HELPING GRADUATE SCHOOLS BUILD FOR THIS CENTURY

"The problem that keeps me up at night is how to offer equitable services to a diverse population of graduate students (non English speakers, older, working, non-traditional) and HOW TO DO THAT AT SCALE."

-M.B. Vice Provost Texas A&M-
Housekeeping…

- Please Sign In, clipboard is traveling around
- Leave a business card in the basket for a raffle that is being supported by Sage Publishing.

- They have donated 12 copies of my book on Finishing Your Dissertation or Thesis Faster: A Proven Roadmap for Success.
Do You Agree??

FACT: Many graduate schools are seeing decreased enrollment?

FACT: While it is widely reported that Graduate Programs have a 50% completion rate on average, that probably is the mean?

FACT: Many Graduate Schools do not have the data to prove or disprove program level completion?

HYPOTHESIS: Targeted professional development has a role to play in reversing these facts
Our Mission:
To participate and share in the evolution of Graduate Schools

Our Vision:
Technology working in tandem with Graduate Schools to build a safety net for students thereby increasing retention and completion

This Research Asks:
1. What evidence do we have from the Deans’ experience?
2. What evidence do we have of retention and completion?
Population for this study...

1. Ten Universities in Three Countries of sizes varying from 13K - 88 students – 25K students in all
2. Decentralized offices supporting 100s of Colleges, and Programs.
3. Roughly divided into thirds as to whether they had almost no, some or robust professional development.
4. Online student population ranging from 17% to 34%
5. 14% global (vs US) citizenship

NOTE: interactive slides available on request
Partnership with DoctoralNet Ltd...

Personalized Portal and App combination roughly priced equivalent to two graduate tuitions. Working with Deans to develop new content that suits their framework.
These Deans give their Masters & PhD or Professional

A complex and redundant, pedagogically driven, suite of digital content and tools
Ongoing Research Employs an Eclectic Mix of Literature & Methodology

Socialization Theory
PhD Completion
Organizational Development
Computer Science

Digital Learning
Teaching and Learning
Marketing Research

Mixed Qualitative & Quantitative Data Sources
Action Research

Narrative Inquiry
Storytelling Research
The Deans’ Stories: University Implementation and Student Adoption
#1-Getting the Data Just Right = Targeted Implementation

Divisions need to be big enough to spark discussion of what can be done to help students most. Frequently this is at the Graduate Coordinator level.
#1 - Getting the Data Just Right = Targeted Implementation

**Question:** Completion data for these programs?

**New professional development can...**

1. target the program and timing for students running into difficulty
2. Work with graduate coordinators to help them over those challenges.
#2- Student Adoption Can Be Tracked from Interest to Use

Lurkers: Open some emails - when a majority are at least lurking the green line is longer than the red.

Somewhat Engaged: Open all the emails, may have gone the site.

Adopters: Frequently use multiple tools.
#3 - Even Without On Campus Support, Students Adopt

- **218 hours** of webinars watched 2018 fall semester
- **278 hours** of webinars watched 2018 fall semester

### In 4th Year
- **22% adoption**
- Total visited pages: 954
- Total visitors: 436
- Unique visitors: 152
- Average visit life: 00:13:13
- Average pages/visit: 2.19
- Bounce rate: 28.67%

### In 3rd Year
- **21% Adoption**
- Total visited pages: 418
- Total visitors: 213
- Unique visitors: 147
- Average visit life: 00:21:23
- Average pages/visit: 1.96
- Bounce rate: 18.78%
#4- Students Adopt Quickly In Universities with Previously Robust Professional

#8- 325 hours of webinar watching before the students even have full access to the site or the tools

#1- Students immediately adopt multiple tools:
- 1 tools adopted by 3
- 304 tools adopted by 152
- 72 tools adopted by 24
- 4 tools adopted by 3
Faculty applauded the Dean during the MastersNet Training when it became clear these adoption data were due to her boldly opting in students for academic writing emails.
It makes a huge difference if you introduce the tools to students live and online as part of orientation.

University #10 New Director introduced DoctoralNet as part of orientation.

338 hours of webinar use 9/15-11/15/2018. 105 of that on Argumentation Making up 1/4 of the audience on that webinar.

1175 tools adopted by 540 students about 10% of the graduate student body.
#6 – It makes a huge difference if you introduce the tools to students live and online as part of orientation

University #10 New-Director introduced DoctoralNet as part of orientation
Brief Recap:

#1-Getting the Data Just Right = Useful for Targeted Work on Completion
#2- Adoption Can Be Tracked from Interest to Use
#3-Even Without On Campus Support, Students Adopt the Tools
#4- Students Adopt Quickly In Universities with Robust Professional Development
#5- Faculty Like It & Help Us Design New Tools
#6- It makes a huge difference if you introduce the PD to students live and online as part of orientation
Retention & Completion?

How Do We Measure Outcomes?

E. Alana James, ED.D.
DoctoralNet
"I will gladly accept any information you provide. I am just getting back to school after 20+ years, and so out of the loop, especially with writing papers and the different styles. I guess I didn't really realize the amount of writing I would have to do, but I'm ready for a career change and know the hard work will pay off in the end.

Thank you! "
"I will be participating in the lingerers group tomorrow. I have been writing my MA thesis for months now and I am stuck and cannot seem to find the will to go on writing.

Thank you in advance for your help."
"Dear Alana,
I had my defense on Monday, and was awarded a PhD! Only a few minor changes are required! So I am delighted! But I wouldn’t have managed to push through without you help, advice, your book and nor without everyone involved in the accelerator experience.
Reviewing everybody’s snippets of their dissertation was so beneficial! As the weeks came and passed, I realized two things. 1: I can do this! 2: I am not alone! Though my research was very different to my peers, we had very similar questions and difficulties! So thank you! Best wishes”

Dr Harriet Cole, DCU
Biology Major
In Closing ...

Bias, Decisions, and Opportunities
#1 Our Bias is Obvious

We are dedicating our lives to the vision that with a technology partner like ours, every university will soon be able to do much better for their failing or lingering Graduate student.

As researchers, we write for peer review (copies of 2 chapters and a journal article from 2018 available on request)

We think these data point in the right direction and therefore...
#2 – Decisions… What is the Cost of Doing Nothing? Vs The Cost of Moving Ahead?

1. Cost of Doing Nothing… Revenue lost when students disengage, recruitment costs go up to replace those numbers, and time lost doing what has always been done to the same results
2. For some these are intriguing enough to make a move
3. For those, there are two options to save money – the cost is roughly two graduate tuitions a year
   1. Option 1: For universities with funds – We’ll half that for a two year pilot that invoices in the spring
   2. Option 2: For those that need to build collegial support – give us a test population for the spring/summer with the intent of starting with everyone in the fall if things go well.

#3 – There are Two More Opportunities…
   a) Educational Leadership (recruiting for Advisory Council)
   b) Research (have design for next phase)
Recap for Discussion:

#1- Getting the Data Just Right = Useful for Targeted Work on Completion
#2- Adoption Can Be Tracked from Interest to Use
#3- Even Without On Campus Support, Students Adopt the Tools Anyway
#4- Students Adopt Quickly In Universities with Robust Professional Development
#5- Faculty Like It & Help Us Design New Tools
#6- It makes a huge difference if you introduce the PD to students live and online as part of orientation

About Retention and Completion…

#1- The Non Traditional Student Tells Us They Need It – Important to Track Multiple Adoptions
#2- Every Group of Students Have Some Who Fall Into Gaps and They are Looking for Ways to Get Out
#3- Those Students Complete When They Have a Safety Net - Testimonials
Sharing in the Evolution of Graduate School

These slides will also be made available in an interactive production of the data on the web after December 7th, 2018. For that access, just write or call…

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