Rural Institute 2024

Navigating Student Success Technology

The Ada Center

With generous support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

About Us: The Ada Center in Brief

Supporting Higher Education IT Strategy and Capacity

The Ada Center

HIGHER EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY AND PROCESS SUPPORT

- Founded on the belief that **technology is not a silver bullet** to any problem, but with the right planning and implementation, software can play an important role in advancing student success and equity.
- Supports **national initiatives** such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Higher Endeavor Network and State Success Centers.
- Develops **research-based, open-access resources** for the field on topics like navigating CRMs or student perspectives on guided pathways technology.
- Works directly with **institutions and states** in need of technology strategy, purchasing, and implementation support.

Meet Our Namesake

"A new, a vast, and a powerful language is developed for the future use of analysis, in which to wield its truths so that these may become of more speedy and accurate practical application for the purposes of mankind than the means hitherto in our possession have rendered possible."

– Ada Lovelace, Founder of Scientific Computing

Welcome to Crownpoint, New Mexico

”Try to Get a Few to Pass”

- ~20 Students Who Did Not Pass State Standardized Exam
- Different Subjects, Differing Degrees
- Lack of Electricity, No Internet at Home

Adaptive Learning Tech + Rotating Centers

Challenges and Opportunities for Technology in Rural Environments

Rural Institutions Cite Common Pain Points, Frustration…

- Limited Resourcing
- Geographic Spread and Need for Transportation
- Reliable Internet Access for Students
- Staff (Particularly IT/Data) Availability, Bandwidth

…But Many Also Note Unique Strengths

***"More technology does not necessarily mean a better technology ecosystem**. Sometimes, it can just mean more complexity, more room for error…being frugal forces you to be more strategic."*

*"We've had to be **innovative and nimble**. We offered hybrid, remote options before some of our urban counterparts, it put us in a better spot than them during COVID…"*

*"…We've asked, 'How do we **use tech to streamline student support so that [students] can quickly get through tasks during the sporadic periods when they have internet access**?'"*

*"It's clear that **IT and Student Success can't live in silos anymore**. At a small rural institution, we already know that, we already wear multiple hats...but we could definitely use more support."*

Today's Agenda

I. Student Success Technology Landscape & Key Background

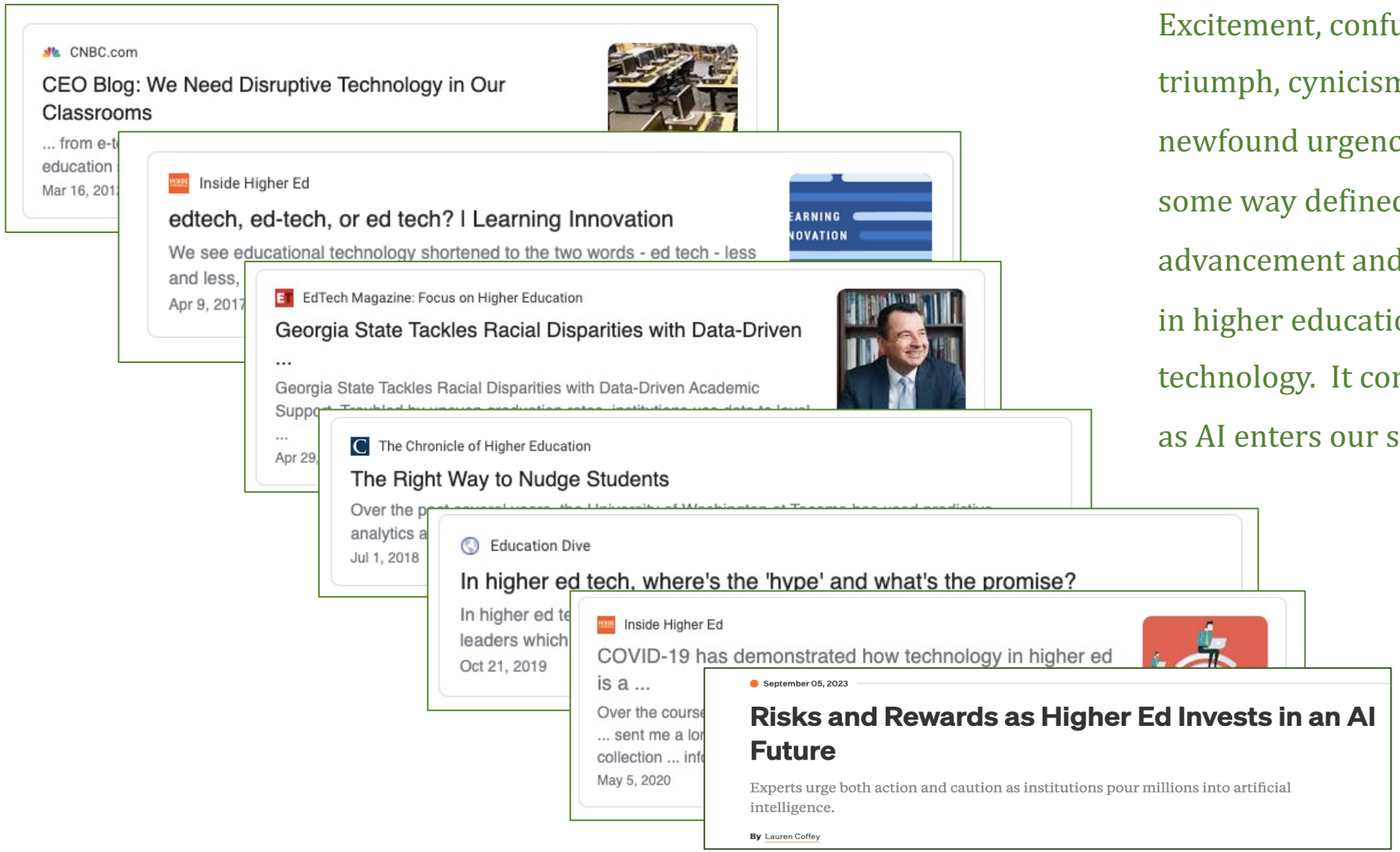
II. Navigating Student Success Technology Curricular Resources Overview

III. Module Tour & Sneak Peeks

IV. Final Thoughts

10+ Years of Higher Education Technology Evolution

2010s

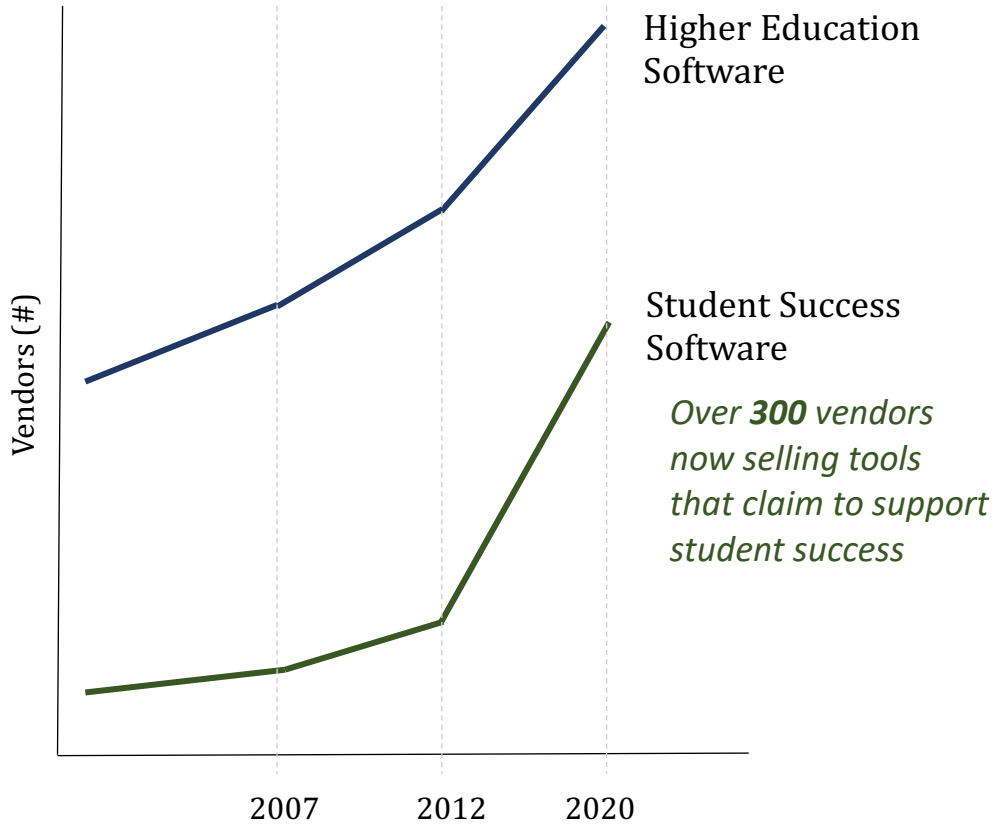


2023+

Excitement, confusion, triumph, cynicism, and now, a newfound urgency, have all in some way defined a decade of advancement and investment in higher education technology. It continues today as AI enters our space…

Exploring An Increasingly Robust Technology Landscape

No Shortage of Student Success Tech



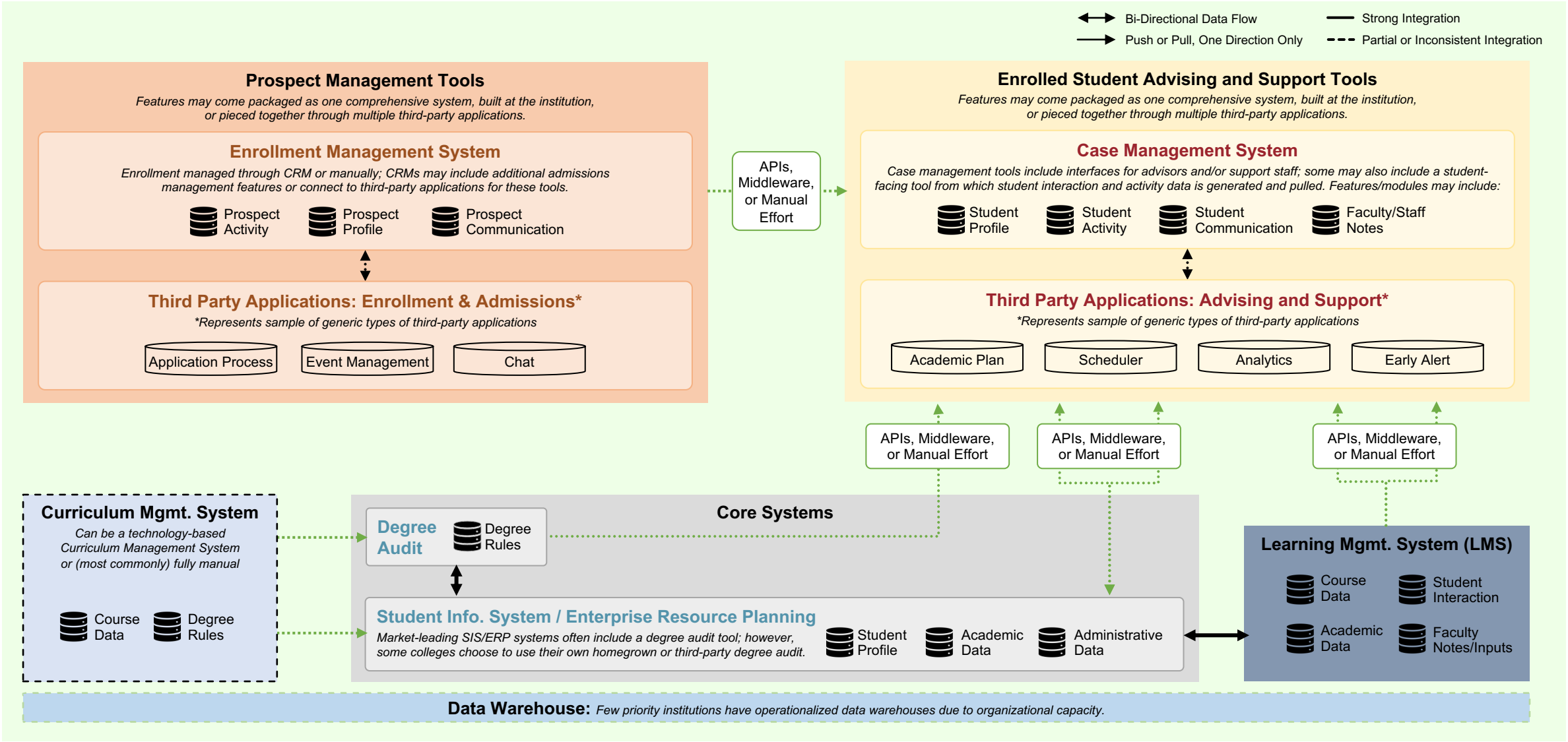
*Over **300** vendors now selling tools that claim to support student success*

The Typical College Has or Is Considering A…

- Student Information System
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System
- Degree Audit
- Curriculum Management System
- Degree Planning Tool
- Case Management Tool/s
- Early Alert Tool
- Student Mobile Application
- Student Scheduling Application
- Student Success Analytics
- Student Onboarding and Orientation Technology
- Learning Management Systems
- All Things “AI”
- Student Life/Events Tools
- Career Planning Tools
- Transfer Credit Planning System
- Data Visualization Tools
- Chatbots

But Institution Leaders Say They Are "Playing Tetris" with Technology

A Typical Tech Stack Includes 30+ Discrete Products



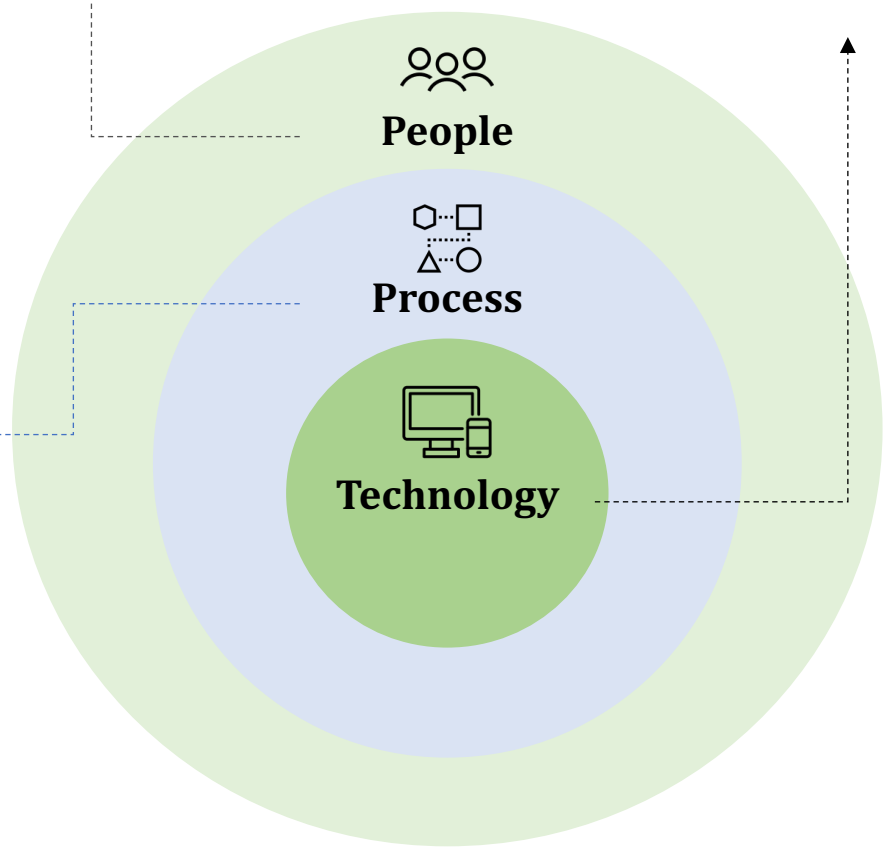
“Winning at Tetris” Requires Trifecta of People-Process-Technology

People

- Leadership Commitment, Vision
- IT Talent & Bandwidth
- End-User Engagement & Capacity

Process

- Data Governance
- IT Prioritization
- Stakeholder Usage Mapping
- Integration with Workflows and Initiatives



Technology

- Functional Features
- Key Integration
- Intentional UX (User Experience Design)

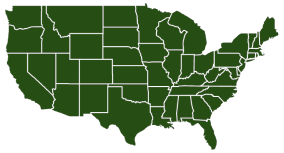
Technology Adoption Without People & Process Components Often Fails*

“We dove into Salesforce not realizing that our data was a mess and we’d need to buy a bunch of add-on instances…”
-CTO, Community College (HSI)

“We bought EAB but didn’t map out how it would work with our advising re-design. Now, everyone is confused and angry and we’ve wasted all this time while our students continue to struggle.”
-VP Student Success, HBCU

Curricular Resources Drawn from 6+ Years of Research and Input from Access-Focused Institutions Nationwide

90+ 2-year and 4-year MSIs, rural, suburban, urban



40+ States Across U.S. Regions

500+ College Leaders & Practitioners

What are the **most commonly asked student success technology-related questions** from across student affairs, academic affairs, IT, institutional research, and faculty at MSIs and access-focused institutions?

How can we distill research that helps to answer these questions into an **open-source, flexible, easy-to-use** set of resources?

Navigating Student Success Technology: *A Step-By-Step Curriculum*

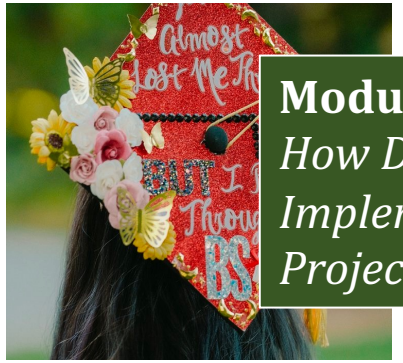
Addressing the Big Questions, Module By Module…

Module 1
How Can Student Success Technology Advance Institution Goals?

Module 2
How Does My College Create a Student Success Technology Plan?

Module 3
What Do Students Think About Our Technology?

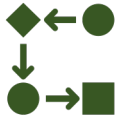
Module 4
How Should We Approach Buying New Technology?



Module 5
How Do We Effectively Implement Technology Projects?

Navigating Student Success Technology: *A Step-By-Step Curriculum*

Leveraging Insights and Tools On Your Campus



How Can We Use This?

Materials can be used for individual training and development, team PD, or within active technology planning and implementation efforts. They include items such as:

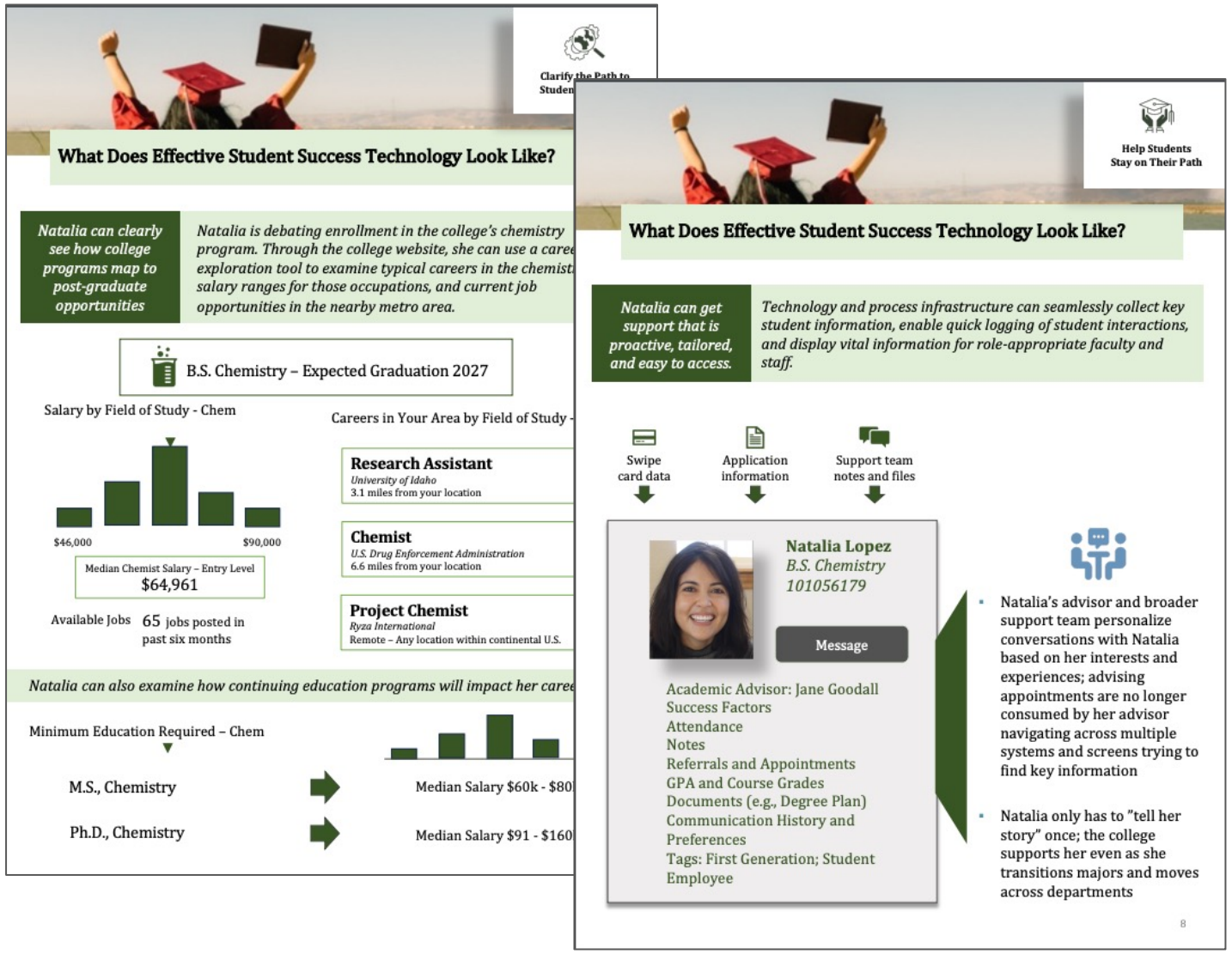
- Easy-to-Digest **Orientation Briefs and Webinars**
- **Facilitation Guides** for Critical Technology Planning and Implementation Milestones
- Research-Based **Templates** for Technology Project Planning and Management
- **"Grab & Go" Resources** and Reference Materials (e.g., Vendor Q&A Cheat Sheet)

Modules can be done sequentially, or practitioners may focus in on the modules or specific materials most relevant to their context.

Module 1: How Can Student Success Technology Advance Institution Goals?

Module 1.1: Sneak Peek

What Does Effective Student Success Technology Look Like?



- Provides walk-through of how student success technology can be deployed effectively across the student journey;
- Visualizes common student success technology product capabilities;
- Guide to encourage reflection around how institution systems align with or differ from the exemplar provided.

Module 1.2: Sneak Peek

What Does It Take to Make Various Technology Tools Work Well?

Clarify the Path to Student End Goals

Considerations for Technology Adoption

- How (what process) and who (which people
  source data to feed the technology? Will we r
  transfer requirements and employment data
  will need to be done to ensure strong integra
- How can we prepare administrators, faculty,
  productively react to student outcomes data,
  disaggregated data that may point to equity g
- What processes will we need to install to kee
  information accurate and current, and maint
- How often will we need to provide updates a
  and faculty to ensure they provide correct in
  of any new updates or features to the softwa
- How can we stay ahead of the course and pro
  rapid changes in jobs and professional comp
  occur?

Key Software Categories

- Alumni and Advancement CRM*
- Analytics and Data Dashboards
- Case Management System
- Career Exploration and Planning
- Degree Audit
- Degree Planner
- Transfer Management System

Reflect and Follow-up

Prompts: Which of these technologies am I not familiar w
Which implementation success requirements might our

Clarify the Path to Student End Goals

How Technology Can Help

- Collect and visualize post-graduate student outcomes data disaggregated by major or program to inform pathway design
- Synthesize labor market data, including up-to-date regional employment trends, wages, and degree and certification requirements for job listings in fields related to each of our institution's majors and programs
- Strengthen communication with alumni to collect and display updated information about the jobs and labor markets that programs and majors have historically fed into
- Synthesize transfer requirements, including pulling reports and displaying aggregate data related to top transfer destinations by program, such as average GPA and other relevant up-to-date program requirements
- Develop comprehensive degree planning maps, with illustrative and intuitive visuals that provide clarity around job and transfer opportunities associated with each major and program

Implementation Success Requirements

- Transfer and labor market data from state, clearinghouse, institution, or other data sets, including historic student information and alumni data
- Clearly articulated degree maps, including major or program descriptions and recommended course sequences
- Institution-wide effort to develop recommended major and program maps, including significant data analysis, planning with academic affairs, career planning, and feedback from advising
- Extensive faculty and staff time to ensure thoughtful interpretation of transfer and labor market outcomes
- Ongoing faculty and staff capacity to update and review accuracy of program maps, as well as transfer and labor market data
- Ongoing web developer and UX/UI designer capacity to ensure that information is easy and intuitive to find via website on computers, tablets, and smart devices

5

How Technology Can Help:

- Develop **comprehensive degree planning maps**, with illustrative and intuitive visuals that provide clarity around job and transfer opportunities associated with each major or program.

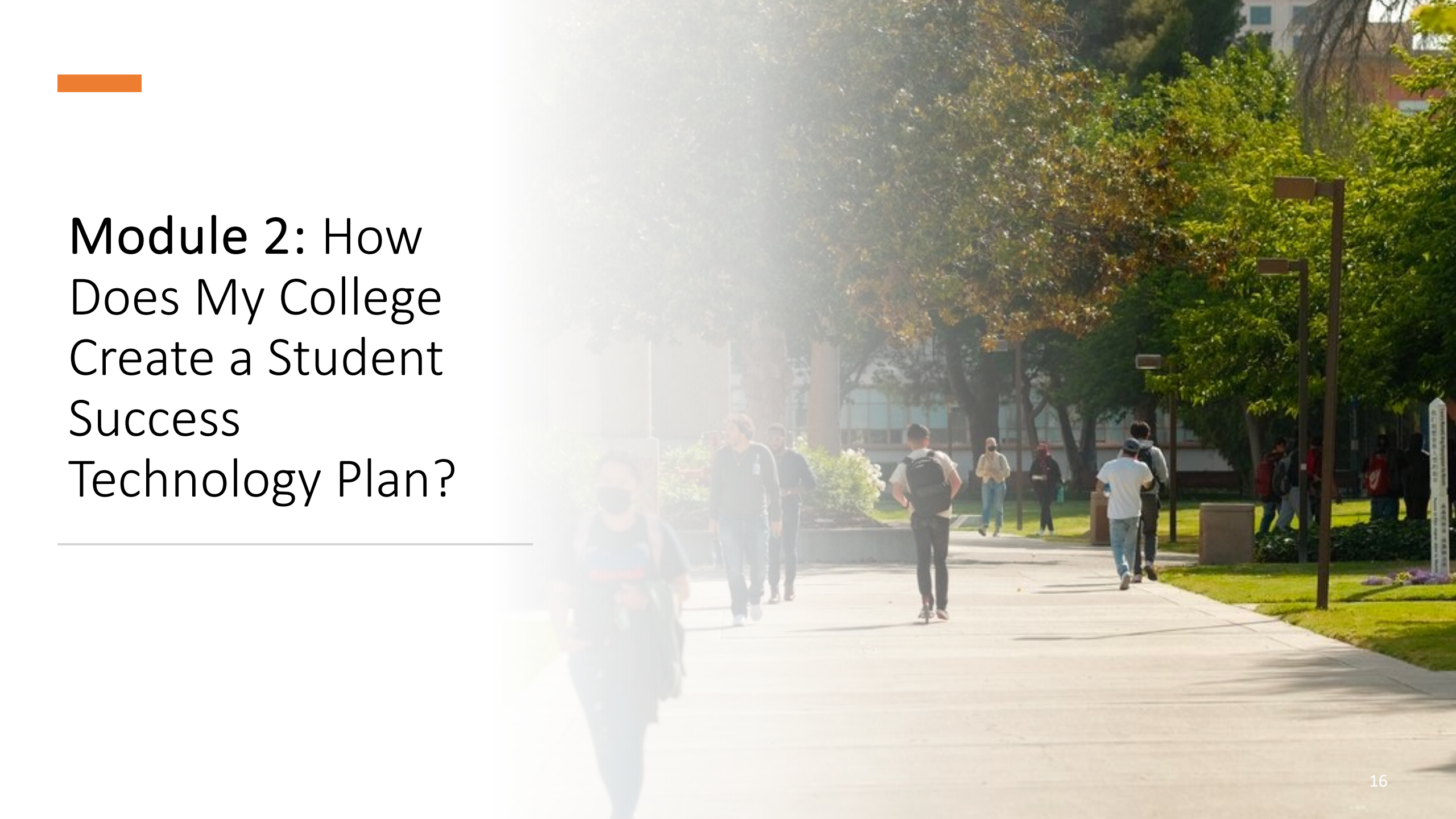
Considerations for Adoption:

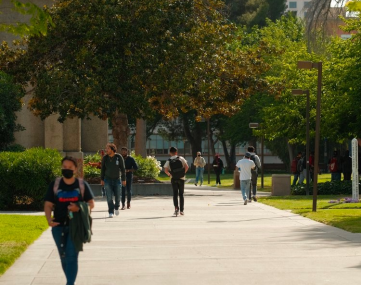
- What **processes** will we need to install and keep **degree requirements** and program information accurate and current?

Implementation Success Requirements:

- **Institution-wide effort** to develop recommended major and program maps, including significant data analysis, planning with academic affairs, career services, and feedback from advising.
- Transfer and labor market **data access** from state, clearinghouse, institution, or other data sets

Module 2: How Does My College Create a Student Success Technology Plan?





Module 2:

How Does My College Create a Student Success Technology Plan?

What You'll Learn

High-performing institutions use student success technology plans to ensure technology supports – rather than impedes – their goals. Here's how to create (or improve) one at your institution:

- What is a student success technology plan, and why does it matter?
- **Plan Preparation:** How can we understand our existing technology and process gaps and opportunities?
- **Plan Creation and Iteration:** How can we ensure our technology projects remain aligned to our student success and equity goals?

Illustrative Advising Technology Alignment Exercise

Strategic Goals Mapped to Fiction College's Priorities and Accompanying Technology Needs

	Improve Student Onboarding	Streamline Student Communications	Strengthen Online Learner Engagement
What should our critical student success priorities be for the next 2-3 years?			
To achieve these priorities, what discrete activities must happen?	• Assign every student an advisor within their area of interest • Finalize academic program maps • Launch online orientation modules	• Adopt a centralized case management approach to track student interactions • Evaluate communication efficacy across academic affairs and student affairs through quantitative and qualitative measures	• Incentivize faculty professional development on elected technologies • Develop learning outcomes for faculty advising sessions • Expand student access to software licenses
How will we know the model/initiative is supporting strong and equitable student outcomes?	• All students (including undecided) assigned an advisor • 90% of programs fully mapped • All students attend orientation	• Case management software used to document at least 80% of student interactions across departments • Improved student response on financial aid and registration communications	• 30% improvements in Learning Management System (LMS) utilization data • Launch of virtual student computer lab
What changes do we need to make to our existing technology structures and processes to support this new model/initiative?	• Student Information System (SIS) field completed for advisor assignments • Procurement of orientation software • Partner with academic affairs, records, and advising to clean-up degree data and input program maps	• Audit existing case management tools and initiate case management software procurement and selection process	• Develop cost estimate for expanding licensing among critical software tools such as Adobe

Integrating Technology With Our Student Success Goals:

Consider:

- What are our top technology priorities? Why?
- Are our technology priorities aligned with our overall strategic/student success priorities? How do we know?
- To what extent does our IT team understand our student success goals?
- To what extent do our student success leaders (or other technology end-users) understand and align with our IT priorities and goals?

Module 3: What Do Students Think About Our Technology?

Module 3:

What Do Students Think About Our Technology?

What You'll Learn

Insights from hundreds of student interviews on common student success technology, plus how to responsibly gather nuanced, actionable feedback from your students.

- Why is the student voice critical for technology strategy?
- What does **current research say about student perspectives** about major student success technologies?
- How can my institution adopt a **student-centered mindset for technology decision-making**?
- How can my institution effectively and equitably engage students across technology planning, procurement, implementation, and continuous improvement?

Module 3:

What Do Students Think About Our Technology?

From the Field

Learning Management Systems (LMS) Through the Student Lens

Welcome?

*"All my teachers are **using slightly different parts of Canvas.***

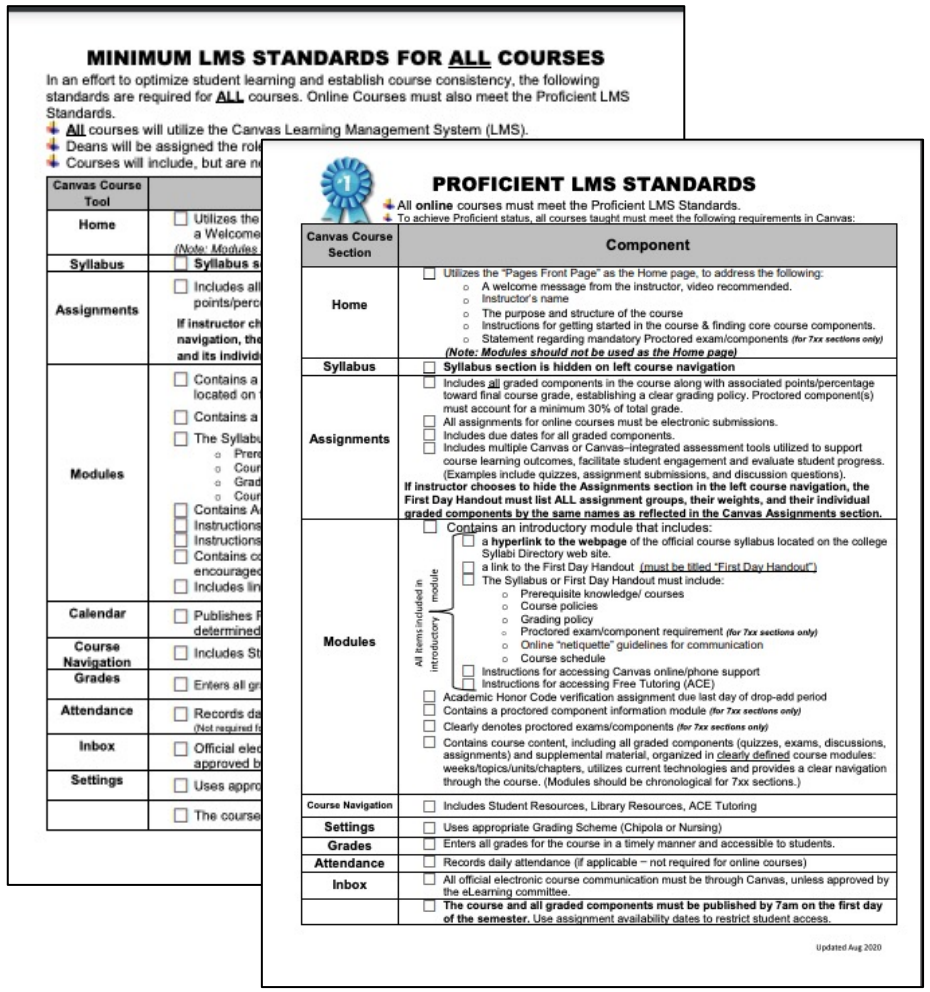
I'm spending so much time trying to keep track of faculty preferences rather than learning new material!"

*"The syllabus said one thing, but then the calendar said something else…I **wasn't sure which one to believe**. Maybe she forgot to upload the new syllabus, or maybe the calendar loaded wrong? Who knows."*

*"…and things would change week to week. It was tough to remember this week the discussion board is Tuesday, but next week it's Friday, and then we had an exam…the **unpredictability is stressful**…"*

*"When things change, it can be announced through email or posted…**sometimes with all the messages in different places, I miss things. "***

Case Study: Multiple Colleges Begin to Establish Clear, Universal Guidelines for LMS Usage



MINIMUM LMS STANDARDS FOR ALL COURSES

In an effort to optimize student learning and establish course consistency, the following standards are required for **ALL** courses. Online Courses must also meet the Proficient LMS Standards.

- **All** courses will utilize the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS).
- Deans will be assigned the rol
- Courses will include, but are n

Canvas Course Tool	
Home	☐ Utilizes the a Welcome (Note: Modules
Syllabus	☐ Syllabus s
Assignments	☐ Includes all points/perc If instructor ch navigation, the and its individ
Modules	☐ Contains a located on ☐ Contains a ☐ The Syllabu o Prere o Cour o Grad o Cour ☐ Contains A ☐ Instructions ☐ Instructions ☐ Contains co encouraged ☐ Includes lin
Calendar	☐ Publishes F determined
Course Navigation	☐ Includes St
Grades	☐ Enters all gr
Attendance	☐ Records da (Not required f
Inbox	☐ Official elec approved b
Settings	☐ Uses appro
	☐ The course

PROFICIENT LMS STANDARDS

- All **online** courses must meet the Proficient LMS Standards.
- To achieve Proficient status, all courses taught must meet the following requirements in Canvas:

Canvas Course Section	Component
Home	☐ Utilizes the "Pages Front Page" as the Home page, to address the following: o A welcome message from the instructor, video recommended. o Instructor's name o The purpose and structure of the course o Instructions for getting started in the course & finding core course components. o Statement regarding mandatory Proctored exam/components *(for 7xx sections only)* ***(Note: Modules should not be used as the Home page)***
Syllabus	☐ **Syllabus section is hidden on left course navigation**
Assignments	☐ Includes all graded components in the course along with associated points/percentage toward final course grade, establishing a clear grading policy. Proctored component(s) must account for a minimum 30% of total grade. ☐ All assignments for online courses must be electronic submissions. ☐ Includes due dates for all graded components. ☐ Includes multiple Canvas or Canvas-integrated assessment tools utilized to support course learning outcomes, facilitate student engagement and evaluate student progress. (Examples include quizzes, assignment submissions, and discussion questions). **If instructor chooses to hide the Assignments section in the left course navigation, the First Day Handout must list ALL assignment groups, their weights, and their individual graded components by the same names as reflected in the Canvas Assignments section.**
Modules	☐ Contains an introductory module that includes: All items included in introductory module: ☐ **a hyperlink to the webpage** of the official course syllabus located on the college Syllabi Directory web site. ☐ a link to the First Day Handout (must be titled "First Day Handout") ☐ The Syllabus or First Day Handout must include: o Prerequisite knowledge/ courses o Course policies o Grading policy o Proctored exam/component requirement *(for 7xx sections only)* o Online "netiquette" guidelines for communication o Course schedule ☐ Instructions for accessing Canvas online/phone support ☐ Instructions for accessing Free Tutoring (ACE) ☐ Academic Honor Code verification assignment due last day of drop-add period ☐ Contains a proctored component information module *(for 7xx sections only)* ☐ Clearly denotes proctored exams/components *(for 7xx sections only)* ☐ Contains course content, including all graded components (quizzes, exams, discussions, assignments) and supplemental material, organized in clearly defined course modules: weeks/topics/units/chapters, utilizes current technologies and provides a clear navigation through the course. (Modules should be chronological for 7xx sections.)
Course Navigation	☐ Includes Student Resources, Library Resources, ACE Tutoring
Settings	☐ Uses appropriate Grading Scheme (Chipola or Nursing)
Grades	☐ Enters all grades for the course in a timely manner and accessible to students.
Attendance	☐ Records daily attendance (if applicable – not required for online courses)
Inbox	☐ All official electronic course communication must be through Canvas, unless approved by the eLearning committee.
	☐ **The course and all graded components must be published by 7am on the first day of the semester.** Use assignment availability dates to restrict student access.

Updated Aug 2020

Sample LMS Standards

Chipola College's LMS guidelines are split into two levels: Minimum Standards and Proficient Standards. Minimum Standards are required for all courses and Proficient Standards are meant for online courses. Standards included:

- ❑ Utilizes the customized "Front Page" to address a Welcome and Course Introduction
- ❑ Contains link to First Day Handout (Must be titled "First Day Handout")
- ❑ Publishes Final Exam date and time on calendar; location added when determined
- ❑ Records daily attendance

Why Does This Matter For Our Students?

90%

Students claim they strongly prefer to take classes with faculty that use the LMS calendar, grading, and discussion board features. Overall, LMS standardization reduced student anxiety and barriers to learning, critical adjustments to enable student success.

The Ada Center Student Focus Groups, 2019

Using Student Voice to Make the Most of Our Core Technology:

Consider:

- How do your students experience your LMS?
- Is that experience consistent across courses, or must the "re-learn" the course layout for each individual class?
- Are there general standards around LMS policies? Could any be improved on your campus? (e.g., ensuring syllabus deadlines match LMS calendar deadlines)

Module 4: How Should We Approach Buying New Technology?

Module 4:

How Should We Approach Buying New Technology?

What You'll Learn

Finding the right technology solution amid hundreds of vendors and competing institution needs can be overwhelming. Here's how to put together an effective procurement process to select technology solutions that are aligned to your needs and mission.

- What does an inclusive and effective procurement team look like?
- How do we **clearly define what products and features we need** given our unique context and goals?
- How do we **prioritize** technology needs given limited resources?
- How do we separate fact from fiction as we explore vendors and products?
- What major variables should influence our product evaluation and selection?

Module 4: Sneak Peek

What Do We Actually Need?

Remember to "Check Your Basement"

CA College Transitions to Remote Advising

Goal: Boost capacity to manage and implement remote advising

Products Explored:
- Zoom
- ConexEd

*"We were really excited about ConexEd. It had a broader set of functionality…but then we realized we **already had Starfish**, which could do a lot of the same things. Duplicative systems would have created havoc for our data team…"*

- Project Lead

Example from "Sample University"

User Story *One per line, specify user title and function (e.g., Advisor can…[action],")*	**Do We Already Have This Capability? (Y/N)**	**If "Yes", What Is The Name of the Existing Tool?**	**Next Step:** *Indicate:* • *Buy* • *Build On Existing* • *Improve Usage of Existing*
Advisor can see a list of existing students/caseload	Y	Excel Spreadsheet	Buy – Excel not sufficient, replace with new tool
Advisor and support staff can see student profile with classes, recent communication, grades, and notes from other support staff and faculty	N	N/A	Buy
Advisor can schedule and manage appointments	Y	Homegrown MyMeetings App	Improve Usage of Existing or Buy/Replace

Module 4.2: Sneak Peek

How Can I Prioritize Among Competing Technology Needs?

Maricopa Colleges Avoid "Boiling the Ocean"

Background:

- 10 College System
- Culture of Autonomy
- Multiple Big Goals (e.g., meta-majors, academic plans, advising dashboard)

Agile, Principle-Based Prioritization

- Put Students First
- Start With What We Have
- Embrace Mobile
- Build Version 1.0 First

Communicating Tradeoffs and Timelines

- Roadshow with Principles
- Transparent Priority/Next Step Updates
- "No for now, not no forever"

The Ada Center

5 Create a Prioritized Features List

Prioritization Guide:
High: Critical requirement, must-have in near term
Medium: Very important for longer term viability
Low: Nice to have as an upgrade over time

User Story	Requirements	Priority (High/Medium/Low)
Pull from list of "Buy" stories in Part 4: Identify Gaps and Opportunities in Current System"	*What front end and backend features are needed to make this user story reality?*	*What is the relative importance and urgency for these features?*

- Which of these requirements are must-haves vs. nice-to-haves? According to which stakeholders?
- Which of these requirements do we most need in the near-term?
- Does our overall prioritization align with our goals? Are all high priority features absolutely necessary (and feasible)?

Procuring New Technology

Consider:

- Have we thoroughly ”checked our basement?”
- What functionality is must-have vs. nice-to-have? According to who?
- What will it *really* take to implement the new technology? (e.g., initial cost, IT bandwidth, data clean-up, training, maintenance)

Module 5: How Do We Effectively Implement Technology Projects?

Module 5:

How Do We Effectively Implement Technology Projects?

What You'll Learn

This work is hard, but this module will cover the basics of how to make implementation faster, easier, and more impactful. It also provides resources for those hoping to rescue a technology initiative gone adrift.

- How can we prepare for an effective student success technology implementation?
- What type of implementation support do we need, if any?
- How can we put together an effective plan to **get a technology implementation back on track**?

Student Success Technology Mishaps Map

Example Tool

Features do not work as expected	Configuration issues	Permissions don't align with college's data access needs, key information fields have not been set up, etc.
	Misaligned user expectations	End users' expectations exceeded reality, or vendor overestimated the tool's interoperability or backend sophistication
	Poor Integration	Tool does not integrate with other core systems and requires manual efforts; college lacks process/bandwidth for this effort
	Data Hygiene Issues	The college lacks data quantity and/or data quality, and/or the data is not formatted to allow for third-party tool access
	Vendor Delivery Issue	Vendor does not deliver key features and/or key features get delayed on the vendor's product development roadmap
Features work, but lack scale and impact	Buy-in lacking	End-users do not use tool because they do not want to (e.g., too cumbersome, does not meet needs, issues)
	Awareness lacking	End-users do not use tool because they are not aware that it (or certain features within it) exists
	Incorrect tool usage	End-users leverage the tool, but do not use it as intended, dampening impact or creating unintended consequences
	Poor impact measurement	The college does not have a process to track and/or analyze key success indicators, including tool usage and end-user feedback
Incomplete implementation	Budget	The college does not have adequate resourcing for the full cost of the tool (e.g., all critical features, training, human resources)
	Turnover	Implementation relies heavily on a select set of champions or product experts who transition out of the college or key role
	Political/Cultural Barrier	Leadership challenges or resistance to change across key stakeholder groups impede implementation
	Poor Prioritization	Multiple initiatives strain institutional financial, IT/IR, and human resources, stalling all projects in the pipeline
	Non-technical readiness	College attempts to implement technology without critical advising vision or processes in place or clearly articulated

Navigating Student Success Technology: *A Step-By-Step Curriculum*

Addressing the Big Questions, Module By Module…

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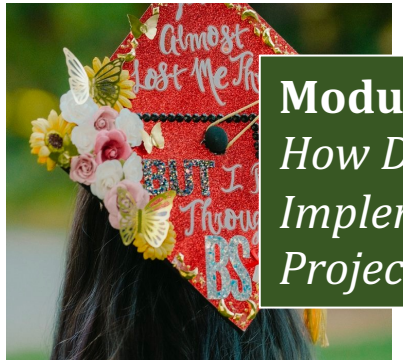


Module 5
How Do We Effectively Implement Technology Projects?

Navigating Student Success Technology

A Step-By-Step Curriculum

Download Modules:
https://www.theadacenter.org/curriculum

Navigating Student Success Technology

A Step-By-Step Curriculum

Interested in Staying In Touch?

Please complete this 2-question survey:

https://rb.gy/74nem3

Download Modules:
https://www.theadacenter.org/curriculum

Questions?

www.theadacenter.org

Brittney@theadacenter.org

Navigating Student Success Technology: *A Step-By-Step Curriculum*

Leveraging Insights and Tools On Your Campus

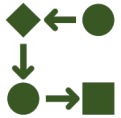
Who Should Use This?

Audience recommendations are on the front of each module, but can be most useful for:

- **Technology procurement and implementation teams** actively leading IT projects
- **IT and IR leaders and practitioners** seeking to bridge technology ecosystems and institution student success and equity strategies
- **Non-IT practitioners** tasked with engaging with or scaling strategic tech projects
- **Institution leaders** interested in understanding and mitigating the strategic risks and opportunities associated with common student success technology types

Navigating Student Success Technology: *A Step-By-Step Curriculum*

Leveraging Insights and Tools On Your Campus



How Can We Use This?

Materials can be used for individual training and development, team PD, or within active technology planning and implementation efforts. They include items such as:

- Easy-to-Digest **Orientation Briefs and Webinars**
- **Facilitation Guides** for Critical Technology Planning and Implementation Milestones
- Research-Based **Templates** for Technology Project Planning and Management
- **"Grab & Go" Resources** and Reference Materials (e.g., Vendor Q&A Cheat Sheet)

Modules can be done sequentially, or practitioners may focus in on the modules or specific materials most relevant to their context.