

Enrollment or Enrolment: A Comparative Look at SEM in the US & Canada



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Your Presenters

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Why This Topic?

- Many Canadian institutions are looking to adopt SEM
- There is a difference in how SEM is practiced in the US and Canada
- A comparative review provides perspective on:
 - Why are there differences?
 - What are the differences?
 - What can we learn from each other?
 - How can we help each other?
 - Where are we going? (possibly eliminate)

Methodology

- List serve queries:
 - American Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
 - Association of Registrars of Universities & Colleges of Canada (ARUCC)
 - National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC)
- Interviews of leading SEM practitioners in Canada and the US
- Our experience doing SEM in Canada and the US

The Canadian Context

- Increasing competition
 - Urban centers increasing capacity
 - Developing stronger marketing materials
 - Increasingly recruiting out-of-province
 - Increase in US institutions recruiting in Canada
 - Increasing scholarship competition
- Increasing participation in higher education
 - Since 1995, university registrations by students aged 18-24 have risen 27.5%
- Opening of a Noel-Levitz Canadian Office (now closed)
- Increasing tuition and a stressed out financial aid system
- Impact of MacLean's University Rankings and the introduction of some tiering
- More public accountability (e.g., NSSE in Ontario)
- Introduction of SEM at many colleges and universities

The US Context

- Regional differences in student demand
- Community colleges becoming proficient in SEM as they build residence halls and deliver 4-year programs
- Increasing cost of higher education; especially at private colleges
- US News & World Report rankings and the further tiering of 4-year colleges and universities
- Impact of on-line learning institutions (Phoenix et al)
- Lower levels (% basis) of state support of public institutions and increased accountability
- SEM becoming so well developed that there is a real need to stay on the cutting edge to remain competitive

Why are there differences?

■ History

- British/European vs. American models

■ Values

- Individualism
- Social Welfare
- Privacy
- Access
- Going away to school

What are the differences?

Accessibility	Recruitment, In-Country
Accountability	Recruitment, International
Admission Policies	SEM Organization
Financial Aid	SEM Plans
Educational Systems	Student Culture
Geographic Draw	Student Retention
Marketing	Student Services

Accessibility

- Accessibility is measured differently in the US and Canada
- Canadians are more concerned about Aboriginal accessibility, especially in the West, Francophone access, and access for new immigrants
- Americans are more concerned about access for African Americans, Hispanics & Native Americans
- This is caused by differences in immigration patterns

Accountability

- NSSE Survey – Ontario; also at many US colleges & universities
- Increasing focus on retention/graduation (both)
- Performance based funding (US)

Admission Policies

- Canadian universities admit almost exclusively on the basis of marks in the last year of high school, while US colleges admit based on a 3-year average plus SAT/ACT and essays; some US institutions beginning to use non-cognitive factors in admissions decision-making
- Canadian institutions admitted on a different cycle until recently (May vs. June confirmation dates)
- More regulation of admissions calendar in Canada; no regulation in US except common May 1 confirmation deadline

Educational Systems

- In Canada, all universities are considered to be of good quality
 - No Ivy League, land grants, “public Ivy’s”...although there is some tiering.
 - The difference between quality at top ranked institutions varies very little from those ranked lower.
 - A greater perceived difference in quality of US institutions
- Private vs. public - no private universities in Canada
- Community colleges now offering applied baccalaureate degrees (both countries)
- Limited transfer from Canadian community colleges to universities, although it varies throughout the country. Transfer to 4-year institutions more developed in the US.
- Competitive impact of MacLeans’/US News & World Report rankings
- Access to higher ed is very important (both countries)
- In Quebec, students must go to CEGEP before going to university.
- Provincial control of higher ed in Canada; State control in the US
- Size of institutions...many smaller colleges in US

Financial Aid

- Some Canadian universities give out very small scholarships, but provide a good amount of need-based aid
- A couple of common approaches in Canada:
 - High tuition, high scholarships/bursaries
 - Low tuition, low scholarships/bursaries
- Impact of tuition reinvestment fund in Ontario and “oil money” in Alberta
- Canadian universities mostly use guaranteed scholarships, while US institutions use a mixture of need and merit; size of endowments is much smaller in Canada
- Leveraging used extensively in U.S.; not used in Canada.
- Tuition-freeze (Ontario, Manitoba, previously in BC; also in many areas of the US)
- Canadian federal government does needs assessment (same award no matter what university the student attends); aid varies in US based on institutional student budgets
- Growing perception (both countries) by low income students that they can't afford to continue their education after high school
- Pressures of increasing tuition and accessibility (both countries)
- Cuts in public funding coupled with large tuition increases (both countries)

Geographic Draw

- Most Canadian students attend their local university
 - Little student mobility between provinces
 - Small residence populations
- Many Americans want to live on-campus and away from home.

Marketing

- Direct mail used extensively in US. Not possible to purchase names in Canada due to privacy laws, but:
 - Plan events to capture names (grades 9-11)
 - Well developed request for info cards/on-line requests
 - Much use of student e-mails/phone calls
- Little use of geodemographic profiling in Canada; used at most private and some public institutions in the US
- Marketing in Canada is mostly “good feel” marketing, which is not geared to student recruitment, while marketing in the US is often in support of recruitment
- Some Canadian institutions buy names of US students
- More collaboration between institutions in Canada (Atlantic Canada institutions; UofT, McGill, Queens – international travel); some collaboration in US by types of institutions, but very limited

Recruitment, In-Country

- Historic collegial approach to recruitment in Canada...too many students for too many years (e.g., Ontario Universities' Fair)
- Up to recently, recruitment was regulated in Ontario
- Use of current students and alumni limited In Canada, but used extensively in the US
- Canadians not as open to telecounselling – see it as intrusive; more accepted in the US
- Beginning to move to 1:1 marketing with web portal systems in Canada; much more common in the US
- Printed materials (e.g., viewbooks) very important to recruitment efforts in both countries

Recruitment, International

- The US is the biggest name in the industry with a long list of brand universities
- Canada has to focus on branding Canada and its higher education system, and then individual universities
- Impact of 9/11, SEVIS and the resultant slow-down in US international admissions, and the increase in the enrollment of international students at Canadian institutions
- The eventual awakening of the US international student recruitment machine

SEM Plans

- SEM plans have become common although not universal in the US; less common in Canada, although many institutions are beginning to develop plans
- Many Canadian institutions equate the use of enrollment management strategies with having a SEM plan (also true at many US institutions)
- Interest in SEM is increasing in both countries, especially for Canadians who are now attending the AACRAO SEM conference in considerable numbers
- Most data analysis in Canada is conducted in planning offices by staff who do not fully understand SEM

SEM Organization

- Many US institutions have adopted a SEM organization
- A small number of Canadian institutions have a SEM organization
 - Most manage SEM from the Registrar's Office
 - Some matrix management
 - EM title becoming more common
 - "All over the map" organizational structures – most recruitment offices still know little about student success
 - Most do not have an organizational structure robust enough to support SEM planning

Student Culture

- Impact of Double Cohort in Ontario (e.g., difficulty in getting classes, more focus on student success)
- Not as much school spirit (no real sports or fraternity culture) in Canada; very important at US institutions
- Student life not a large factor in recruitment in Canada; much more important in the US
- Universities are less residential in Canada; more than ¼ US students attend residential campuses

Student Retention

- Almost no retention data analysis in Canada; much more prevalent in the US
- Most Canadian institutions have not set retention rate goals and retention is not well developed, while retention has become a large concern in the US since it is an accountability measure in many states
- Retention is a growing concern of government in Canada (required retention reporting in Ontario since late '80s)
- Use of NSSE Survey – Canadian Consortium; significant use in US

Student Services

- Introduction of learning commons/centers to integrate academic support services and other student services consolidations or one-stop centers (both countries)
- Intrusive academic advising making a difference (both countries)
- First year experience programs (both countries)
- In short, much similarity between the approaches found in both countries

What can we learn from each other?

- SEM works in different cultural contexts
 - But application of SEM must account for differences
- Do strategies work in both culture?
 - Some do, some don't (e.g., accessibility, collaboration, direct mail, financial aid, student life)
- NSSE?
 - A great example of how the differing cultural contexts apply in SEM to the benefit of each country

How can we help each other?

- Keep talking and networking with each other to share and compare
 - Come together at the AACRAO Annual meeting and SEM Conference
 - Write about our experiences in AACRAO's College & University journal and SEM Source
 - Participate in list serve conversations (e.g., AACRAO, ARUCC, NACAC)
 - Consider taking advantage of the AACRAO Consulting Service to learn more about how to do SEM at your institution

Where are we going? (possibly eliminate)

- Are we going to go back to a traditional model?
- Pan-Canadian system of credit transfer
- Growth of graduate enrollment, increased credentialism
- More joint and articulated programs, collaborative
- A more active approach nearly everywhere
- Looking beyond North America international recruitment

Summary

- SEM developed differently in the US & Canada due to:
 - different higher education systems (e.g., tiers, costs, values)
 - timing of competition
- It is now an important tool in both countries
- It can still be improved in both the US & Canada

Questions or Comments

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