

Looming Enrollment Crisis Reading Abstract

Article: The Looming Enrollment Crisis – The Chronicle of Higher Education

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Abstract: Colleges cannot count on students just showing up to attend college anymore. Students and parents have concerns about the cost and the value of education. Beginning in 2025, the pool of college students is forecasted to shrink significantly and become more racially diverse. Colleges need to look at the relevance of programs they offer, declining birthrates, and where and how they attract students. It is time to right size including programs, faculty, and staff before it is critical. We need to look at barriers for low income and underserved populations in our area and how we can serve them with new programs, short term programs, workforce readiness and retooling skills.

SWOT: Stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, and so a SWOT Analysis is a technique for assessing these four aspects of the college. Specific to this article or book, use a SWOT analysis to identify YC's advantages (strengths) and challenges (weaknesses), and assess new opportunities or threats to the college.

Strengths: New and strong leadership at YC that is willing to take a look at the future **now** and make the necessary and sometimes difficult changes. The College is financially sound so we can make good decisions rather than being reactive and making random bad decisions. YC is a student centered college that focuses on the students and their retention and completion.

Pandemic – has made everything more difficult for the College and our students, but we have done well at moving forward. It wasn't easy going remote, but we did it well. This speaks volumes to our leadership at YC. YC is part of the Yavapai County community...with the Performing Arts Center, OLLI courses, and other programs that are offered to the public at YC. We need to remain front and center as a partner in community.

Weaknesses: Do we have the right program offerings at YC? It is time to revisit what degrees and certificates we offer and how we offer these? Are we reaching out as well as we should be to low income and underserved populations to help them attend college and help them understand what the opportunity of higher education will do for them? Do we have enough people in the right places to do recruitment and retention? What is our niche, what is YC known for by students and the community?

Opportunities: There are untapped markets that YC can reach out to – Hispanic population, Native Americans, other underserved populations, low income, transfer students, students in YC courses in the high school (do we attract them to YC upon graduation as well as we could?).

Looking at our program offerings now and making changes or eliminating any that do not have good enrollments. What other short-term certificates can we offer to get people into the workforce i.e.: Google IT Cert. Offering shorter programs or degrees that can be completed in less than the normal two years. Are we offering programs the way our students want them – online, hybrid, weekends, nights?

Partnering with our 4-year schools in AZ to create opportunities for students that they might not initially be accepted because of low GPA etc. ...we could accept them at YC and they would be conditionally to the 4 year to transfer seamlessly.

Reaching out to parents and students in the middle-income bracket to help them understand the value of attending YC. Many parents do not understand or are intimidated by the cost, FAFSA etc.

What does our community need?

Threats: Increased competition from other institutions, cost of attendance for in-state and out of state students. Do we have barriers that make students unable to attend YC ie: testing, cost, is it clear on our website what the steps are? Are we clear what the value of attending YC is?

We are limited to Yavapai County to market and recruit students from. Can we expand? No international recruitment or recruitment for online programs. Online programs are hidden on the website.

Need more collaboration and engagement of faculty and staff to understand that they are part of the extended recruitment team. Limited number of recruiters at YC =2.