Marshalling Resources for Change: System-Level Initiatives to Increase Accessibility to Post-secondary Education

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Organization of Presentation

1. Introduction: Glen

2. Funding Tools and Rethinking the System: Lucia

3. Involving Community and Measuring Success: Emily

4. Conclusions and Questions: Glen

Introduction

- Origins of CMSF Discussion Paper
- Authors: Glen Jones, Theresa Shanahan, Lucia Padure, Sylvie Lamoureux, Emily Gregor
- Objective: Review of System-Level Policy Instruments and Approaches, Canadian Perspective
- Contribution: Macro review of selected international system-level mechanisms

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Government Funding Tools and Rethinking the System

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Funding Policy Instruments

- Enrolment-based funding formula
- Student financial assistance
- Regulating tuition fees
- Special purpose grants
- Performance-based funding

combined with…

…System Design Policies

- Eliminating binary systems
- Differentiating the college sector
- Improving transfer functions through the system
- Expanding distance learning and private provision

Closing equity gaps:
What works better?

- Universal aid vs. targeted assistance
- Loans vs. grants
- Needs-based vs. merit-based aid
- Increasing vs. decreasing tuition fees

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Do national innovations work?

- Broad-based merit aid (Georgia HOPE)
- Equity performance-based funding (Australia)
- Institutional Development Programs (USA)
- Postal-code funding for disadvantaged students (UK)
- Performance contracts (Spain & Quebec)

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Involving Community

Why is community important?

- Importance of student's **expectations** in deciding whether or not to pursue postsecondary education

- Importance of **engagement** once postsecondary education begins

Types of community-based access programs

Early & concurrent outreach

Dual enrolment

Geographic access

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Community-based access programs

Examples:
- York University's Advanced Credit Experience
- University College of the North
- Campus Saskatchewan

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Measuring Success

Measuring Success

- Difficulty in defining "success"
  - Access? Persistence? Outcomes?
  - Student? Institution? System?

- Data challenges
  - Identifying data to collect
  - Cross- and inter-jurisdictional barriers

Measuring Success

Examples

- National Survey of Student Engagement
- EU Euroranking project
- Backing Australia's Future

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Discussion Questions

- What policy or governance structures best ensure that system-level agencies and administrative bodies can engage effectively with local communities?

- Would governments do best to focus on increasing the presence of postsecondary institutions in underrepresented communities (e.g. through distance learning or new or specialized institutions) or on increasing outreach and support structures at existing, conventional postsecondary institutions?

- Does standardized data collection discourage institutional specialization or impede institutional autonomy?

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Conclusions and Questions

Concluding Observations on Canadian Access Initiations

1. Importance of context
2. Develop definitions and goals for "accessibility" and "success"
3. Focus on transitions and mobility
4. Target low-access populations
5. Strengthen Canada's data and research infrastructure on access to PSE
6. Some problems cannot be solved by PSE institutions alone
7. Keep an eye on system capacity

A Few More Questions …

- Does the paper omit important mechanisms and approaches that should be considered? What are we missing?

- Have we misinterpretted the design or success of initiatives in your jurisdiction?

- Is there a need for more comparative analysis, for example on the data/policy research infrastructure in different higher education systems?