Navigating the Unknown, Guiding the Mission of Higher Education in the American Midwest

Daniel Hurley, CEO
Navigating the Unknown, Reaffirming the Mission of Higher Education

• Balancing near-term actions with mid- and longer-range scenario/continuity planning
• Priority #1: public health and safety
• Maintaining fundamental missions: system, board, institutional
  • Possible reorientation of missions to adapt to new landscape (workforce, workplace, economic, public health, financial need, social expectations around higher ed delivery)
Challenges

Financial Outlook
• Tuition revenues
• Auxiliary enterprises
• Federal support
• State support
• Research grants
• Endowment returns
• Philanthropic support

Enrollment Outlook
• Students’ health/safety concerns
• International students
• Families’ ability to afford
• Midwest demographic/migration challenges

Resource Alignment
• Aligning human resources with financial resources, and in light of diminished/different operational status
Challenges

So Many Variables, So Many Unknowns
• Level, pace, geographic spread of COVID-19
• Threat of second or multiple waves of resurgence
• Economic & social-trauma toll
• Federal & state public policy responses
• Long-term threats to the traditional higher ed delivery model
Actions & Opportunities

• Institutional/system redesign
• Program delivery redesign:
  • Instructional delivery
  • Academic calendar
  • Other models that promote physical distancing
• Student services redesign
• Public-private partnerships
• Institutional/system efficiencies
State/(Eco)System Leadership

Advocacy & Coordination: Federal & State Resource Support
- Federal advocacy & policy ($ distribution)
- State advocacy and policy

Institutional Navigation
- Fostering peer inquiry, institutional actions taken
- Program delivery, student services, staffing, operations

Continuity Planning
- Public health, educational delivery, research, finance, facilities, computing, athletics
- Fall semester (operational status, model, timeline)
State/(Eco)System Leadership

• Facilitate collaboration among all stakeholders
  • Private sector, K-12, higher ed, state government
• Qualifying & quantifying pandemic’s impact on IHEs
• Coordinating/Promoting stewardship role in pandemic response, communicating/affirming IHE’s public-purpose missions
• Positioning IHEs as post-pandemic recovery accelerators
  • Up-skilling un- and under-employed adults
  • Demonstrate importance of ed attainment through new economic data
• Maintaining/Strengthening quality, access and equity
How Can MHEC Help?

- Amplification of current programs, services?
- New, temporary efforts?
- Fostering informal peer-to-peer inquiry?
- Next steps?