Students who have lived in Missouri for nearly all of their lives and graduated from Missouri schools are no longer considered Missourians when it comes to the tuition they must pay at public colleges and universities.

The students affected fall under a policy known as DACA, for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. It covers those who came into the United States as children, with parents who were undocumented, and have been in the country since June 15, 2012. Other conditions also apply, including school attendance and lack of a criminal record.

At issue in the new change is language in the preamble to House Bill 3, the higher education appropriations bill passed this year by the Missouri legislature.

Though the bill itself doesn’t say anything about what students are entitled to pay in-state tuition rates at public colleges and universities, the preamble says:

“…no funds shall be expended at public institutions of higher education that offer a tuition rate to any student with an unlawful immigration status in the United States that is less than the tuition rate charged to international students, and further provided that no scholarship funds shall be expended on behalf of students with an unlawful immigration status in the United States.”

Vanessa Crawford Aragón, executive director of Missouri Immigrant & Refugee Advocates, or MIRA, estimated that about 1,300 DACA students live in the state. But, she said, it’s hard to know precisely how many students in the state will be affected, because schools keep their own records and have their own tuition policies.
That situation makes it hard for students and their families to determine how to deal with what she called “an end run around the legislative process.”

“Schools are trying to figure out where they stand,” she said, “which is problematic for the schools and the students.

Under some interpretations, including those by Gov. Jay Nixon and the American Civil Liberties Union, the language is not enforceable because it is not part of the law itself.

Sarah Rossi of the ACLU called the prohibition a “backdoor attempt to create policy. It’s not a statute. It’s not a statutory change. It was put into the preamble in an effort not to have to make a statutory change as required by the constitution.”

She said no decision has been made on how the ACLU or affected schools might proceed.

“We haven’t yet decided to file suit,” Rossi said. “At this point, we’re working the advocacy route and trying to get the governor and the universities themselves to take a position.”

University of Missouri sends regrets

But some of the schools within the University of Missouri system have begun to notify returning students and new students who fall under the definition of the preamble language that they cannot count on paying in-state tuition – a change that for students at the University of Missouri-St. Louis would mean paying about $25,000 instead of $10,000 for the school year that begins next month.

A letter dated June 30 from Alan Byrd, dean of enrollment services at UMSL, began:

“I regret to inform you that you residency status has changed at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.”

The letter told affected students that their admission status is not affected, but their in-state rate would no longer be valid.

“Please accept my sincere apology for any inconvenience this legislation may have caused you and your family,” Byrd’s letter concluded. “We truly value
you as a member of our campus community and hope this will not prevent you from continuing your education at UMSL.”

In an interview, Byrd said that hope won’t be fulfilled for several students who had planned to go to UMSL but have now decided to enroll instead at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. Illinois does not have the same policy as Missouri, and SIUE allows students on the Missouri side of the St. Louis area to pay in-state tuition rates

“Right now,” he said, “we are working diligently to be able to bring those students back. Of course, we can’t offer them any public funds, but we’re allowed to use private funds to keep them at the current rate, so they’ll be able to afford to finish their degrees here at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.”

But, he added, such private funds are limited.

“We do not have enough to cover everyone,” Byrd said, “so right now it’s a priority that we’re trying to secure funds to be able to take care of all returning students.”

At the university’s Columbia campus, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said only two students are affected by the change in the law, and Mizzou is working to find “alternative ways to fund their education.”

He noted that while the campus has thousands of foreign students attending class, they have proper visas.

“The people primarily affected by this are really not people who have come to this country specifically to go to higher education,” Loftin said in an interview. “They were brought here probably when they were two years old or younger, by their parents, who have been in the country illegally.

“They are the ones who are still here, have gone through school systems here, from the time they were in kindergarten or pre-kindergarten through high school, and they come to universities like Mizzou to pursue higher education.”

He said that U.S.-born students often do not try to earn graduate degrees in areas like engineering and the physical sciences, so foreign students fill that gap. Attracting international students is not a matter of seeking higher tuition
than that paid by Missouri residents but one of achieving a diverse student body, Loftin said.

“We want this university to reflect the world,” he said. “Our graduates are going to be working in a global environment, a global economy. To the extent that they have relationships here at this campus, it prepares them much better to a part of the global community when they leave the university.”

Asked whether foreign students might be filling slots that could be taken by Missouri residents, Loftin replied:
“We have never denied admission to a qualified Missouri student in place of a person from outside of Missouri.”

**Other actions affecting college costs**

The situation involving DACA students and in-state tuition follows Nixon’s veto last week of legislation that would have taken away eligibility for A+ scholarships from undocumented students. The bill would have limited such scholarships to students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

Nixon called the bill, Senate Bill 224, “a harsh measure imposed unfairly on children who have done nothing wrong. Quite the contrary, they have done much to be admired, in their studies, for their schools and on behalf of their communities.”

In a speech in Kansas City on Saturday, he added:

“At a time when we are working to make higher education in Missouri more accessible and affordable, this bill would have the exact opposite effect by taking away the scholarships these students have earned through their hard work and achievement.

“These students have worked hard, played by the rules and given back to their communities. Rather than punishing them, we should be encouraging students who are willing to work hard both in and out of the classroom to achieve their goals and strengthen their communities.”

On Wednesday, Nixon announced a further effort to help students afford higher education. He said the maximum award amount for Access Missouri scholarships — designated for students from low-income families — will increase to $850 from $660 for students attending participating 2-year
institutions and to $1,850 from $1,500 for those attending participating 4-year institutions.

College officials excited by Access Missouri scholarship increase

By Megan Favignano

Thursday, July 16, 2015 at 2:00 pm

Local colleges are beginning to rework the financial aid packages for students receiving Access Missouri scholarships after Gov. Jay Nixon moved to increase the maximum award amount of the need-based scholarships.

The maximum award amount for Access Missouri, a scholarship program for Missouri college students, will increase between 23 and 30 percent this coming year, Nixon said Wednesday during a press conference at North Central Missouri College in Trenton.

For students receiving Access Missouri funds at two-year institutions, the maximum award will increase about 30 percent, from $660 to $850. Students attending four-year institutions will see their award amounts increase by more than 23 percent, from $1,500 to $1,850.

Columbia College Director of Financial Aid Sharon Abernathy said she was excited by the increase.

“It's a huge impact for our students,” Abernathy said. “I realize $350 may not seem like a lot, but it's a lot for students” receiving need-based aid.

Abernathy said Columbia College usually awards Access Missouri funds to more than 1,500 students each year. Her office will be adjusting student award packages, which she hopes will mean less debt for those students.

The University of Missouri has awarded 4,551 students a total of $6,686,250 in Access Missouri scholarship funds for the coming school year. MU spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said the university will be making adjustments because of the award amount adjustment.

Kim Stonecipher-Fisher, financial aid director for Stephens College, said she would begin alerting students receiving Access Missouri scholarships of changes to aid packages. She said the
change will “make a tremendous impact” for 42 percent of the college’s Missouri students who receive Access Missouri funds.

During the financial aid process, Stonecipher-Fisher said, Stephens College stresses the possibility of change to parents. “It depends on what happens in” Jefferson City, she said. “We may not know from year to year what may happen.”

Scholarship amounts can be increased because of the state’s responsible budget management and improving economy, Nixon said in a news release.

“This substantial increase in Access Missouri scholarship amounts will make college more affordable for thousands of students across the state,” Nixon said in the release. About 50,000 students receive Access Missouri scholarships each year, according to the release.

Missouri has become the second state to give college students more room on campus for protests, marches and other peaceful expressions of free speech.

A bill signed this week by Gov. Jay Nixon and effective Aug. 28 stops colleges and universities from limiting locations where students can protest, as flocks of Missouri students did last year with chants, pickets and “die-ins” against police brutality after racially charged incidents in Ferguson, Mo.

The Missouri Campus Free Expression Act says that “the outdoor areas of campuses of public institutions of higher education in this state shall be deemed traditional public forums.” Schools that violate the law could be taken to court and fined at least $500 for the initial violation, plus $50 for each day the violation continues.
The same protections granted in the Missouri law were made for students in Virginia last spring.

According to the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, one in six top colleges and universities in the country has a designated free speech zone — limited space on campus where student expression is permitted without a permit. The University of Missouri is on that list.

“Free speech zones were set to restrict student speech,” said Joe Cohn, the foundation’s legislative and policy director. “We are really proud of this bill making campuses … better places for free speech. Universities can’t just shift students into small places on campus to speak out, and that’s the way it should be everywhere.”

MU officials and lawyers are reviewing the law and the school’s policy to see what changes are needed, university spokesman Christian Basi said.

Basi said MU has always encouraged free speech “as long as their freedom of expression does not infringe upon the rights of others by disrupting the normal operations and functions occurring on campus.”

“We have accommodated individuals and groups who wish to express themselves publicly by providing a speakers circle in the center of our campus where they can be most visible without interfering with the normal functions of a very busy campus,” he said.

Holding student events elsewhere on campus requires a permit.

But the new law says students must be allowed “to spontaneously and contemporaneously assemble.”

The law does allow for some “time, place and manner restrictions” if they come with a reasonable explanation that the limits serve “a compelling institutional interest.” For example, protests could be limited near a university hospital.

In St. Joseph, Missouri Western State University has a policy prohibiting the use of bullhorns.

“We will have to tweak our policy to get it in conformity, but we are not far off,” said Tim Kissock, risk manager at the university.
Here Are the Four Types of Drunks, According to Science

Are you a Mary Poppins or a Hemingway?

You know when you’re out with your friends at a bar, and you’ve all had the same amount to drink, yet one friend is giggling uncontrollably, another is telling a hilarious story to a group of strangers, a third is picking a fight with the bouncer, and the last is talking to the bartender as if those four Jägerbombs never happened? You might have wondered, well, what’s up with that?

Science to the rescue. Psychology researchers from the University of Missouri at Columbia have published a study in *Addiction Research & Theory* attempting to bring the conventional wisdom that there are many distinct ways to be drunk to its logical, scientifically-based conclusion. Their study, which involved 374 undergraduates at a large Midwestern university, drew from literature and pop culture in order to conclude that there are four types of drinkers: the Mary Poppins, the Ernest Hemingway, the Nutty Professor and the Mr. Hyde.

The first and largest group — about 40% — was the Ernest Hemingways. Named for the writer who famously boasted that he could “drink hells any amount of whiskey without getting drunk,” Hemingways do not exhibit any major changes in personality when they transition from sober to drunk, the study contends.

In contrast, Mary Poppins drinkers follow the “practically perfect in every way” description Poppins bestows on herself in the 1964 movie: they are already outgoing types who somehow get sweeter and happier with alcohol.

After that come the Nutty Professors, named for the chemically-altered academic with a second personality immortalized by Eddie Murphy. They, the study says, are natural introverts who shed their inhibitions with special vigor when they drink, showing a flashier and more social side.

And, lastly, there are the Mr. Hydes: the evil-twin drinkers who are, according to the study, “particularly less responsible, less intellectual, and more hostile when under the influence of alcohol.”

The study authors hope to use these categories to tailor future alcoholism interventions to particular personality types. Meanwhile, you can use them to take bets on how many beers in your Nutty Professor friend will have had enough to start flirting with that brunette by the jukebox.
Nueterra remains mum on future of Fulton hospital

By Rudi Keller

Thursday, July 16, 2015 at 2:00 pm

The future of Fulton Medical Center — a hospital with few patients, no surgeons and a growing deficit — is uncertain after Monday’s vote to reject a proposed 10-bed operation in Columbia, and the majority owner, Nueterra, isn’t talking.

Nueterra, a Leawood, Kan.,-based hospital and health care management company, purchased the former Callaway Community Hospital in December as part of a joint venture with University of Missouri Health Care. As part of the $6 million deal, MU Health paid $1.15 million in cash and provided a loan guarantee for $2.75 million for a 35 percent stake.

On Monday, the Health Facilities Review Committee voted 5-2 against granting a certificate of need to the new hospital, which was planned for property on South Lenoir Street.

Before the vote, Fulton Medical Center CEO Michael Powell said the $36.1 million plan that included two operating rooms and an emergency room was needed “to keep our doors open.”

Amy Leiker, vice president of Global Marketing at Nueterra, wrote in an email Tuesday that the company would issue a statement about the vote by 9 a.m. Wednesday. Leiker did not respond to calls or emails seeking comment Wednesday and Thursday morning.

Profits from the new hospital were intended to underwrite $2 million in deferred repairs at the main hospital and to stabilize an operating budget that is $1 million in the red, according to testimony during the Monday hearing. The application for the new hospital said the occupancy rate at the Fulton hospital is 70 percent for staffed beds, a number challenged by opponents who put the true rate at about 30 percent.

As the junior partner in the deal, MU Health will not decide the future of Fulton Medical Center, spokeswoman Mary Jenkins wrote in an email.

“Nueterra will be taking the lead in decisions about the hospital in Callaway County, but MU Health Care will support every attempt to keep services available for Fulton residents,” she wrote.
MU Health became a partner in the deal in part to sustain a 40-year residency program at the hospital, CEO Mitch Wasden said in December.

MU Health “will continue to plan for ways we can meet the needs of our growing patient population and support the teaching, research and clinical missions of the University of Missouri,” Jenkins wrote.

One part of the deal to build a new hospital on South Lenoir Street that won’t change as a result of Monday’s vote is the decision by Whirlwind Properties LLC to close Ed’s and Sunset mobile home parks on the property selected for the building. Ron Netemeyer, owner and manager of Whirlwind Properties, said in an email Wednesday that the $4 million deal for the land was contingent on approval of the certificate of need.

“I have no clue what Nueterra is thinking,” he wrote.

The future use of the property is unclear, Netemeyer wrote. He will press ahead with a request for the Columbia City Council to add hospitals and other medical facilities to the list of allowed uses under the planned commercial district zoning on the property.

The zoning change was approved 7-0 by the Planning and Zoning Commission and will be on the council’s consent agenda Monday.

“This rezoning will give prospective buyers more options for development and is consistent with the property uses around me,” he wrote.

Students get crash course in local government during leadership academy

By Megan Favignano

Thursday, July 16, 2015 at 2:00 pm

The council chambers at City Hall were full Wednesday afternoon during a heated debate.

The Columbia City Council was nowhere to be found, but that didn’t stop a group of students from tackling issues such as how longer school years that skip summer break could allow students to graduate from high school by age 15. Students who supported the concept said school takes up too much of their lives.
“It may seem like a lot of work” to attend school with fewer breaks, “but you can get done with school earlier,” student Jacob Bentlage said.

Seventh-, eighth- and ninth-grade students held a mock city council meeting Wednesday as part of the Truman Leadership Academy, a summer leadership camp.

Students chose four ideas to discuss and vote on during their meeting. While the mock council did not approve the idea to extend the school year, its members did make progress on other items.

Students engaged in heated debate about school lunches, with the council voting to have healthier lunches four days a week and to allow one “cheat day” each week — a time when students could eat as they choose.

The council also voted to increase the number of honors classes in Columbia Public Schools. Attendee Logan Huckstep said during a mock public hearing that doing so would challenge students more in school.

“They’re teaching to the lowest common denominator,” Huckstep said of the current situation in schools.

Other students agreed and said students shouldn’t be stuck in a class they find boring or too easy.

A measure to allow homeschooled students to participate in sports through the school district passed unanimously, receiving support from all who spoke during the mock public hearing.

Graduate students with the University of Missouri’s Truman School of Public Affairs organized the five-day camp, which included activities focused on leadership, service and community involvement.

**Amanda Ball, a first-year MBA student at MU this fall, volunteered to help with the program and emphasized the importance of hands-on experiences for the students.**

“They actually get to experience how their government system works rather than just reading about it,” Ball said.

Two management fellows with the city, Leah Christian and Megan Allen, taught students about Columbia’s government and the rules of city council meetings.

“It’s OK to disagree as long as we understand that the end goal isn’t about one person,” Allen told the students before the mock meeting.

Activities during the weeklong academy included group discussions, a presentation from the Girl Scouts of America, goal-setting exercises, a service project cleaning Flat Branch Park, and learning how local and state government work.
The service project, Ball said, is an important component for the students.

Ball said she was excited to volunteer with the group. “I love the process of discovery that takes place in the growth of leadership,” she said.

Before their mock council meeting, Columbia Sustainability Manager Barbara Buffaloe led the group on a tour of City Hall. Buffaloe explained the significance behind the large keyhole outside the building.

“You, as community members, are the keys to the city,” she told the students Wednesday.

Show Me State Games Torch Run Begins at Jesse Hall Today

The Show Me State Games opening ceremony is today. There is the annual torch runs in both Jefferson City and Columbia. The Jefferson City torch run begins this morning at 11 on the steps of the capitol building. The Columbia torch run will be at 2:30 this afternoon, and will begin on the steps of Jesse hall on MU's campus.

Watch the story:
A Step Backward for Students

July 17, 2015

By Thomas J. Snyder

NO MENTION

Earlier this summer, the Department of Education proposed new regulations addressing the management of Title IV funds and the distribution of financial aid refunds. As a system with 32 community college campuses that serves nearly 200,000 students, Ivy Tech processes on average 155,000 financial aid balance disbursements each year.

This is a huge undertaking and one that we take very seriously, as students use their disbursements to pay for books, supplies and other living expenses.

Many of our students -- 61,000 of whom receive Pell Grants -- rely on the speedy and safe delivery of their student aid to ensure they can pay their bills and continue their education. Without significant modification, the proposed regulation would create unnecessary challenges for us to provide students with their financial aid refunds in a timely, secure manner. While many provisions of the proposed regulation seek to limit fees and tighten security measures, several aspects unfortunately have the opposite effect.

A Move Back to Paper Check

Today, institutions can decide whether to offer paper checks as an option for disbursement among the other options for electronic disbursement. In the event that students do not choose any method for receiving their funds, they will be mailed a paper check. This method has allowed institutions to
encourage and promote electronic delivery, which is a more secure and a timely method for students and institutions. Requiring institutions to provide the up-front option of a check goes against decades of encouraging electronic transfer of funds for many consumer purposes, including government benefits and employee earnings.

This will be operationally challenging for our system, and it also would provide a ready market for check cashing services and their exorbitant fees. Again, other provisions of this regulation seek to limit fee exposure to students. Unfortunately, the requirement to provide paper checks up front will expose many students to check cashing fees.

**Increased Risk of Financial Aid Fraud**

Under the new requirement, colleges would be limited in what information they could share with their third-party disbursement providers. No data, other than a student’s name, address and email, would be permitted -- information that is too vague and opens up exposure to financial aid fraud.

Without the ability to securely authenticate the identity of the student and share additional information, including the amount of a student’s disbursement, third parties would have no way to process these transactions with the level of security and accuracy that they do today. We need to find middle ground on this issue, which could be accomplished by giving third-party providers access to refund amounts and unique, nonpersonal student identifiers.

**Federalization of the Disbursement Process**

Under the proposed regulations, the education secretary is reserving the authority of the department to operate the credit balance disbursement process -- essentially an invitation for unnecessary complication and delay.

Institutions and their students would be required to use the department’s system, whether or not it met the unique needs of a particular college and despite logistical burdens on both institutions and the department. Additionally, any system developed by the department is unlikely to deal with non-Title IV funds, requiring institutions to have redundant systems for the delivery of this aid, which could lead to more delays and errors.
The distribution of financial aid disbursements to our students is a process we take extremely seriously. Students must receive this aid quickly and securely to ensure they can benefit from the education they receive at Ivy Tech and other institutions across the country.

Like the department, we want to protect our students' financial well-being and provide the least expensive, least burdensome and most financially secure systems. Unfortunately, despite good intentions, the proposed regulation in its current form would be a step in the wrong direction -- a step many students can’t afford to take.

**Closure Concerns and Financial Strategies: a Survey of College Business Officers**

*July 17, 2015*

*By Kellie Woodhouse*

**NO MU MENTION**

Nearly one in five college and university chief business officers are worried their institutions are at risk of shutting down in the foreseeable future, and skepticism over the financial model of their institutions continues from last year, according to a survey by Inside Higher Ed and Gallup.

But are institutions doing enough to navigate an era of financial difficulty?

The 2015 Survey of College and University Business Officers, Inside Higher Ed and Gallup's fifth such study, reveals that as institutions deal with financial concerns, they are using some strategies, like increasing enrollment, more
widely than more unpopular methods of trimming the budget. And that’s not necessarily to the benefit of struggling colleges, analysts interviewed for this article say.

In the survey, 64 percent of business officers this year strongly agreed or agreed that their financial model is sustainable over the next five years, compared to 62 percent last year. That confidence drops to 42 percent over 10 years, roughly similar to last year’s response of 40 percent.

About the Survey

Inside Higher Ed's 2015 Survey of College and University Business Officers was conducted in conjunction with researchers from Gallup. Inside Higher Ed regularly surveys key higher ed professionals on a range of topics.

On Thursday, Aug. 13, at 2 p.m. EDT, Inside Higher Ed editors will analyze the survey's findings and answer readers' questions in a free webinar.

The Inside Higher Ed survey of business officers was made possible in part by advertising from Axiom, Jenzabar and Workday.

More institutions are moving toward cost-saving measures like shared services, an approach that centralizes administrative services formerly scattered across departments and schools: 43 percent reported their institutions use some type of shared services and another 23 percent said their institutions were considering adopting a shared services model.

The vast majority of CFOs said their institutions have placed a primary emphasis over the past five years on increasing enrollment (88 percent) and net tuition revenue (74 percent).

Fewer have increased their focus on measures like the cost of providing health care (67 percent) and retirement benefits (50 percent), the profitability of their academic programs (65 percent), the return on endowment investments (52 percent), the cost of athletic programs (52 percent), and increasing the faculty teaching load (44 percent).

Yet higher education analysts and experts say colleges will have to look beyond enrollment increases if they plan to solve deep-rooted financial issues in the sector.
“All of the signals are that this is a sector that is in trouble,” said Jane Wellman, a higher education finance expert with the College Futures Foundation. “Yet the kind of things that would better position institutions for the long haul probably aren’t happening. They’re still at the edges, and solving this more symptomatically than strategically.”

Increasing enrollment and net tuition revenue, as a financial strategy, “can only go so far,” said David Wheaton, the chief business officer at Macalester College, a liberal arts college in Minnesota. “Most of us are limited in how much capacity we have on our campuses,” he continued. “You can’t do that year after year after year.”

The survey, released in conjunction with the annual meeting of the National Association of College and University Business Officers in Nashville, Tenn., beginning this weekend, is based on the responses of chief financial officers at 403 public and private colleges and universities. Just under 3,000 CFOs were asked to participate in the survey. A copy of the survey report can be downloaded here.

Public vs. Private

When Sweet Briar College announced its pending closure in March -- a controversial decision that has since been abandoned after alumnae, faculty members and students fought to keep the college alive -- the news caused a ripple of concern throughout many in higher education, including business officers: Were their institutions -- many of which struggle with similar concerns of large discount rates and lowering enrollment -- also at risk of closure?

The survey, distributed before Sweet Briar’s decision to shutter was reversed, found that concerns about closing aren't as rare as one might think. Nearly one in five business officers said their institutions are likely to shut down in the coming decades. Of that 19 percent, just 1 percent feared a shuttering would occur in the next five years.

“This is a sector that's in a lot of transition and it's quite unstable. The majority of the people who are responsible for money think that it's manageable in the short term, but not long-term,” Wellman said.
CFOs at private nonprofit institutions were twice as likely (27 percent) to fear closing as were their public university counterparts (11 percent), with 38 percent of baccalaureate private college business officers reporting their institutions might have to shut down in the foreseeable future.

The disparity in the number of private and public institutions concerned about shutting down was noted by several of the analysts asked to review the survey.

“That really jumped out at you,” said Richard Staisloff, a former business officer at the College of Notre Dame, whose RPK Group now consults with colleges. He says public colleges aren’t immune to the forces that contributed to the since-abandoned decision to close Sweet Briar College, a private women’s institution in Virginia.

“Demographic trends, reductions in certain revenue sources, a lack of efficiencies, a lack of response to market demand -- there are a lot of public institutions that have similar challenges,” he said.

Susan Fitzgerald, a senior vice president at Moody’s and leader of the credit agency’s higher education team, says CFOs’ responses are on par with Moody’s own analysis of the sector, which has found that about 20 percent of universities continue to confront material revenue growth pressures.

Fitzgerald says it’s rare for public institutions to shut down because their partnership with the state or a municipality kicks in during times of trouble.

“Public systems, by their nature, often have support from the state that comes in where there’s trouble,” she said. “They have that state backstop that either makes it more unlikely that they’ll close or more likely that they’ll merge.”

Public colleges are also harder to close because of the political implications of a shuttering. Many institutions are the economic driver of their towns, and in times of financial difficulty legislators tend to stymie closures.

Thirty-three percent of CFOs agree that their tuition discount rate is unsustainable -- a feeling more prevalent among CFOs at private institutions (39 percent) than at public ones (27 percent).
And while 61 percent of CFOs believe new spending at their institution will be funded by reallocating resources, rather than increasing net revenue, this feeling is somewhat less prevalent among CFOs at private institutions (57 percent) than their public peers (64 percent).

Urgency?

In the coming year, the most prevalent strategy institutions plan to focus on is increasing enrollment (82 percent), while runners-up include launching new revenue-generating academic programs (70 percent) and academic collaborations with other institutions (62 percent).

Less prevalent strategies include administrative collaborations with other colleges (39 percent), eliminating underperforming academic programs (38 percent), reducing administrative positions (38 percent) and increasing faculty teaching loads (26 percent).

The least prevalent strategies are revising tenure (14 percent), cutting athletic spending (15 percent) and outsourcing academic programs (4 percent).

“I still don’t see the urgency that I would think should be there around the business model in higher education,” Staisloff said.

“There are some shifts that we see in terms of thinking differently about the business model, but not the bigger things that are necessary in my opinion to really create a robust sustainable business model for the future in higher education,” he continued. “We have to push toward more innovation and more return on investment, and that doesn't seem to be evident in the responses.”

Staisloff said CFOs and colleges, based on the survey’s results, appear to be focusing more on enrollment growth and tuition gains, but should instead be focusing on items like program profitability and “increasing efficiencies and productivity within the academic portfolio.”

Of the 43 percent of institutions using a shared services model, the most common areas affected are payroll, information technology, accounts payable and accounts receivable. Human resources, risk management and
procurement were also common targets. Fewer institutions used the model for grants, academic support or secretarial work.

“Shared services should be easy,” Wellman said. “Those are no-brainers.”

But shared services alone is not enough to tackle financial difficulties, she continued: “Until they tackle employee benefits and the cost structures of health care costs and start getting their academic program aligned to where student demands are, they haven't gotten to the tough stuff.”

Just 27 percent of business officers believe that they can make significant spending cuts without hurting quality.

Many institutions don’t have the data CFOs say they need to make tough decisions: 42 percent of CFOs say they have enough data to know which academic programs should be eliminated or enhanced, while 37 percent feel they have enough data to evaluate the efficacy of specific programs and majors. Thirty-five percent say they have enough data to evaluate the performance of administrative units.

A large swath of institutions aren’t doing anything to evolve their budget model to a new era in higher education: 39 percent of CFOs reported that their institutions haven’t changed their budget model in the last four years or plan to change their model in the near future.

About 24 percent of respondents use a responsibility-centered management budget model, a practice that recently contributed to deficits at arts and sciences colleges at Ohio State University and Indiana University.

Views

CFOs have little confidence in their faculty’s knowledge of the financial issues facing their institutions, with just 32 percent agreeing that faculty members are aware of and understand financial challenges and 33 percent agreeing that faculty members have been supportive of efforts to address those challenges.

“Business officers need to own that and do something about it,” Wellman said. “Sitting around and complaining that the faculty don't understand is like saying, 'It's not my problem.' ”
Business officers are much more confident in the understanding their fellow senior administrators (88 percent) and trustees (79 percent) have of financial challenges, and 59 percent feel that greater transparency in decision making leads to better financial decisions.

Meanwhile, 44 percent of CFOs feel that media reports suggesting higher education is in the midst of a financial crisis are inaccurate.

Teenagers and Colleges Are of 2 Minds on the Best Recruitment Strategies

By Eric Hoover

NO MENTION

If you understand teenagers, then — wait, does anybody really understand teenagers? No, of course not. But colleges spend a lot of time and money recruiting them. That means embracing various communication strategies: the old-school, the high-tech, and the because-my-president-thinks-this-will-work.

Yet what you think you know might not be right. Admissions officials and prospective students sometimes have very different ideas about recruitment. At the ACT’s annual Enrollment Planners Conference here on Thursday, admissions officers heard a fascinating discussion of where, based on the findings from recent surveys, their perspectives often differ.

Consider this statement: "Facebook is dead to teens." True? Many admissions officers believed that. Less than a third said they thought applicants used Facebook when deciding where to enroll. Yet last year 67 percent of teenagers said they used Facebook when researching colleges, up from 58 percent in 2012. And half used it to check out colleges they had applied to.
Here’s another one: "Social media is an awesome channel for engaging teens who don’t know your institution." Thirty percent of admissions officials agreed with that statement (only 18 percent said the same of email).

As for prospective students, though, it’s complicated. Although half said they used social media to make decisions about colleges they applied to, only 4 percent said they wanted it as the first point of contact with an institution. So while 75 percent said they were interested in engaging with admissions officers via social media, the applicants wanted to initiate those conversations.

Another wrinkle: While a whopping 70 percent said social media influenced their decision about where to enroll, influence tends not to flow from the admissions office. Typically, applicants want to engage with current students — and not with the folks who are paid to recruit them — to learn about life on the campus.

So said Michael Stoner, president of mStoner, a marketing and communications firm: "A lot of these discussions and these interactions are occurring way outside your control."

Teenage Minds

The insights into the minds of teenagers were drawn from regular surveys of college applicants by the student-services company Chegg.

Recently, the data inspired Mr. Stoner to pose similar questions to admissions officials in a survey of his own. Mr. Stoner and Gil Rogers, director of marketing and enrollment insights for Chegg Enrollment Services, wove together their survey results for a joint presentation that they plan to release in a forthcoming white paper.

Their findings revealed several gaps between perception and reality. College respondents had much rosier opinions of the effectiveness of student-search mailings than applicants did, for instance. And applicants tended not to attribute as much importance to early-stage conversations (at college fairs or high-school visits) as admissions officials did.

One statement concerned the power of rankings: "The higher your institution’s ranking, the more impressed teens are." Prestige matters, right? Most (72 percent) of the admissions officials surveyed said applicants consulted U.S. News & World
Report’s rankings of colleges when deciding where to apply. Relatively few (11 percent) said students did the same after receiving acceptances.

Among applicants, however, the picture looked different. Just 16 percent said rankings were "extremely useful" when applying to colleges. Yet 77 percent said the lists influenced their final decisions about where to enroll.

"There’s a misalignment in the use of rankings," Mr. Rogers said. "We tout these types of things to all of our prospects because we feel like that’s going to push the needle in getting those students to apply." Yet your institution’s ranking just might matter more to applicants much later in the game.

And then there are viewbooks, pamphlets, and mailings — you know, all that stuff your college probably spends a ton of money on. "Teens regard print as a vital source of information about colleges." Nearly all (91 percent) admissions officers said the print materials students pick up at college fairs influence teenagers’ decisions about where to apply.

In one PowerPoint slide, Mr. Rogers and Mr. Stoner summed up students’ view of printed materials: "OMG! LOL!" Followed by 24 I’m-laughing-so-hard-I’m-crying emoticons.