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This issue of the *Enrollment Management Review* discusses recent publications on a wide range of topics including institutional barriers to student success and graduation at community colleges, instant messaging, and retention. It also includes reviews of the projections on high school graduates by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) and the new handbook for college admissions from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). Collectively, these reviews touch on a set of institutional and public policy issues important to enrollment managers.

## Shulock, N., & Moore, C. (2007, February). *Rules of the Game: How State Policy Creates Barriers to Degree Completion and Impedes Student Success in the California Community Colleges.* Sacramento, CA: California State University Sacramento, Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy.

## Retrieved at <http://www.csus.edu/ihe/PDFs/R_Rules_of_the_Game_02-07.pdf>.

## Institute for College Access and Success. (2007). *Green Lights & Red Tape: Improving Access to Financial Aid at California’s Community Colleges.* Berkeley, CA: Author.

## Retrieved at [*http://www.ticas.org/files/pub/Green\_Lights\_Red\_Tape.pdf*](http://www.ticas.org/files/pub/Green_Lights_Red_Tape.pdf)*.*

## Perin, D. (2006). [Can Community Colleges Protect Both Access and Standards? The Problem of Remediation](http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentId=12328). *Teacher’s College Record.*

## Retrieved at <http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentId=12328>.

The question Delores Perin poses, “Can community colleges protect both access and standards?” gets at the heart of the enrollment and policy conundrum facing community college senior enrollment officers. Through accountability measures stressing student success, persistence, and transfer/graduation rates, community colleges are being asked to demonstrate that they are producing more transfers and graduates. However, because so many students who enroll in community colleges need remediation and other forms of support, many observers are asking if community colleges can succeed by these accountability measures and still retain their open admissions mission. If they cannot, community colleges in some states may be forced to become smaller institutions. In such a climate, the emergence of new policy-oriented research on enhancing community college retention, graduation, and transfer rates is unsurprising. The three policy studies reviewed here are concerned with state as well as institutional practices and together provide an overview of current thinking on improving student success at community colleges. Two of the studies, while focusing on California, deal with issues relevant to community colleges across the nation. The Perin study discusses remedial education practices at community colleges in 16 states.

Early in *Rules of the Game,* Shulock and Moore point out that only 60 percent of all students who enter California community colleges are seeking degrees. The remaining 40 percent take classes for personal enrichment, basic skills, or job skills. Discouragingly, 76 percent of the degree-seeking students neither complete a degree nor transfer; 18 percent transfer, 4 percent earn an AA degree, and 2 percent earn a certificate. Looking at state policies that could encourage the production of more community college graduates and transfers, the authors offer the following recommendations to address low completion rates:

1. The state funding formula based on enrollment should move toward one that includes financial incentives for institutions to graduate students.
2. Regulations on community college expenditures of state dollars should be changed to free colleges to pursue creative solutions to increasing student persistence. In addition, institutions should be free from state staffing regulations so they can hire the staff they need to increase student completion rates.
3. Assessment of skills at entrance and participation in a strong orientation program should be required of all degree-seeking students.
4. Institutions should be allowed to benefit from student fee revenue as well as to develop affordability policies that include encouraging students to participate in federal and state financial aid programs.

*Green Lights & Red Tape,* an important policy paper on financial aid policy problems endemic to many community colleges, supplies ample evidence of good financial aid practices on many campuses. Here, however, we will focus on the problem areas identified in the paper because they represent important concerns. The authors find that some community colleges do not actively encourage students to take out loans because they want students to avoid going into debt. The report notes that some campuses provide aid information only in English even though they have large Latino student populations. The report also notes that several community colleges have an insufficient number of experienced financial aid officers working directly with students. Perhaps the most vexing problem the authors identify is that because so many community college students do not complete the courses for which they register, community colleges are always at risk of having to repay Title IV funds disbursed to students who drop out early in the semester. To address this problem, many campuses do not disburse funds until the 3rd or 4th week of classes, which means that some students cannot access funds they need for such expenses as books and commuting until a quarter of the way through the semester. The paper calls for an increase in funding for state financial aid programs and for their administration, so that financial aid offices can be better staffed.

Perin’s paper examines the range of state and institutional policies around student remediation. Although research has not yet conclusively proven the efficacy of remedial education, assessment and remediation are core activities of open admissions community colleges. Perin finds a great deal of variation across community colleges in whether placement tests are required or voluntary and in what passing scores are on course placement tests. She further notes that students whose admissions placement tests indicate they need remedial education often find ways to bypass remedial courses and then subsequently are not successful in nonremedial courses. Overall, this paper presents a chaotic and uncertain picture of the role of remediation in community colleges. Although the author ultimately cannot answer the question of *what works* among these various policies, Perin leaves readers with the impression that a clearer set of policies and practices in remediation could be an essential element in the efforts of community colleges to demonstrate they can increase the number of transfers and graduates.

**Lauren, B., ed. (2008). *The College Admissions Officer’s Guide.* Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.**

With 44 chapters, AACRAO’s new overview of the role of the modern admissions professional is too comprehensive to review in detail here -- however, we will highlight some of its strengths. The volume addresses an impressive range of topics and contributing authors include Stan Henderson, Michael Olivas, Kristine Kerlin, and Robert Sternberg.

This edited volume begins with a strong chapter on the historical evolution of the admissions role, followed by a solid primer on the role of financial aid in recruiting students and a chapter on state college savings plans. Indicative of the more visible public role of college admissions, the volume also includes a chapter on affirmative action and college admissions.

A pair of chapters deal with the various ways institutions admit students, with one chapter on holistic review and another on open admissions policies and practices in community colleges. This section might have been strengthened by an overview of various models for making admissions decisions, as in the work of Gretchen Rigol and the College Board’s Admissions Models Project. A chapter on selective admissions models would have added balance to this section. The next two sections present discussions of various recruitment tools including electronic tools as well as solid overviews of approaches to recruiting targeted populations including low-income, African American, Asian Pacific, Hispanic, indigenous, transfer, and home schooled students.

This AACRAO volume also has chapters on the role of admissions professionals with international students and on “back-room” elements of admissions such as admissions processing and predicting enrollment yields. A particular strength of the volume is its treatment of the role of the admissions professional in graduate programs, a component of the profession that has been growing in significance. The book includes chapters on admissions issues in law schools, medical colleges, health professions, and graduate schools. In addition, there is a chapter on the Bologna accords and their possible impact on international admissions in the U.S. The closing chapters focus on the role of institutional research in college admissions, the profession of college admissions, and the career ladder in the field.

As is common among edited books, this volume suffers some from uneven quality across chapters and weak transitions between sections and chapters. Nevertheless, this is a good reference for early to midcareer admissions professionals.

**Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. ( 2008, March.) *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity 1992-2022.* Boulder, CO: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.**

 **Retrieved at** [**http://www.wiche.edu/policy/knocking/1992-2022/knocking\_complete\_book.pdf**](http://www.wiche.edu/policy/knocking/1992-2022/knocking_complete_book.pdf)**.**

For almost three decades the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has been providing a service to the postsecondary education community by reporting the projected numbers and characteristics of high school graduates -- information vital to enrollment managers with their eyes on both this year’s entering class, as well as those in the future. The WICHE reports have consistently been enrollment managers’ best source for coming enrollment trends and this report is no exception—providing a compelling picture of how near future demographic trends are likely to affect postsecondary enrollment in various regions of the United States. The variations in high school graduation rates by state and region are perhaps the greatest we have seen since WICHE began publishing these reports. Vermont, for example, is projected to experience a 25-percent decline in the number of its high school graduates between 2008 and 2019. Florida, on the other hand, is expected to see a 14-percent increase. A regional perspective projects that the number of high school graduates will steadily rise in the West and South of the country and will decline markedly in the Northeast and moderately in the Midwest. However, even these descriptive trends oversimplify the demographic future for enrollment managers.

Underlying these trends are important shifts in the characteristics of future high school graduates. In almost every region of the country, increases in graduation rates, or even patterns of stability or moderate declines, are being fueled by increases in the number of Latino and Asian/Pacific Islanders -- although increases in the number of Latino students are the most pronounced. In this overview of the latest WICHE report we focus primarily on Latino students because we know more about the characteristics of these students at the aggregate level. Well-documented wide variations in the postsecondary attendance patterns of Asian/Pacific Islander student subgroups make it more difficult to form implications about increasing numbers of high school graduates among them. In addition, although the percentage of Asian/Pacific Islander students is increasing significantly in many states, their relative impact on postsecondary enrollments will be less pronounced because the total number of Asian/Pacific Islander students is significantly smaller than the numbers of students from other racial/ethnic groups.

Regarding Latino students, 18 states expect increases in the number of Latino graduates of 2 percent to more than 10 percent between 2005 and 2015. All states but Hawaii will see increases in the total number of Latino high school graduates. Many states and regions where the number of high school graduates are projected to decline or remain stable would be projecting even larger declines were it not for the number of Latino students in these areas. Importantly, most of the increases in numbers of Latino students are coming from first-generation and low-income families. Current Latino postsecondary participation rates of first-generation students lag behind those of White students at approximately a 2:1 ratio. In addition, these students are much more likely to enroll in a nearby community college or regional commuting, public university.

Although several publications and conferences on enrollment management have dealt with these changing demographics, surprisingly little institutional attention has been given to this WICHE report. Only recently have enrollment managers and other senior campus administrators started to consider carefully how these demographic shifts might affect their strategic goals. The impact of these shifts will affect the various sectors of the postsecondary system differentially. Many community colleges and urban commuting institutions will likely be advantaged by the increase in first-generation Latino students—who tend to stay close to home and commute to school and who are more likely to enroll in community colleges or low-cost public four-year institutions. These institutions, however, should not take enrollment growth for granted. In the last two years, for example, some urban two- and four-year institutions in areas with high Latino populations experienced enrollment shortfalls—at least partly because too few students were entering postsecondary education after high school. Less selective residential four-year institutions located in the Northeast and some areas in the Midwest may experience enrollment declines. Other institutions—to compete for an increasing number of low- and moderate-income high school students—may have to shift their financial aid away from merit-based aid to need-based aid to increase their academic profile. More selective institutions may have to dig deeper into their application pools and they may need to prepare their campuses for a more diverse student body. The key is for enrollment managers to study these demographic trends carefully and to shape realistic goals and objectives to fit upcoming changes in the profile of future college students. These demographic changes will soon reach all states and it behooves enrollment managers to be looking carefully at the implications of these shifts for their campuses.

**Wilkinson, R. B., Taylor, J. S., Peterson, A., & de Lourdes Machado-Taylor, M. (2007). *A Practical Guide to Strategic Enrollment Management Planning.* Virginia Beach, VA: EPI International.**

Published by the Educational Policy Institute, an international nonprofit think tank that studies educational opportunity, this guide offers sound advice on how to implement a strategic enrollment management (SEM) plan at institutions of higher education. The volume’s six chapters take enrollment professionals through step-by-step procedures on how to pragmatically develop and implement a campus SEM plan. Noting that campus cultures vary significantly and keeping the guiding principles general, the authors provide a guidebook with a wealth of knowledge for enrollment professionals early in their careers as well as a way for seasoned professionals to review their own SEM plans.

Chapter 1 offers a basic explanation of strategic planning and why it is important as well as a definition of strategic enrollment management. For more experienced enrollment professionals this chapter may only give a sketch of enrollment management and its history, but for professionals early in their careers it may provide important context for the field. The authors suggest that the often cyclical nature of SEM plans aids in continuous evaluation of the plan itself. As plans rarely offer ways to continually evaluate each step, this is an important piece of the authors’ plan and method.

The second chapter’s discussion of key concepts in planning models—mission statements; long-range and short-term planning; and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis—will be review for upper-level enrollment professionals, yet the pragmatic approach to planning is extremely beneficial. The goal of this publication is clearly not just to discuss planning and its importance but rather to give the reader a germane set of tools to facilitate the development of a SEM plan. As such the authors provide models for each phase of their proposed six-phase strategic planning process: (1) preplanning, (2) institutional framework, (3) SWOT analysis, (4) strategic vision, (5) consensus building, and (6) action. The rest of the volume devotes considerable space to each of these phases.

Chapter 3 discusses the importance of the preplanning stage, with the first of 14 worksheets. These worksheets, designed to take enrollment professionals through the necessary steps of the planning, can be revised according to each institution’s specific needs.

The fourth chapter discusses the actual SEM planning process and key components to enrollment management plans such as philosophical underpinnings and mission statements (both institutional mission statements and missions for the enrollment management plan itself). What is perhaps most salient in this chapter is not the discussion of these concepts but the sound examples that are provided for each of these sections. Actual guiding principles and mission statements are compiled exemplifying differing institutional approaches from a number of institutions including Pittsburgh State University, University of Arizona, Texas Tech, and DePaul University.

The remaining two chapters give sound examples of how institutions of higher education are going about their own SEM plans. Chapter 5 not only discusses the salience of SWOT analysis but gives examples from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks and Guilford College, among others. The introduction to the components of the SEM plan and the various examples offer insights into the numerous directions and formats for effective planning. Chapter 6 ends with a discussion on vision and strategic goals, with additional examples from other institutions.

This guide may leave some of the newer topics in SEM planning unexplored, but the worksheets to facilitate this process and the multitude of examples are among the great strengths of the publication, making it a great help to early-career enrollment professionals and to committee members who are part of a university-wide planning process. Although seasoned enrollment professionals will not find this guide as useful, they may find the examples useful and the worksheets helpful in reassessing current institutional enrollment management plans.

**Ackerman, R., & Schibrowsky, J. (2007-2008). A Business Marketing Strategy Applied to Student Retention: A Higher Education Initiative. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory, and Practice, 9*(3), 307-336.**

The authors acknowledge that using business concepts in higher education may be an uncomfortable notion for campus professionals, so they focus only on the germane aspects of marketing and apply them to higher education -- beginning with a literature review on retention, retention models, and the influences on student persistence and retention. For enrollment professionals already up to date on this literature, this section still offers a good review; for those who are not, the brief literature review on retention offers significant insight into this field of study.

The next section of the article discusses *relationship marketing*—beginning, cultivating, and improving customer relations—and how it can be applied to higher education. Higher education, the authors posit, can utilize relationship marketing to improve student retention and retention practices by forming strong bonds with students. Arguing that it is more economically beneficial for schools to maintain relationships with current students than to continually form relationships with new students, the authors explore the benefits of greater retention and persistence from both the institutional and student perspectives. They uniquely position customer relationship marketing techniques proven effective in business and tailor these techniques to the higher education framework.

The article concludes with a look at three kinds of relationship bonds: financial, social, and structural—all working toward an increase in student retention. For enrollment professionals the financial bond is relative to merit-based financial aid and competitive tuition costs, yet the authors argue this is the weakest of all bonds, as it relates to retention. A stronger bond, the social bond, is developed through what many enrollment professionals view as ongoing personal interactions and communications with students. Of course, this bond must continue well beyond the recruitment stage and should continue with interpersonal interactions between faculty, advisors, students, and student affairs professionals. The structural bond—deemed the strongest of the three—comprises policies, activities, programs, and initiatives that strengthen ties between the student and institution. The authors suggest ways to foster all three kinds of bonds.

The overarching theme of the article is the great importance of long-term relationships—not only for the financial benefit of the institution but for the success of the student. Overall, the authors provide insight into the literature of retention and a unique perspective on enrollment management and the myriad relationships formed during its processes. While this perspective may interest many enrollment professionals, some student affairs officers may feel uncomfortable applying business methods to customer relations in higher education.

**Zalanowski, K. (2007). Instant Messenger in Enrollment Management: Evaluating Use and Effectiveness. *Journal of College Admission, 196*(Summer), 20-29.**

The Spring 2008 issue of the *Enrollment Management Review* was dedicated specifically to marketing and included a review of David Meerman Scott’s book, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR,* on the use of technology and online tools in marketing and efforts to enhance enrollment. This article on instant messaging (IM) in the admissions process—by Kevin Zalanowski, an enrollment professional at the University of Iowa—continues this discussion. Although effective uses of IM on different campuses will naturally vary, Zalanowski’s case study at a single institution—the University of Iowa—offers a helpful look into the use of this technology in enrollment management.

A brief literature review on the perceived efficacy of IM in informal and formal contexts shows that only about a third of students use IM for academic or formal purposes. Yet, importantly for both the recruitment and retention of students, many studies have shown that new technologies like IM can be effective in developing relationships with students.

The University of Iowa diligently recorded the use of its new IM chat system for a year to determine how often it was used and who used it most frequently. Zalanowski disaggregates this data to identify the students most likely to make use of the IM chat with the admissions office and the months, days of the week, and times of day yielding the most use. This information may be helpful to enrollment professionals implementing IM on their own campuses and, at the very least, will provide a good starting point for a similar campus effort.

Overall, IM was determined to be an effective way to communicate with students, and the study showed that millennial students were willing to use IM in a formalized setting. Over the course of the one-year study, more than 300 students used IM to speak with an admissions professional and 42 percent of these students used it more than once. Although IM has the potential to be an effective outreach tool, Zalanowski cautions, it can also be difficult to track students using IM technologies all the way through the admissions funnel. In most IM systems, the user supplies only a screen name, creating a high level of anonymity and making it difficult to track students.

This study would have been strengthened by an enrollment survey of all matriculating students to determine the impact of IM chats on students’ final decision whether to attend and the impact of IM relative to other recruitment efforts such as collateral materials, Web-based information, and interactions with admissions counselors. Such a survey would help determine the overall efficacy of the IM chats and the differences between the entering students who participated in the chats and those who did not. Despite these limitations, because so little has been written on this topic this article can be helpful to admissions offices currently using or considering using IM in recruitment.

**Briefly Noted:**

**Sigler, W. (2007). *Managing for Outcomes: Shifting from Process-Centric to Results-Oriented Operations.* Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars.**

A successful director of admissions for many years, most recently at the University of Minnesota, Wayne Sigler credits much of his achievement to the management processes he has put in place. Although *The Enrollment Management Review* generally does not focus on management models, Sigler’s volume is a worthwhile read for enrollment professionals on an element obviously important to successful enrollment organization.