Creating a Culture of Student Engagement and Philanthropy

Engagement that will last a lifetime...

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Partnerships with students today will pay off in alumni engagement and support tomorrow.
Engagement Building Blocks

- College search process
- Rites of Passage into University
- Engaging student experience
- Commencement
- Young Alumni programs
- Affinity Group Engagement
- Loyal Lifelong Supportive Alumni
Our Opportunity:
Creating Community

- Traditions
- Rituals and rites of passage
- Membership
- Commonalities and collaboration
- Student-administration partnerships
- Student-centered decision-making
- Intergenerational connections
Our Opportunity:
Creating a Lifelong Bond

• Institutional identity and pride
• Meaningful participation
  • Leadership
  • Philanthropy
  • Service
  • Advocacy
• Gratitude and loyalty
• Traditions (Reunions & Homecomings)
• Affinity-based engagement
Assessing Current Structures

How are your students currently involved in supporting the University?

• Tour guides
• Chancellor’s ambassadors
• Student Foundation
• Reunion volunteers
• Alumni Scholars Societies
Who are potential partners in connecting with students?

- Student Life professionals
- Residence Life; RAs, RHAs
- Orientation leaders
- Cultural organizations and Bridge programs
- Academic student leadership groups
- Parents’ groups
What Student Affairs Brings to the Table

- Our knowledge and expertise on students and the student experience
- A collaborative approach to problem solving
- Our awareness of mission, purpose, and values
- Our knowledge of the student development process
- Creativity and ability to stretch dollars
- Our connections to the larger environment through student involvement, career connections, parents, and active alumni
Best Practices Tour: What we learned...

UCs

- We have not typically focused on history and traditions
- Need programs and policies that support student engagement
- Young alumni leadership pipeline not cultivated

Universities Visited

- Traditions are critical to building student engagement
- Different models can work: membership or non-membership, general or class
- Collaboration with student affairs is critical to the success of engaging students and enlisting their support
- Campus culture should be honored
Best Practices Tour: What we learned

- Self governing student groups connected to the alumni association build student engagement
- Students can be communicated with during the college search process and pre-orientation to see their membership as lifelong
- The message of philanthropy can be integrated into all marquee events
- Alumni Centers can become a friendly home to student groups on campus and central to key rites of passage
- Student givers/joiners become alumni givers/joiners
UNC’s Philanthropy pipeline

- Student member in the General Alumni Association
  Recruitment starts at Orientation and Welcome Week
- High quality student programs draw in members—a value proposition for students
- Over 6,000 of their 17,000 current undergraduates join the alumni association
- 35% of their members make a gift – compared to 24% participation rate in the annual fund
- 55-60% of young alumni who give, gave as students
- Former Phone-a-thon workers are great regional connectors and give at a higher level
UNC’s Innovative idea

UNC Student Alumni Association staffs Info tables at two dates:

- “If your tuition covered your education costs, the semester would end today…”
- “If state support covered your education costs, the semester would end today…”
UVa's early Philanthropy message

- Alumnus funds donation of a nickel on every student seat at Convocation
- Convocation convener tell students that the gift symbolizes investment in their education; expectation of future support
- Oh, yeah, their founder appears on the nickel!
UVa's Class Council Approach

- Builds from universal first year residence-based leadership structure
- Alumni Association creates Second Year Council and builds on developmental programs through 4th year
- Class councils are co-advised by Dean of Students and AA but receive most support from AA
- Third Year Council members (Trustees-in-waiting) produce most graduation activities for graduating 4th Years
- 4th Year Trustees serve for 6 years, through their 5th reunion
Importance of Class Identity

- UCs have underutilized class identity
- Students think of themselves as “class of” whether or not they graduate in that year
- Class giving closely tied to class identity
- Future connection to University likely will be class based
Meet Allen. Let me tell you a little about what I've been doing. I finished high school at San Francisco University, and I'm also a political science major at UCSD. I'm going to be a junior this fall, majoring in political science. I've been living in San Francisco for five years, and I've lived in San Diego for three years. I've also spent a lot of time in Los Angeles, and I've been to New York City a few times.

I've been very active in the political science department at UCSD, and I've been involved in a lot of different clubs and organizations. I've been a member of the political science honor society, and I've been involved in the political science club. I've also been a member of the UCSD Student Government. I've been involved in a lot of different events, and I've been a member of the UCSD Student Union. I've been very active in the political science department, and I've been involved in a lot of different clubs and organizations. I've been a member of the political science honor society, and I've been involved in the political science club. I've also been a member of the UCSD Student Government. I've been involved in a lot of different events, and I've been a member of the UCSD Student Union. I've been very active in the political science department, and I've been involved in a lot of different clubs and organizations. I've been a member of the political science honor society, and I've been involved in the political science club. I've also been a member of the UCSD Student Government. I've been involved in a lot of different events, and I've been a member of the UCSD Student Union.
Class Giving, not Class Gift

- High degree of competition with previous class
- Class committee comprised of diverse membership
- Members expected to solicit gifts large and small
- Donors may direct their gift to a wide array of groups and projects
- % giving is more important than size of gift
Young Alumni Reunions

Texas A & M’s Affinity Model

• Association of Former Students—broadly inclusive model
• Up to 60 reunions in a given year—meet alums where they are
• 500 leadership roles for alums
• Alumni Home is center of rites of passage
• Talent-oriented Board members
• Extensive regional engagement efforts
• Class ring is cornerstone of student attachment
Social Networking *is* Information Management

- When students or alumni join social networking sites, they tell us what matters to them
- Affinities can be tracked for long term connections
- Alumni engage *each other*, making your work easier
- Can reduce lost alumni and dead addresses
- Can easily target generational marketing and programming
Considerations in Student Engagement Efforts

- Campus culture—leadership approach must build on
- Staffing multiple leadership options—Student Affairs, Alumni Affairs partnerships
- Manage relationship between engagement efforts and philanthropy
- Don’t alienate students with future means
- Comprehensive giving campaigns
- Breadth of membership
- Pipeline for reunion/class leadership
- Developmental programming
UC San Diego’s Promising Partnerships

- Willing to put resources on the table
- Shared messaging about “lifelong membership”
- Learn proven strategies from industry leaders; make them our own
- Learning about developmental advising
- Strategic alignment of efforts for marquee events (Convocation, Family Weekend, Commencement, Reunions)
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