



Presentation to the Faculty of
the Community College of
Philadelphia—Professional
Development Day

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Where is Higher Education Headed? Trends, Challenges, and Implications

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From theory to practice . . .

Creating an Adult-Centered Professional University



John Sperling

UOPhx Mission

. . . to educate working
adults to develop the
knowledge and skills that
will enable them to
achieve their professional
goals, improve the
productivity of their
organizations, and
provide leadership and
service to their
communities.



Our Academic Vision

Can We Answer These Four Questions?

- Do they know what they should know?
- Can they do what they should be able to do?
- Have they developed values that are appropriate to their professions?
- Do they achieve their life and professional goals?

Knowing, Doing, and Valuing *Learning Goals*

- Professional Competence and Values
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication
- Information Utilization
- Collaboration



Professional Programs

- Bachelor/Master/Doctoral
- Programs in:
 - Education
 - Nursing and Health Care
 - Business and Management
 - Criminal Justice
 - Information Technology Management
 - Counseling
 - Human Services

Our Beginnings . . .

- Early 1970s
- Field-based research/San Jose State U
- Programs to train teachers and police officers to deal with at-risk youth
- Led to creation of Institute for Professional Development—predecessor to and sister institution of UOP
- 1976—University of Phoenix: A University created just for working adults

Roots of UOPhx Teaching/Learning Model

- Eclectic:
But grounded in philosophy, pedagogy, motivational psychology, learning theory
David Hume, Maria Montessori, Anton Macarenko, John Dewey, Gerald Bruner, Martin Seligman
- Fundamental Decision:
To give equal focus to the affective as compared to the cognitive

“Reason is and ought to be the slave of the passions. Reason can tell us what to do, only the passions can WILL us to do it.”



David Hume

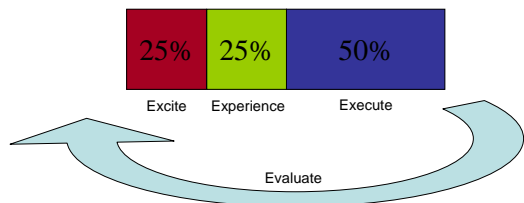
" I like to learn, but I do not always like to be taught."

Winston Churchill



Learning and the Affective Domain

Facilitating learning involve much more than transmitting information



What do adults need?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Active Learning Environment | Immediate Practical Relevance | Convenience and Access |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|



What adults need:

Learning Environment

- Active involvement in learning process
- Makes use of students' experience
- Emphasizes collaboration and "Horizontal" learning
- Rigorous and structured--but fosters self-directedness



What adults need:

Immediate Practical Relevance

- 80% work/80% work full-time
- Reason for returning is profession/ career-related
- Marriage of theory and practice
- Use at work the next day what I learned the night before



What adults need:

Immediate Practical Relevance

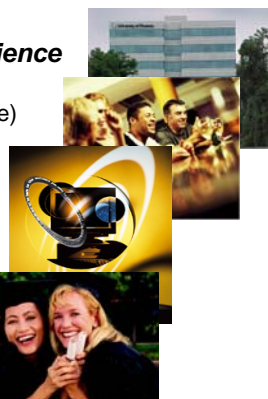
- Professional Practitioner Faculty
- Learning Teams
- Course assignments require application to students' work experience
- Consistent curriculum and course design



What adults need:

Convenience

- Time, place, space (not pace)
- Structure
 - One night a week in class
 - Learning Teams
 - One course at a time
- Online
- Blended delivery
- Time to degree
 - Continuous enrollment
 - Cohort groups



What adults need:

Convenience

Administrative Services

- Available when students need them
- Alternative delivery methods
 - Web-based
 - Telephone



A caution to those who think of themselves as prophets . . .

Forecasting is hard—particularly of the future

What is our current location?

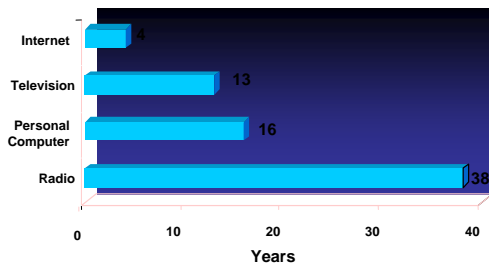
- Differences of opinion on the current state of higher education
- There is no such thing anymore as a stable state—change is and always has been the norm, but it moves much faster now
- Higher Education is being transformed whether we like it or whether we approve
- Change is inevitable--**growth is optional!**

Drivers transforming higher education

- Rise in number of qualified high school grads seeking admission (over 70% of HS grads now go on to college)--traditional college-age population will grow by 17% over next 10 years
- New Economy employment churn and rising public expectations of higher education's role in preparing the work force
- At the same time the traditional funding bases of traditional institutions will continue to stagnate or decline

Technology as a driver of change

Years to 50 million users



Source: Economist 1998

The future?

- Consolidation of higher education (from 3600+ to a few clearly defined clusters) & training sectors
- 1st-tier liberal arts & research institutions left relatively unchanged
- Transformation of non-elite private & public higher education institutions: urban institutions multiply sites and diversify offerings and schedules and focus on traditional and workforce preparation
- Suburban/rural, if unable to diversify, will decline

Adapted from *The Futurist*, March-April 2000

Why is this happening to us?

- An academic culture that emphasizes teaching over learning
- Lack of convenience--we don't make ourselves "easy to use"
- Inertia/Inefficient decision making/Inflexibility
- Poor resource management
- Protectionism

The result?

- Our students are no longer "our" students
- They will attend school in ways they choose instead of ways we choose
- New categories of providers
 - For-profits
 - Corporate universities
 - Publishers
 - Virtual universities
 - “Brick and Click” hybrids
 - International providers

The Answer?

What if **learning** were the purpose of education?



Advantage → Community Colleges

- Fidelity to mission—once you decide what it should be
 - Change or die!
 - Never say “that’s not what we do” unless you’ve thought about whether you should
- It’s all about learning
 - What do we want them to know/do/value?
 - How will we get them there?
 - Did they get it?
 - How do we know they know?

- Grow or die! Educational R&D
- Get efficient
 - Online education can no longer be a cottage industry
 - Don’t fall in love with the technology