

## # 2- Engage with SoTL

### Motivation

One of my motivations throughout the course is student success. If my students are successful then I am successful as a facilitator of my course. If a student is struggling in the course, why are they? Is it the course material? Delivery of material? Or is there an underlying learning disability that we have not uncovered?

As educators, we need to look beyond the individual student's final mark. If the class average is 90%, we should not assume that is because we are great teachers. Course material could be too easy, marking schemes have not been updated to reflect industry standards, or the overall course does not reflect the industry we are serving.

I have had students with 65% reach out to me and express thanks about a course, and I have other students with 95% tell me they were disappointed by the course. Marks are a way to measure the consumption and memorization of material and not necessarily the ability to apply the material.

Another motivation I have is self-reflection and improvement. As Professors, we sometimes fall into a pattern; we have taught the same course for many years and it becomes status quo. We need to challenge ourselves to provide a better product for our students. We need to reach out to our students, our fellow Professors within our discipline as well as outside our discipline. Joining online discussion groups allow us to further our reach within our institution and more important outside our institution. By expanding outside our college, we move away from the "way we do it in our institution" to new ideas and approaches worldwide.

### Student Success

Student success is a great motivation to me. I have been retired for 5 years now (Financial services industry – Project Management), but have continued to teach as it is a hobby of mine. I have taught for over 45 years in Continuing and Part-time education. When I say it's a hobby, it is something that I enjoy and get great satisfaction in. Because of this, financial rewards are not the primary driver in my teaching.

When students are a success it means we have met their needs and interests. We have engaged them in learning and have prepared them for graduation. Student success should not be measured just by marks, student success is when we have met their needs and interests, regardless of whether they obtained an A or a C in the

course. Too many times we measure success by marks, tangible assets, or how much you get paid, we need to be measuring based on the needs and interests.

As professors we need to have a level above “met” the needs of our students. We should approach each course with the attitude that we are going to “exceed” the needs of our students.

## **Value in Education**

We are experiencing a decline in the perception of the value of higher education amongst our students, employers, and parents.

In 1950-70 we went through an increase in the value of education. In Ontario Canada, we saw the introduction of colleges to allow for more technical hands-on teaching.

According to Forbes, its peak enrollment at US higher education institutions was 19,610,826. By the spring of 2020, that number had dropped to 17,458,306. They predict that it will dip to under 17 million this spring, making for a net loss of more than 2 ½ million students over the last decade.

Forbes notes that the percentage of aspiring adult learners who believe education will be worth the cost has dropped from 77% to 59% since 2019. Those believing that education will help them get a good job dropped from 89% to 64%

We must change, the introduction of badge-based education will open up higher learning to adults looking for concise and specific educational learning. Instead of taking a 3-year Project management Course, I can take a 2-weekend course on Project Risk and obtain a badge.

We need to migrate to a more customer-centric sector. Our customers mean our students, parents, alumni taxpayers and our employers.

Our students are changing, they are changing how they learn, and how we teach them. The Professor today is more of a facilitator than an instructor. We must embrace the tools available today (and in many cases leave behind the chalk and chalkboard), to ensure that the courses we are teaching today brings forth the questions and excitement of our students.