ongoing.

Aligning to authenticity

Utilizing internal assets and being aware of challenges



Academic program planning

Integrating market research is essential to academic planning

- External influences are important factors in academic programs planning within an increasingly competitive market. In all instances, but particularly in academic program planning, these factors must be contextualized to and balanced with institutional mission.
- Prioritize understanding emerging student demand and labor market needs.
- Build approval structures that allow you to be responsive. Time to market is critical.
- Be mindful of modality preferences.
- Engage external stakeholders such as alumni, local employers, and public officials to gain insight into the labor market.

Examples

External Influences	Potential Strategy
Steady demographics in your recruitment region but notable decline in the market of a competitor.	Anticipate potential share decline as competitor may expand into your market. Be able to communicate your value proposition. Identify additional recruitment regions to cultivate if and as yours potentially becomes more competitive.
Significant emerging labor market need in project management, but university has a multiyear approval process.	Engage faculty to consider the need and viability of a degree or certificate program and begin process. Work with faculty to infuse project management skills in relevant programs, communicate those program features, and engage industry partners.
Perception data suggests your institution is not known or not preferred amongst your competitors.	Identify key quality attributes of importance to your prospective students. Articulate your strengths in those quality attributes. Decide who you plan to compete with or position against. Review how those competitors are positioning themselves. Invest marketing dollars strategically.

Questions & Discussion



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