The Registry®

November 6-8, 2022

CELBRATING 30 YEARS!

Key Takeaways

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The Registry's 2022 Annual Seminar Key Themes

The Registry's 2022 Annual Seminar was held November 4-6, 2022, in Memphis, Tennessee, celebrating 30 years of excellence.

After several tumultuous years of navigating their institutions through Covid-19—and now facing a host of financial, academic, operational, and administrative challenges—colleges and universities across the country are increasingly seeking out Registry Members as interims and the expertise of The Registry's consulting arm, Registry Advisory Services, to help set their courses for the future.

SEMINAR KEY THEMES

- **Colleges and universities are facing a period of rapid change.** The tenure for campus leaders is becoming shorter on average. This turnover in leadership is one of the greatest challenges in higher education right now. This drives considerable demand for experienced interim leaders who are ready to step in, hit the ground running, and immediately lead significant transformations. In fact, because so many leaders on many campuses are so new to their positions, interims are frequently the most experienced people in the room. Accordingly, other leaders look to Registry Interims for guidance and mentorship.
- **Interim leaders can have an immediate impact by combining their significant experience with a unique, fresh perspective.** When serving in an interim role, Registry Members don't have the luxury of sitting back and fully absorbing the institutional culture and the unique flavor of the institution. These institutions are increasingly looking for significant strategic engagement by interims. A number of years ago, interim leaders served primarily as caretakers to maintain the status quo until a college or university named a successor. This is no longer the case. Today's interim leaders are frequently needed and expected to act as transformative change agents.

  As the role of interim leaders has evolved, institutions are leaning on these experienced leaders to help the institution move forward by relying on the interim's fresh point of view and wealth of experience. Often a college or university is looking to the interim leader to identify the most important issues that require immediate, concentrated attention and expedited change. The interim's objectivity and outside perspective can help uncover the institution's most valuable assets and glaring weaknesses. Working with The Registry on the Expectations Document at the outset helps the Member align their work with the needs of the institution and shapes their approach to the role.

  Successful interims authentically embrace the mission of the institution. The Registry and its Members focus on helping the institution fulfill its mission and achieve its goals, from the initial notice to the completion of the placement. As colleges and universities turn to The Registry to help with their biggest challenges, the assignments become ever more complex—and some are lasting longer than previously. The distinction of The Registry is Members' depth of experience, analytical insights, and ability to translate these capabilities into action on behalf of the institution.
- **Many higher education institutions are confronting financial challenges and enrollment pressures and are looking for practical and creative solutions.** A wide range of higher education institutions—small colleges, large universities, HBCUs, and seminaries—are facing similar challenges. For many, alliances and partnerships are a key element of a sustainable path forward.

  The Registry, through its consulting arm and placements, has assisted institutions in a variety of arrangements. The kinds of solutions that these institutions are forging include both full-scale mergers and alliances that retain considerable independence for each institution while also allowing for cost-sharing and joint marketing. Key lessons from these experiences include that an optimal partnership requires culture fit and cannot be driven solely by financial expediency. A shared mission may include a commitment to the community or the desire for social impact.

This range of approaches comes with multiple challenges to be overcome. Key barriers that must be addressed include a lack of trust among key players and preventing egos of various players from getting in the way of progress. Another pitfall is when institutions take too long to make fundamental changes and become too weak to pursue a viable path to sustainability. Frequently, an interim leader is able to use their unique position to help bridge these gaps and prompt the organization to take needed action.

- In this time of uncertainty, the academic program must address the needs of the market. As institutions confront demographic trends that jeopardize enrollment, those that thrive find ways to adapt. At its core, an institution's academic offerings must respond to the needs of students, so that they will choose to enroll.

  HBCUs facing this pressure are revisiting their fundamentals of impact and growth, in order to produce social and economic impact in a viable and scalable model, and are leading to experimentation with new platforms and innovative collaborations.

  An important strategy being pursued by some institutions is aligning with local and regional growth industries and growth companies as a way to add value for students and create opportunities.

  Another path is exemplified by the Southeast Iowa Higher Education Alliance, where a small university partnered with a local community college to offer a regional education system tailored to the interests of an economically challenged area.

  Some organizations work with outside experts to use modern analytical tools to reform the academic lineup based on insights generated about the market demand for certain subjects and degrees. This approach can set a sound strategic course and improve an institution's financial prospects.

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and belonging play a key role attracting students, even amidst an uncertain political environment. DEI and belonging initiatives dovetail with the need to attract students. Efforts to make a school attractive to all people, across an array of dimensions and identities, can further relationships with prospective students, donors, stakeholders, and strategic partners. This outreach can help the institution to grow, while navigating sensitive politics. DEI and belonging flow from the leadership of the school, and interim leaders can leverage their unique status to be a force for positive change in the school and the greater community.

- Successful transformation requires engagement over time by many stakeholders. The transformations that today's higher education institutions are making demand a lot from many stakeholders. Leadership is called upon to consider the interests of students, faculty, alumni, and communities. Keeping students central to any transformation must be the foundation of any initiatives around academic changes and inclusion.

  An institution's staff is a sometimes-overlooked stakeholder, especially in light of post-pandemic disruptions and social awakenings. For many staff members, the flexibility provided through hybrid and remote work can help stabilize an institution and help it meet its mission, while also broadening options for partnerships and other strategies moving forward.

  Institutional change takes time. Successful leaders of transformations exhibit patience and flexibility without losing sight of the urgent need for change. This need to stay the course and invest the time frequently lies behind the extension of an interim's contract beyond the initial term. Those interim leaders who stay in close contact with their Registry Principal are best positioned to navigate their contract extension and leverage the wealth of resources, from Principals to other Registry Members.

Orientation Session

Facilitators: **Jackie Armitage**, Vice President, The Registry; **Nikki Cormier**, Director of Client Support, The Registry; **Mikaela Rodgers**, Director of Business Development, The Registry
Registry Member: **Julie Furst-Bowe**, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, Arkansas Tech University

OVERVIEW

Mikaela Rodgers and Nikki Cormier led a discussion of The Registry placement process, with additional insights shared by Jackie Armitage. Julie Furst-Bowe, a Registry Member, discussed her first assignment.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The key documents for The Registry Members are the resume, Google search information, and references. Members are asked to keep these documents up to date and can send The Registry a new resume at any time. That is what is submitted to the institution.
  - Members are asked to keep resumes at 6 to 8 pages and to include the dates for each role.
  - To avoid missing any notices, Members are asked to update any changes to their email or phone numbers.
  - Membership status is coded to reflect availability; a Member may temporarily be coded as inactive. This avoids unnecessary notices being sent and can easily revert to active when the Member is available again.
- The placement process includes a number of steps, with support for Members by Registry Principals throughout:
  - The process begins when The Registry receives an *inquiry by an institution*, prompting Principals to obtain details from the client about the opportunity.
  - The Registry drafts a *notice* to send to a list of *potential candidates*, which is generated by analyzing Members by expertise, availability and other key metrics. Because the Registry does not "place up," Members receive opportunities for positions they have already held. Notices are highly confidential.
  - *Notices are sent* to Members by email, and typically include the position title, institution location, and web address, along with terms and details such as annualized salary, start date, and housing.
  - Members can be *candidates* for multiple opportunities, with priority for the first institution that names them as a finalist.
  - *Statements of Interest* by Members are short statements in Word or an email and include specific experience and credentials relevant to the institution. Members explain their interest and fit with the institution.
  - The Registry *submits the assembled materials* to the client for their review and selection of finalists. The time frame for review and selection varies by institution. Members are notified either way.
  - Finalists are typically *interviewed* via Zoom, and the institution can structure the interview for the finalist with one group or a series of interviews with small groups. Depending on the position, it may include a 1:1 interview with the president or cabinet members. The Registry handles logistics and preparation materials.
  - The assigned Registry Principal attends the interviews and helps craft the *Expectations Document*, an accountability guideline for the interim to follow on the assignment.
  - The Registry works to finalize the *Placement Agreement* once terms are finalized among all of the parties. The principal supports the Member throughout the placement.
- Assignment duration can be extended by mutual agreement of all parties. Assignments can also end early when the institution makes a permanent hire.

- If offered, it is a Registry **expectation** that the **Member accepts the position**.
- As an interim, Members **contribute to the institution from the start**. The Expectations Document facilitates the Member hitting the ground running.
- At the completion of the placement, the Member conducts a **confidential self-evaluation** based on the Expectations Document to help with further assignments. Members also update their resumes at this time, using the Expectations Document and any modifications to recall key accomplishments. These materials are useful in future statements of interest.
- **Lifestyle considerations**, especially applied to housing, are important to bring up with the Registry Principal early in the process, including whether a spouse will be accompanying the Registry Member on assignment and any plans for regular visits to the Member's permanent home.
- The trend over time has been that institutions look to **engage interim leaders for strategic reasons**, to bring different experience and viewpoints to a position and establish a strong foundation for the institution to move forward.

ACTION ITEMS

* It is vital to provide the Registry with *current information*, from contact details to an updated resume. "Update your resume as often as needed."
* Because members travel and otherwise may be unavailable for assignment, Members need to *use inactive status* to save time for everyone.
* Let the Registry know either way *when you receive a notice*.
* Because the expectation is that Members accept assignments, be sure to *think it through*, consider travel, and discuss with your spouse and others. Sometimes it is just a matter of letting the Principal know the issue up front and they can negotiate with the institution on your behalf.
* *Use the Expectation Document* as a key resource during the assignment.
* At the end of the placement, *complete the self-evaluation* and update your resume. This helps you to catalog the work that you've done and build statements of interest in the future.
* Please *refer suitable people* to nominate for Registry membership; The Registry provides referral fees.

Maximizing Your Potential as a Candidate for Placement

Facilitators: **Jim Martin**, Senior Consultant and Member, The Registry; **Bob Smith**, Senior Consultant, The Registry

OVERVIEW

Jim Martin and Bob Smith led a lively discussion about successful strategies for placement of Registry Members, focusing on winning interviews and smart Statements of Interest (SOIs). Other members of The Registry's senior team also shared practical insights on how Members can most effectively be selected for placements.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Reviewing the Notice

- Moving from candidate to placement starts with a **careful assessment of the Notice**. Be realistic and self-aware since finalists are expected to take the position if offered. Avoid assumptions based on stereotypes about a location or position and be open to new settings.
- If it's a **struggle to match** your experience with the job prospectus, it's likely not a good fit.

Preparing Your Resume

- An effective resume is helpful to the institution, meaning **challenges and achievements in previous positions are more relevant** than academic publications. It should be up to date and lacking mistakes. (Don't put an open-ended date on your last position!)
- **Unsuccessful resumes** often present a simple litany of positions that lacks context and specific accomplishments.

Writing the Statement of Interest

- An effective Statement of Interest **engages the institution** immediately. Institutions want to hear that candidates embrace their mission and show enthusiasm for it.
- The cardinal rule in SOIs is to frame it from **how the Member can help the institution**. Be specific about how past experiences can serve the needs of the new institution. The biggest pitfall is simply listing a recitation of past positions.

Acing the Interview

- As in any interview process, it is necessary to **do homework** to understand the institution and its needs. Then, connect these needs to your experiences.
- Interviews are still overwhelmingly being conducted on Zoom. **Prepare your Zoom environment** and be focused. Anything that can be distracting on Zoom is not helpful to the candidate.
- Institutions want to know that candidates are **drawn to their mission**.
- A strong interview includes both **strong content** relating the Member's experience to the institution's needs and a **positive dynamic**.
- **Being authentic** in interviews enables that intangible human connection, a key differentiator among several candidates who may have similar professional experiences.
- **Succinct, meaningful responses** encourage more informative dialogue.

Staying the Course

- **Persistence** pays off. Sometimes a Member goes through several unsuccessful attempts before landing the right placement. There is an undeniable, intangible element of chemistry that is hard to predict.

ACTION ITEMS

* Do not simply talk about yourself in the SOI. Remember it is primarily about the *institution's needs*.
* Start your SOI with two sentences about *why* you want to work at the specific institution. Then discuss the *lessons learned and work experiences* that will help succeed at that institution, continuing to center the institution in your framing.
* Assess your *Zoom setup* for proper lighting, camera angle, and background. Blurring the background can be effective, but be wary of virtual backgrounds that can be distracting. Plan to minimize interruptions as much as possible.
* *Interview preparation* should include YouTube, a surprising source of textured information about the campus, professors, and student life. Use your Registry Principal as a resource, with insights about the position that are hard to glean from the job description.
* *Be authentic* and share yourself in the interview.
* Be honest about *how you can help the institution*. Be confident without overselling.
* When asked in the interview why you're interested, the best answer is to say that you're *drawn to the mission* of the institution and expound on that.
* Remember the interview is a *dialogue*, not a monologue. Talking too long robs you of the opportunity to hear what the interviewer is looking for.
* Avoid the trap of spending too much time on a "tell us about yourself initial question."
* End your interview by reinforcing that you would *appreciate the opportunity* to work at that institution.

Renewal by Registry: Innovations, Alliances, Affiliations, and More

Facilitator: **Bill Nelsen**, Senior Consultant, Member, and Alternative Futures and Seminary Practice Leader, The Registry
Registry Members: **Christine Plunkett**, Interim President, Iowa Wesleyan University; **Amy Ruetten**, Interim Chief Financial Officer, General Theological Seminary; **Jim Martin**, Senior Consultant and Member, The Registry

OVERVIEW

Facilitator Bill Nelsen and the Members who were presenting discussed strategic challenges facing institutions, such as declining enrollment and demographic pressures. They offered practical examples of ways The Registry has been called upon to help these institutions and lessons learned.

While the term "merger" tends to strike fear in leaders, various partnership options, short of merger, offer many alternatives to fit the specific needs of colleges, universities, and seminaries.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The Registry brings experience and independence to help institutions confront their challenges. The result is an array of renewal efforts by institutions working with The Registry:
  - *Innovation:* the steps an institution can take to reform and renew without engaging others.
  - *Partnerships:* combining with other institutions in ways that include alliances, affiliations, federations, and mergers (where necessary and appropriate).
- Considering the full array of options is vital to finding the right path for each institution. Partnerships can help strengthen an institution facing an upcoming demographic cliff.
- An affiliation agreement can enable an entity to improve its financial footing, while maintaining its independence.

CASE STUDY:

Affiliation Agreement – Episcopal Divinity School and Union Theological Seminary

- Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) in Cambridge, Mass. was facing *diminished enrollment* and was drawing down its endowment.
- Its board publicly expressed an *interest in a partnership or merger*, which unsettled many stakeholders.
- The Registry's first task was to create a *calmer environment* for change, so the Interim President met one-on- one with the board, staff, and many students.
- The *partnership development process* established with the board started by sending out requests for proposals (RFPs) to about 20 institutions, which resulted in 10 solid proposals.
- The Registry worked with the board to *narrow the options* to three, with an EDS team spending at least two days on each of those campuses.
- The result was an *affiliation agreement* with Union Theological Seminary in New York. The Registry was engaged for another year to help craft and implement the agreement.
- EDS *moved operations* from Cambridge to New York and sold its Cambridge campus for $38 million, which added to its endowment. Combining academic and administrative programs led to savings that provided a *more stable future*.
- The affiliation agreement allows both institutions to *retain their identity* and to continue with their own boards and endowments, while improving financial footing for the long term.

SOME IMPORTANT LESSONS LEARNED

- The foundation for a successful partnership is not solely the need to save the institution. Registry Advisory Services can help generate a variety of leads to explore multiple pathways.

  —The Registry can form a joint task force and *facilitate discussions* across institutions.

  —A tangible way The Registry can offer insights and intelligence is by providing the institutional leadership reports with *detailed options* including program development, cost sharing, joint marketing, and transfer agreements.

- Consider the impact on students and communities broadly, including state tuition grants and the role the institution can play in the local economy.
- The most significant challenge in bringing institutions together is bridging different cultures. Individual egos and lack of trust can also impede a successful partnership. State and regional educational accreditation can be another hurdle to get past in finalizing arrangements.

The panel reviewed other federation/partnership examples where Registry members have been directly involved, including an affiliation agreement and potential merger between General Theological Seminar in New York City and Virginia Theological Seminary; Paul Smith's College in Upstate New York that has recently announced a major agreement with Fed Cap, a large training organization for veterans, ex-foster care youth, and low-income and handicapped people; Ripon College and Marian University in Wisconsin that are implementing shared services; and Bethany College in West Virginia that is initiating a systematic partnership process with Registry guidance.

CASE STUDY:

Alliance – Iowa Wesleyan University and Southeastern Community College

- In highly unusual circumstances, Registry Member Chris Plunkett, served as interim CFO of Iowa Wesleyan for four years, and has now been in the president's role as a Registry Interim for four years, having *led the university back* from the brink.
- The Registry entered when Iowa Wesleyan University was in *perilous financial condition*, having seen enrollment drop over a few years from 700-800 students to fewer than 400. The university is in an economically challenged region and serves a diverse student body.
- The first year was focused on *restructuring the debt* to try to stabilize the situation.
- Facing ongoing difficulty, the university's leadership announced it was *likely to close*.
- While their community provided an immediate infusion through fundraising, Iowa Wesleyan worked with Registry Advisory Services to consider *alternative partnership opportunities*.
- An initial planned partnership with a small Catholic college in Florida did not materialize, but it did offer lessons that helped direct the path forward.
- That experience brought to foreground *local concerns and opportunities*, such as students' Iowa tuition grants and the role the university could play in strengthening the regional economy.
- Iowa Wesleyan formed an *alliance*—the Southeast Iowa Higher Education Alliance—with a two-year, publicly funded, vocationally focused community college.
- While each institution *retains its own boards, presidents, accreditation, and identity*, the Alliance itself has a board with representatives from both institutions. There are shared employees and services, such as food service and subscriptions.
- The Alliance represents a *regional educational system* for this economically challenged area, emphasizing workforce development and engagement with high schools to grow enrollment.
- The distinctive model has attracted favorable visibility and allowed for joint marketing. Students receive a double admissions letter and can participate in shared campus activities.
- The number of transfers from the community college to Iowa Wesleyan so far is small, but growing, and the *impact of shared services and activities is meaningful*.

ADDITIONAL LESSONS LEARNED

- A common pitfall is looking to partner with a similar institution. Better results come from **linking with a complementary but not necessarily similar partner**.
- Sometimes the **best partner** is not another institution but a **nonprofit** whose objectives and values align with the institution's mission. For example, Fed Cap, a large New York based nonprofit, has locations in 22 states and abroad, an annual budget of $365 million.
- **Waiting too long** to make a change is a *big risk* for institutions, which can become too weak to forge a successful partnership.
- Financially targeted actions only work if the program is designed to interest students, so it is vital to **keep students' interests at the forefront**. This has led to **innovative programs** with local employers and health care systems and to reconsidering residential and hybrid models.
- Meaningful **results will take time** when attempting changes this significant. Team buy-in is essential, though challenging with complex institutions. The perspectives of faculty, alumni, and other stakeholders need to be considered.

ACTION ITEMS

* As an Interim, a *Registry Member can deliver the message about the need to change more effectively* to an institution. Independence is a primary reason why institutions look to bring in Registry Members.
* Institutions must *keep the students at the center*. As most institutions, problems stem from insufficient student interest. Think expansively about the programs and fix that first.
* Sometimes *out-of-the-box thinking and non-institutional partners* produce the best results. Consider nonprofits whose missions align.
* Help *prevent your institution from waiting too long to change course* by sharing the experiences of Registry Members and Advisors.
* *Use the resources of The Registry*, both Advisors and other Members, for practical support when navigating the challenges of assisting a struggling institution.

Why HBCUs Are Needed, Now More than Ever

Facilitator: **Richard Green**, Senior Consultant and Member, The Registry

Panelists: **Ronald Johnson**, Interim President, Kentucky State University; **Mablene Krueger**, Interim Provost, Dillard University; **Cynthia Warrick**, President, Stillman College

OVERVIEW

HBCUs comprise about 3% of the approximately 3,000 higher education institutions in the United States. However, HBCUs plays an outsized role in social and economic impact.

Changing demographics and market shifts are forcing movement of traditional liberal arts colleges and universities to new business models, such as the development and incorporation of innovative, strategic ecosystems. Although there will be challenges to overcome, such as campus inertia and resistance to change, a new approach to higher education is critical to continued survival for HBCUs.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Historically, HBCUs have led the way in elevating and improving the human condition.
  - —Hallmarks of HBCUs have been *providing education and opportunities*, and focusing on eliminating—or at least challenging—social and economic disparities.
  - —HBCUs have had a *notable impact on the country and the larger world*, with influential international leaders among their graduates.
  - —Citigroup estimates that over the last 20 years the U.S. economy lost $15 trillion. However, a concerted effort to reduce health, social, and economic disparities would add $5 trillion to the U.S. economy in a five-year period, making *HBCUs needed now more than ever*.
- Higher education institutions are moving toward market-driven programs.
  - —The *business model of HBCUs* is affected by the various factors that affect all institutions of higher education. Traditional liberal arts colleges without a significant endowment, such as many HBCUs, are especially affected by the movement across the higher education landscape. The pandemic had a significant impact on enrollment.
  - —Especially in tuition-driven, private institutions, *drops in enrollment can devastate institutional revenue*, driving the need for new approaches to programming.
- Strategic collaboration ecosystems close market gaps.
  - —Changes in higher education have created *two primary gaps for HBCUs*: impact and growth.
  - —The *impact gap* centers around the ability of HBCUs to have the same *social and economic impact* as in the past.
  - —The *growth gap* focuses on *financial viability and scalability* of the institution and its offerings.
  - —To address these two gaps, HBCUs are applying a *variety of models* and approaches, including the development of *collaborative partnership platforms, or ecosystems*.
  - —In *ecosystems*, institutional programming interacts and aligns with a set of goals. In the ecosystem model, students are on one side of the educational transaction and industry; government and social impact organizations on the other side are brought together to fulfill complementary needs, adding value to the institution.

—Examples include:

- *Kentucky State University* is in the process of developing the institution as a platform-based ecosystem driven by innovation, entrepreneurship, and social impact. Creating such an ecosystem will allow KSU to link to other large, growing ecosystems in those spaces. This will, in turn, support the overall growth of the institution.

- *Bowie State University* has introduced entrepreneurship and innovation across the campus and created Living Learning Centers for students to be immersed in concepts surrounding innovation and entrepreneurship.

- *North Carolina A&T* is similarly developing an ecosystem with a focus on local, state, and global connections. In addition, a strategic partnership with the University of Greensboro allows the institution to expand the new ecosystem's reach.

• Institutional value should be tied to **growth industries**.

—When higher education institutions shift to a more *market-driven approach*, determining which priorities the school will and will not have is key to defining the path forward.

—Understanding what is the *value-creating* component of the school and defining priorities and goals based on value creation will attract connectors in industries that are growing fast.

—*Growth industries* are critical to ensure that the school grows alongside the industries.

ACTION ITEMS

* While not all HBCUs will have the opportunity to create ecosystems, consideration should be given to the development of *partnerships* with outside entities, including other universities, government agencies, and social impact organizations and corporations. These partnerships should be actively driven by HBCUs, rather than passively received.
* *Growth industries* to consider include alternative energy, film production, and computer science.
* As *sources of additional revenue*, consider grants and contracts, state funds, and property leasing.
* Increase *community involvement* by staff, faculty, and students to improve brand recognition and support for the institution.
* Be intentional about *recruiting faculty with an entrepreneurial mindset* who can engage with the community and business and social service sectors.
* Express more frequently the *value of HBCUs* by highlighting the positive contributions of its graduates to the national good: economically, ethically, aesthetically, and politically.

Higher Education Restructuring

Facilitator: **Bob Smith**, Senior Consultant, The Registry
Panelists: **Walt Branson**, Interim Senior Associate Vice Chancellor of Administration, University of California, Santa Cruz; Past Interim Vice President for Administration & Finance and Chief Financial Officer, Arkansas Tech University; **Jim Hunt**, Interim Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, University of Texas Permian Basin; Past Interim Provost/Vice President Academic Affairs, Henderson State University; **Ann Shenethia Emanuel**, Interim Associate Vice President for Human Resources, Northland Pioneer College; Past Special Assistant to the Chancellors Office, University of California, Merced

OVERVIEW

Whether prompted by financial needs, academic efficiencies, or human resource development, restructuring offers opportunities but presents challenges. Interim leaders are often brought in to assist with this process.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Panelists shared their experiences with financial restructuring, academic restructuring, and human resources restructuring.

- Financial Restructure: Arkansas Tech University. Arkansas Tech University (ATU) had experienced personnel turnover and significant enrollment loss, which exposed a looming budget crisis created by a structural deficit in the school's budget.

  ATU engaged with The Registry to bring in Walt Branson as the interim vice president for finance and administration with a focus on resolving the immediate budget problems and developing a five-year financial plan.

  Taking a transparent approach from the start, the university moved quickly, forming three committees: one to evaluate administrative areas, a second to evaluate academic areas, and a third overarching committee to steer the process.

  Every unit across campus was asked to divide its budget into buckets that prioritized:

  —Existing programs and activities

  —Opportunities for transformation

  —Areas to phase out or merge

  —New initiatives

  Vice presidents then prioritized within each bucket to provide a sense of what was most important.

  With the full support of ATU's president, the institution underwent a board-approved 14% budget cut. During the process, ATU also established reserves, which it had never been done before, and adjusted service levels. The goal was to put the institution on a good financial trajectory to move forward.

- Academic Restructuring: Henderson State University. Academic restructuring can occur for various reasons, including addressing financial deficits. When considering an academic restructuring, it is important to understand campus culture and to know what the issues are.

  Henderson State University (HSU) in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, called upon The Registry to provide expert assistance with an academic restructuring. Jim Hunt was brought in and HSU went through a major restructuring, including administrative flattening and the elimination of some academic departments, to address budget issues. This restructuring fundamentally changed the institution. In reducing the faculty by 60 members, new leadership rose from within, reorganizing into what HSU called "meta themes."

  Restructuring is primarily about faculty—particularly faculty governance. Every institution is different. There will not be a single approach that works for all. Setting clear goals and articulating how the value of the existing structure will be carried forward is more likely to gain leadership buy-in.

- Human Resources Restructuring: University of California Merced. For institutions to survive and thrive, human resources practices that existed prior to and even during the pandemic are no longer adequate. The generation that defined much of today's human resources is leaving the workforce, giving way to a younger generation that thinks, acts, and engages differently. Disruption in human resources is here.

  The University of California Merced reached out to The Registry in search of an associate vice chancellor for human resources and engaged Shenethia Emanuel to restructure HR for university staff.

  That restructuring project resulted in the implementation of three simple work modalities for each position: on site, hybrid, and remote. The service(s) associated with each position, and the way the service(s) would be delivered based on the work modality, were also clearly defined, which ensured consistency between the job description and actual responsibilities.

  Offering flexible work modalities and defining clear responsibilities established an approach at UC Merced that speaks to a new generation of workers.

ACTION ITEMS

* Regardless of the type of restructuring, *interims can optimally support the institution* to identify what the school wants and what it can afford, then help determine how to make it work.
* *Identifying key leadership* early in any restructuring process and bringing them along helps continue improvements and sustain the restructuring after an interim leaves.
* Some budget savings can often be achieved immediately, but *savings tend to be easier and faster in administrative areas* than in academic areas.
* Restructuring *cannot ignore the needs of students*. For example, processes such as student communication pathways need to be ironed out regardless of faculty governance structure.
* Higher education institutions must recognize that there is a *new employee value proposition* with an *emphasis on flexibility* and improved work-life balance, and adapt accordingly.

DEI: A Journey of Knowledge and Understanding

Facilitator: **Lucille Sansing**, Senior Consultant and Member, The Registry
Panelists: **Patricia L. Hardaway**, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor, Staff Human Services and Chief Human Resources Officer, University of California, Santa Cruz; **Marie Billie**, Interim Vice President of Human Resources, Frederick Community College; **Cecil Howard**, Past Interim Director of Institutional Equity and Compliance, California State University, San Bernardino

OVERVIEW

Readiness for a diverse and inclusive institution is not automatic or easy, whether by virtue of where an interim lives, schools where they have worked, or communities in which they have participated. The DEI and belonging journey is one of incremental progress, of being exposed to things, learning from those experiences, and moving forward.

Three panelists discussed the evolution of DEI on higher education campuses and their personal DEI journeys.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Concepts of DEI and belonging have evolved.** Although in the term HBCU, the H stands for "historically," the societal issues that created the need for HBCUs, pre-Civil War in the mid-1800s, are still present today. **DEI and belonging continue to be important**.

  In the *1950s and 1960s*, DEI and belonging were addressed through **affirmative action** programs; however, being an affirmative action hire was viewed negatively, connotating a lack of qualification or a lower performance level than someone not hired because of affirmative action. This led to low buy-in and criticism of affirmative action.

  As a result, in the **1970s and 1980s**, corporations **reworked their approach to DEI**, incentivizing managers to make diverse hires. However, using numbers to signal diversity was misleading, as representation did not mean inclusion. Thus, the **inclusion** movement was born, which led to more training, education, and action toward leveling and equity.

  Today, DEI and belonging apply to every demographic difference in society.

- **Institutions must push through legal and political challenges.** Throughout the evolution of DEI and belonging, enforcement of and **accountability to laws and policies** have been critical to the protection of the rights of those who were previously marginalized. Legal action has been an important part of continued progress in the pursuit of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

  Recent **actions taken by state legislatures** to prevent critical race theory discussions in schools can hamper an institution's DEI and belonging efforts. However, public funding averages only 25% of a public institution's budget. Efforts to advance the interests of everybody, across all aspects and identities, can make a school more attractive to students, donors, and partners, which ultimately feeds the bottom line.

- **The Role of Interims in DEI.** If leadership is afraid of prioritizing DEI, nothing will happen. The value of being in an interim is that the potential repercussions of having open, transparent conversations and taking DEI action are lower than for long-term leadership. **Interim leaders have a unique opportunity to impact DEI** and institutional culture by being outspoken and moving confidently toward permanent change.

ACTION ITEMS

* It is important to *get educated*. For example, read works by thought leaders such as Dr. Kathy Obear, and participate in learning exercises, such as the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge developed by Eddie Moore.
* *Inclusion* is the idea that every person has an identity that needs to be respected. It is important to acknowledge and name that others are of different races and experiences.
* It is okay to not know everything and always good to ask, "Can I help you? And if so, how?"
* Given the current DEI court cases, it is *critical that DEI starts with senior leaders*. It cannot be an issue passed on by a president to a chief diversity officer or provost. It must come from the top and must be strategic, intentional, and open.
* Develop a *strategic plan for DEI and belonging* that identifies issues and defines how the institution will address them. Including reasonable metrics and timelines helps ensure that no one feels excluded and builds confidence in the institution's investments in these areas.
* At the same time, continue working and *supporting individuals at the personal level*. Although efforts to change the big picture might at times fall short, educating and articulating values one-to-one can help other people come along.
* To *answer interview questions* about DEI authentically and thoroughly, it is important to practice your response and be honest. If you have never had any experience with diversity, say so. However, also demonstrate the efforts you have made to get educated, acknowledge differences, and offer support.

New Challenges for Leadership

Introduction: **Ian Newbould**, Senior Consultant, The Registry
Presenter: **Richard Ekman**, President Emeritus, Council of Independent Colleges, and Special Advisor to The Registry

OVERVIEW

We are living in a period of rapid change. On average, the tenure for campus leaders, including presidents and chief academic officers, is shortening. With new leadership in high demand, the role of interim leaders and The Registry is increasingly important and is changing.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- In 2022 and 2023, the number of presidents of higher education institutions who retire is expected to be about three times the typical number. Those retiring fall into one of three categories: 1) presidents who intended to retire in 2022 or 2023; 2) presidents who intended to retire earlier but stayed on through the COVID-19 pandemic for the good of their institutions; and 3) those who didn't intend to retire but have decided to do so after the extreme challenges of the past few years.
- Challenges have likewise driven changes in the role of interim leaders, who are more likely to directly experience some of the top issues of today during their tenure. This shift has led to an expansion of options for the role that interim leadership plays. Four main approaches are:

  — *Traditional.* Serve the institution. Do not undertake many big changes and make minimally disruptive decisions. Maintain operations until the next long-term leader arrives.

  — *One-time actions.* There are some actions that an interim is better positioned to take on than a long-term leader, such as making difficult employment decisions.

  — *Addressing specific long-term issues.* In recent years, some longstanding issues have required more rapid attention because issues are evolving so quickly. For example, addressing enrollment now requires immediate, bold steps that cannot be put off. Similarly, shifts in expectations of DEI efforts require significant progress without delay.

  — *The "new normal."* New issues, whether due to the pandemic or other events, require immediate action by any new leader. Examples include sustaining the emphasis on student mental health that is driving big investments in counseling and advising services, countering the increasing percentage of the population skeptical of the value of higher education, and establishing growth majors and partnerships with industries to remain competitive.

- With this four-pillar model come three cautions:

  1. *Over-reliance on data.* Data can vary significantly by region and by type of institution. Not everything applies to everyone and data are not institutional destiny.
  2. *Exaggerating trends.* The ability to anticipate trends is influenced by many things. Consider that the higher education press has a tendency to overgeneralize and exaggerate trend significance.
  3. *Sustaining the status quo.* Interims must trust your own instincts. Bringing experience and a fresh perspective reveals truths that longer-serving institution members cannot see, both in terms of distinctive strengths to develop and distinctive weaknesses to address.

When Nine Months Becomes Two Years

Facilitator: **Karen Whitney**, Former Interim Chancellor, University of Illinois at Springfield
Panelists: **Gary Pack**, Interim President, Clarkson College; **Greg Paveza**, Interim Dean, College of Health Sciences, Chicago State University; **Russell Pinizzotto**, Interim Provost, Simmons University

OVERVIEW

The *number and length of interim appointments are increasing*. Often, longer interim appointments may be the better leadership approach at certain times for an institution. However, interim leadership is different from ongoing leadership, and shorter-term (traditional) interim leadership is different from extended interim leadership.

Four panelists who have served in *extended interim roles* discuss their experiences.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Extended placements are becoming more common, sometimes outlasting the median tenure for the position. The opportunities are increasing not just at the college administrator level, but at the departmental level, as well, including student affairs and registrar.

  At the start of any interim placement:

  — Do as much *research* as possible on the appointment. A good match is much more likely if all parties have conducted thorough research and can make a well-informed decision about the likelihood of a good fit.

  — Have a *clear understanding* of the institution's *expectations and desired outcomes*.

  — *Understand your own expectations* of the position and ensure that they match those of the institution.

  — Make sure there is a clear direction and understanding of *accommodations*, such as living expenses and travel stipends.

  — Where applicable, set *expectations with spouses and families* as early as possible.

Negotiating before signing a contract can ease the path for working together with an institution. If a contract extension is offered, leverage the experience you gained from the initial contract negotiations to renegotiate expectations, outcomes, accommodations, and familial support as needed. Keep in mind that in an extended position, some things you were unable to accomplish in the first year will carry over, or projects planned for a long-term replacement will fall to you to actualize.

The Registry's consultants are highly knowledgeable and can assist in both the initial and additional negotiation needs.

One of the biggest challenges within higher education right now is turnover in leadership. With so many new people in leadership positions, interims are frequently the most experienced people in the room. Therefore, others often look to an interim both for guidance and mentorship.

Real institutional change takes a decade. As transitional leaders, focusing not on accomplishing projects, but instead on putting the right people in the right place and supporting movement in the right direction, can help the institution be prepared for both the expected and the unexpected.

For interims, an extension can offer an opportunity to accomplish that preparation more effectively than a single year allows.

ACTION ITEMS

* *Recommended reading:* "On Boarding the Transitional Presidency: A New Imperative for Interim Presidents," a resource guide specifically for external interim leaders.
* Be involved in the *search for your successor*. Finding the right fit at a high level of leadership takes a long time. The search process can serve as a good indicator early on of whether you might be asked to stay on for an extended time.
* If you suspect you will be extended, *loop in your primary contact at The Registry* as soon as possible so the Primary is part of the discussion early on. This will give you time to discuss any issues that you may want to renegotiate.
* *Make a decision* on your own as *early* as possible. Knowing whether or not you will stay another year saves time and energy for everyone.
* Continually *build trust* through listening and applying what you have learned. If you are extended, having the trust of faculty and staff is key to successful action in the second and subsequent year.

Registry Advisory Services Consulting

Facilitator: **Kevin Matthews**, President, Advisory Services, The Registry
Registry Member: **Kenneth L. Hoyt**, President, The Higher Education Practice, LLC

OVERVIEW

When faced with an institution experiencing financial difficulty, the quickest and easiest fix is to stop bleeding in retention and graduation. However, like many things in higher education, identifying what to address takes analysis.

Kenneth Hoyt explained how *Optimizing Academic Balance (OAB)* provides an approach to analysis that goes beyond simple cost-cutting, using in-depth analysis to support long-term student and institutional success.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- When institutions take a simplistic cost-reduction approach of cutting everything equally by the same percentage, the institution will invariably cut programs that are working well alongside those that are not.
- In taking that same simplistic, equal approach, a lack of detailed analysis can result in making investments in new programs without a clear demonstration of the potential for success.
- OAB is not a financial audit of an institution, though the benefit of the analysis is improvement to the bottom line. The process of OAB is driven by three main measurements:
    1. What ought to be *reduced* or cut back
    2. What has the ability to *add to the bottom line*, both in terms of investing in new programs and solving existing programs in retention, graduation, and improvement
    3. Student success
- OAB takes a data-driven approach. Using inquiry data, application data, admitted student data, enrollment student data, junior student data, and graduate data, the process measures demand for each program, which serves as a proxy for revenues.
- To understand the real cost for teaching each major, calculations are based on faculty salary and benefits and departmental expenses, with detailed costs split out to where teaching actually take place. The analysis also includes costs to offer core curriculum courses and costs of adjunct professors. Three to five years' worth of data for each course offered is reviewed.
- The results are an analysis of whether programs are working or not financially. For example, a program costing $700,000 with only five graduates over the past five years is not producing a benefit for the students or the institution.
- The purpose of OAB is to examine the long-term viability of each major. The analysis does not make recommendations, but rather identifies which programs can grow and expand, and which resources might be redirected to help strengthen the institution.
- The analysis allows for regression analysis to be applied to various data to understand exactly what is causing students to leave and to identify where students are going to come from for a major, so admissions staff can focus their work on the right places.
- The method can be applied to any academic program at the undergraduate, graduate, or non-traditional level, although graduate programs and non-traditional programs often do not have inquiry through enroll data. The modality of the institution will inform the data used in the process.
- Institutions cannot undertake a process such as this by themselves. Gathering data and running the analysis requires hundreds of hours of time to complete and involves prioritizing academic programs and services that may create challenging environments if executed internally.

- Because the analysis depends on a significant amount of data, gathered with assistance and cooperation from various departments, the person at the top of leadership—the president—must fully support and drive the process.

ACTION ITEMS

* *Assess the analytical approach* being used at your institution to make decisions. Is it a simplistic approach of "reduce all expenses by x%," or a rigorous, detailed, nuanced process?
* Learn more about OAB.
* For a copy of the presentation used in this session or a copy of the OAB data collection tool, contact Kenneth Hoyt at KLHoyt@HigherEdPractice.com.

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