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Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders
Reinventing the Adult Learning Model through Competency-Based Ed.
Rapid City, SD
April 8-10, 2015
1. Why CBE at Southern New Hampshire University?

2. Big questions we tried to answer.

3. Quick Overview of CfA

4. Workforce Development/Talent Strategy Model

5. Partnership Case Study

6. Results so far
SNHU and College for America (CfA)

Southern New Hampshire University
- 4000 Students
- Traditional Undergrad & Grad
- Residential campus in Manchester, NY
- $120K BA

University College (1932)
- 4000 Students
- Traditional Undergrad & Grad
- Residential campus in Manchester, NY
- $120K BA

College of Online Continuing Education (1997)
- 45,000 Students
- 200 Programs
- Non-traditional students
- Full, separate operation in Manchester, NH
- <$40K BA

College for America (2012)
- 1000 students
- CBE degrees: 1 AA, 2 BA’s
- Employed, older adults
- Enroll through employers
- $10K BA
- Ed Tech Start-up/College

Private, Non-Profit University
Mission to expand access
NEASC Accredited
50,000+ students
Manchester, New Hampshire
Our Big Questions

- Can we improve quality of higher education?
- Can we put the student at the center?
- Can we better prepare people for 21st century work?
- Can we expand opportunity and access?
- Can we build a sustainable low-cost model?
- Can we disrupt/influence current system of higher education?
Overview of CfA Approach

- Extremely low cost ($2,500 per year all-inclusive) – two six-month terms – “all you can learn”
- Totally online – work uploaded and submitted to reviewers
- No classes – all learning resources available in LMS
- Employer Supported – many employers pay
- Flexible: self-paced and self-directed
- Organized around competencies, not courses or credits
- Goal is mastery, not grades
- Students supported by Learning Coaches, Reviewers and a robust online learning community
- Eligible for U.S. Title IV financial aid
- Average student is age 40, employed working adult
Workforce/Talent Development Model

Partners Healthcare

Corps Network

WellPoint
Students come into CfA through industry partners – over 75 and growing. Employers have told us they partner with CfA because:

**It’s accountable.** Employers know that students only get credit for mastery, not seat time.

**It’s achievable.** A strong support system of Learning Coaches and a robust learning community makes success more possible than ever before for many students.

**It’s relevant.** While the program is a general studies, liberal arts degree, it enables students to develop – and demonstrate – critical skills that employers need.
High Student Satisfaction

92% would recommend or strongly recommend CfA to family, friends, co-workers
92% are employed full-time
85% said field of study is closely or very closely related to current job
77% have taken some college courses; 84% have no degree or certificate
94% rate Learning Coaches as good or very good
95% rate Reviewers as good or very good
93% agree or strongly agree that CfA projects will help with career goals
72% agree or strongly agree that CfA has helped increase their current job skills
71% agree or strongly agree that completing CfA will allow them to change jobs
89% expect to have $0 (57%) or <$5,000 debt upon completing program
100% believe CfA is good value

Nearly all say CfA has met or exceeded their expectations
Students develop “growth” mindset.

We want our students to become effective (self-directed) learners:

• Choose the next right-sized challenge
• Identify knowledge and skills gaps in order to use resources effectively
• Create and submit deliverables
• No failure, just feedback
• Ask for help
• Receive, reflect on, and apply feedback
• Resubmit towards mastery
• Repeat
Questions?

Our web site:
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