The Measures, Treasures and Pleasures of Graduate Enrollment Management (GEM)

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Introduction
My purpose today is to help frame the nature of graduate enrollment management, or GEM, as it builds on a history and heritage of strategic enrollment management, or SEM, in higher education.

I guess I am particularly well-suited to the task:

• I’m a relative old-timer in this field. I was one of the first chief enrollment officers to actually be called that, having had the words “Enrollment Management” in my title since the late 1980s. From the look of this audience, I’ve been doing this kind of work longer than many of you have been alive. Moreover, I’ve had the privilege to work at institutions over the years that have been early adopters and are considered exemplary models of the practice and perspective called SEM. I have had the opportunity to write about and speak about SEM on the national stage since the initial conferences ever convened to discuss, define and develop this thing now known as SEM. Like they say in the Farmers Insurance commercials: I know a thing or two because I’ve seen a thing or two.

• More importantly, for the past 20 years I’ve worked as the senior enrollment management officer at DePaul University in Chicago. DePaul is an institution featured in 1984 in the first-ever book on EM systems in higher education, singled out in a case study as “the best example of transformational change” of all institutions that were showcased as early adopters of an EM perspective. It continues to be considered an exemplary or “best practice” approach to enrollment and marketing strategy, which it needs to be since DePaul is the most tuition-dependent of the nation’s largest private universities with over 20,000 students. It’s an institution where enrollment in graduate programs is embraced as a critical, if not the most critical, part of institutional enrollment strategy.

• It’s from that vantage point that I have long admired how NAGAP has stepped up to embrace EM as its prevailing focus, seeing the need and seizing the moment to become the professional home to those laboring in these particular vineyards at institutions coast to coast and around the world, to be THE leader in graduate enrollment management. So it’s an honor and privilege to be asked to kick off this 30th annual NAGAP conference.

Allow me to first set the context with a brief overview of GEM at DePaul since that’s the lens or the filter through which I view the nature and focus of GEM. Yes, we do have a distinct GEM function providing
enrollment management services and support to our graduate programs and leadership to university strategy regarding graduate and professional education.

It’s no surprise our SEM efforts encompass graduate and professional programs as well as undergraduate. Our enrollment portfolio includes 175 graduate programs across 10 colleges enrolling over 7,500 students. Our graduate and professional programs—mostly professional masters degrees with only about a half dozen doctoral programs—account for one-third of enrollment but a higher proportion of our net tuition revenue. Our grad programs produce high operating margins and net revenue after costs that are critical to overall university financial outcomes.

Through our GEM model:

- We direct grad recruitment and admissions for our colleges of Education, Communication, Liberal Arts, and Science and Health. We do not directly oversee admissions in the Graduate School of Business or in our College of Computing and Digital Media, but we work actively with them in their enrollment management efforts.
- We provide centralized data systems—including CRM, document imaging, records and registration, admission and financial aid processing—for all graduate programs.
- We provide marketing support for all graduate programs, including digital marketing and search engine marketing, web development, advertising, and print production. We also direct the brand research and brand development for our graduate programs to assist them in differentiating themselves in a very cluttered marketplace while still building upon the overall DePaul brand.
- We provide extensive enrollment and market research for all graduate programs and do all of the enrollment projections and budget forecasts for graduate enrollment.
- We support new program development for graduate programs, partnering with our faculty in creating and launching new programs, a process that is critically important since about 10 percent of all grad enrollments are in programs created and launched in the prior 5 years.

Suffice it to say that a significant share of the time and attention of my division is committed to graduate and professional programs. We have a team of enrollment professionals leading GEM at the university level, working with the admission and student service staff and faculty in the various schools and colleges. At DePaul, SEM and GEM really are one and the same.

And as a result we are in a particularly good position to compare and contrast the enrollment management challenges and opportunities between traditional undergraduate programs and grad/professional programs.

With that as context, in these comments I will focus on some defining elements of the SEM perspective and practice and explore with you how they help us appreciate the similarities and the differences between SEM at the traditional undergraduate level and SEM at the graduate level—or GEM. And I’m going to suggest how some of these differences present you with some unique challenges and opportunities in your role as a GEM leader on your campus.
OVERVIEW OF SEM

The theory and practice of SEM has evolved significantly over the decades, and as it has evolved, it has taken on some defining, distinguishing features, which I alliteratively frame for you today with four I’s:

- Intentionality
- Integration
- Innovation
- Information

These four attributes will structure my comments today.

First, **intentionality**. SEM is a goal-oriented activity, focused on setting goals and achieving outcomes that are inherently **measurable**. They are intentions and outcomes that bring with them great accountability. There is a purposefulness and a planfulness in SEM that not only gives it direction but gives it energy. Many organizations are characterized by what a physicist once described as “all force, no vector” or “all activity yet no direction.” SEM is not that; in fact it is a deliberate effort to avoid that. SEM by its very nature meets a university’s need for direction, focus, plans and purposes. It does so because unlike the aspirational goals that populate many university strategic plans—goals like “academic quality,” “excellence,” “student success,” “engagement,” even “learning”—the goals of SEM are distinct and defined, published and public, manageable and measureable. SEM forces institutions to set priorities, plans and purposes precisely because the many goals of SEM are often in conflict with one another and require an institution to be crystal clear in its intentions in order for SEM to be successful.

Secondly, SEM is about **integration**. From its earliest emergence, SEM has recognized the truth in the notion that “structure follows strategy,” that organizational alignments and arrangements of various functions **matter**, that bringing together otherwise disparate functions into a single organizational framework is more than just moving pieces around in an org chart. As the preeminent thought-leader about organizational strategy Michael Porter has noted, organizing an institution’s activities so that critical functions are optimally aligned is part and parcel of what creates strategic advantage. So the **integration** of activity is a core and defining element of SEM.

Third, SEM is about **innovation**. It’s not about creativity and cleverness for its own sake, but rather a willingness to continuously change strategy in response to the continuous changes in our environment. In the face of rapid change in our society, economy, demography, technology, and each institution’s competitive arena, institutions of higher education are often viewed as notoriously slow to respond. As someone once jokingly noted, it took 40 years for the overhead projector to make it from the bowling alley to the classroom. But SEM is, in my view, all about building a more market-responsive institution, about introducing change, again not for the sake of change but to ensure the sustainability of our institutions by being responsive to rapidly changing realities while seeking to remain true to our institutions’ missions. Innovation energizes SEM.

Fourth, SEM is about **information**. There is no working definition of SEM that does NOT include some sense of it being a data-driven activity, a highly informed perspective, a process that continually seeks to use research, analysis and data to guide planning, to evaluate strategy and to orchestrate change. I find it interesting that no other administrative or professional domain of higher education practice is as fundamentally defined as data-driven as SEM. Advancement, student affairs, human resources—none are defined in their professional literature as data-driven like enrollment management. And similarly, none of the typical component parts of enrollment management are defined that way. No one describes admissions, or financial aid, or the registrar’s
profession as data-driven by definition, though they clearly are, or should be. No, it’s SEM that is by definition a perspective, process and practice that elevates as an essential activity the cultivation of evidence, nurturing a near obsession with data support for decision-making, continuous evaluation of plans, programs and policies and the measurement of outcomes. SEM produces and consumes information as its primary activity and now, with advances in big data and analytics, the SEM officer is at the forefront of helping institutions deploy and exploit new approaches to working smarter.

When I think about what defines SEM, I don’t immediately think of its typical parts or organizational units, its functions, its activities, its tactics. I think of these four transcendent, overarching characteristics of intentionality, integration, innovation and information. These dynamics give SEM its distinct flavor. They are what define the metabolism of the SEM organization, and by metabolism I mean this: it’s how we generate our energy and how we expend our energy.

Now with these four I’s as our framework, what is it about managing enrollments in the graduate arena that presents distinct challenges and opportunities to us as enrollment management professionals? That’s the question for the day—and the question I hope you reflect upon over the duration of this conference.

**The 1st I of SEM: Integration**

First, let’s return to intentionality. Intentionality, as I noted, is all about achieving explicit goals. SEM is by definition a goal-driven activity and that intentionality goes hand in hand with accountability. And it’s accountability for enrollment goals that is often harder to pin down with graduate programs than undergraduate. The level of involvement of graduate program directors and program faculty is typically greater in GEM—and as you all know, the more cooks who are in the kitchen, the harder it is to hold someone accountable for how the meal turns out. In graduate programs, it is simply more difficult to craft an enrollment plan and set enrollment goals precisely because it has to be a more inclusive process.

In my experience, we can pretty much set the university’s undergraduate enrollment and marketing goals just with my own enrollment management team, and then we inform the deans and department chairs what our goals and projections are so they can make their plans accordingly. But bringing intentionality and goal-based planning to graduate programs is necessarily more inclusive of our academic partners and faculty. In fact, it cannot be done without their active involvement.

And therein lies the rub. At many campuses, it’s not uncommon for enrollment goals to be set in graduate programs in ways that do not include the university’s professional enrollment management team. And those goals are therefore often insufficiently informed by realities like market trends, applicant demand, pricing, retention rates, and so on. One of the challenges for GEM professionals is not only bringing some discipline and intentionality to the goal-setting process, but to also view those goals through an SEM lens that takes into account a fuller array of factors, conditions and implications than academic program directors typically consider or even understand. It’s all a part of bringing intentionality to a process that often needs it. That’s part of bringing the models, methods and mechanisms of SEM to GEM, and it’s one of your fundamental roles as a GEM leader.

Another observation I’d make regarding intentionality in GEM is that I see so many institutions now scrambling to create new graduate programs in a mad rush for revenue—and I fear that this often is the ONLY intention. Enrollment and revenue growth may be the only goal driving the expansion of the portfolio of graduate programs. But what other measures should frame our goals for graduate enrollment? Are we as
conscious of the diversity of the student profile in our graduate programs as we are of the freshman class? Do we know how many of our graduate students are the first in their family to earn a college degree, much less a graduate degree? Are we as conscious of the debt burden and the loan default rates of our masters’ programs? Do we know the socioeconomic profile of our grad students? Are we able to cite the retention and grad rates of our grad programs? Can we cite the career placement rates of our graduate programs? How does what we know about the student experience of those enrolled in our graduate programs compare to what we know about our undergraduates? Are our intentions as inclusive of their experiences, their satisfaction and their outcomes as are our undergraduate enrollment goals? And if so, are we actively assessing that and are we accountable for it?

If the answer to most of these is “no,” then I’d suggest our intentions in graduate enrollment efforts are guided pretty simply by headcount and revenue goals, and are not married to any broader purposes and missions of access, diversity, success, a broader social good and social purpose. And to whatever degree that is true, shame on us.

My point is that one of the things that defines SEM is its intentionality in achieving explicit goals. So many of the outcome metrics that our institutional leaders know by heart, however, are hardly ever related to graduate programs. I would hate to think that enrollment in our graduate programs is only a means to an end in revenue, a means of subsidizing undergraduate programs, for example. We should be conscious of the broader social good we seek to realize through ALL of our programs, undergrad AND grad. Your leadership on this front is pivotal in elevating this as part of the GEM agenda on your campus, to broaden our view of the intentions we have in graduate-level education.

**The 2nd I of SEM: Integration**

We have long known the value of integration and centralization in undergraduate admissions, financial aid, registrars and various student services. In fact, organizational integration was what characterized the earliest manifestations of enrollment management when it emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. And these integrated approaches are now nearly universal in colleges and universities seeking to better manage their undergraduate enrollments.

Such integration is not so easy and not so common with GEM since grad programs are more decentralized in our academic organizations. But more and more universities are now asking themselves questions like this:

How do we get the value of centralized approaches to GEM without losing the shared ownership and accountability for enrollment outcomes that characterize graduate programs? How can we improve the efficiency of our efforts that typically comes with integration and centralization when we are supporting an increasingly differentiated set of academic programs—without sacrificing the autonomy those programs naturally enjoy? How do we efficiently execute scalable and sustainable strategies across highly differentiated academic programs with limited staffing and typically fewer financial resources than are available for undergraduate efforts? These are the questions we pose as we seek to bring integration to our GEM efforts.

But SEM is not just about integration of effort. We also try to build an integrated brand identity for the institution. And in GEM, we try to do so with grad programs that are often less likely to even want to comply with an over-arching brand architecture, or are reluctant to subordinate their program brand to a university brand. How can we achieve an integrated approach to our marketing when deans and directors of graduate programs are often inclined to engage vendors who have contacted them directly promoting program-specific
digital marketing strategies, paying little heed to or adhering to institutional brand identity or messaging. Or, as is more and more common, vendors who promise deans some outsourced marketing services that do not cost the dean anything at all, as long as they commit to giving up a share of eventual tuition revenue? These are the kinds of things that make an integrated approach to university marketing a challenge.

Of course, a related challenge is that for many institutions, the whole notion of the university brand is grounded in the undergraduate experience. Taking an integrated approach to brand marketing for grad programs is nearly impossible if the university’s brand promise is developed and defined in ways that are grounded solely in the undergraduate experience. At DePaul, we’ve been deliberate in developing our understanding of the university brand identity in a way that includes our graduate and professional programs and the experiences of those students, making it far easier to build integrated marketing strategies that are brand-consistent across all of our graduate programs. Doing so can be one of the pleasures of GEM, but it requires a genuine commitment to developing an integrated brand that many institutions struggle to realize, given the highly decentralized nature of graduate programs.

Another critical part of any enrollment management strategy is retention. This is a great example of the challenges we face in integrated strategy in GEM. Undergraduate retention strategies are often targeted to populations of students across all programs that may be defined as being at greater risk of attrition. Centralized services reach out in intervention programs targeting groups of students independent of their program of study. Many of those efforts are focused on the first year of study, when students are engaged in a pretty uniform array of general education curricula and are not yet splintered into their majors. But in graduate programs, retention strategies must be embraced and embedded in the academic programs themselves since the entire student experience is located there; it requires direct faculty involvement and intervention and is therefore much harder to mobilize, scale up and integrate as a result.

Yet another part of the integration challenge for a GEM professional is to help deans and directors understand the integrated nature of the enrollment process itself, the way that enrollment outcomes are built upon a foundation of marketing strategies that build awareness, followed by a recruitment process that moves suspects to prospects to applicants, that then leads to admission and financial aid processes that result in student yield and matriculation and then are followed by retention and student success strategies.

All of these processes are more easily understood as integrated and interconnected in the traditional undergrad arena because the traditional undergraduate enrollment process is pretty uniform. We know when traditional freshmen are going to take their ACT or SAT, when they are going to apply, when they will file for financial aid, when they will visit campus, when they will matriculate and when they will graduate. Graduate students in many graduate programs, to the contrary, can inquire and apply anytime and enroll any quarter; the enrollment process is less uniform and not as predictably sequential, and as a result, our efforts are harder to integrate. But on the plus side, if we think about the enrollment process with the traditional funnel imagery, the graduate funnel is much narrower than in traditional undergrad programs. By that I mean that conversion rates of inquiries to apps are higher, yield rates are higher, retention rates are higher—all of which narrows the funnel and can create greater efficiency of effort and predictability of outcome. That is one of the pleasures of GEM in terms of how it builds our measures of success. Having an integrated sense of the student enrollment process or enrollment lifecycle is a bit more evasive, and it’s up to you as a GEM leader to help inform your academic colleagues of how enrollment management works as an integrated, holistic process.

The final example I’ll share of how issues of integration differ between SEM as it is applied at the undergrad versus the grad level is in the academic product itself. In undergraduate programs, there is blurriness in what
the curricular product actually is and what it costs. Undergrad degrees are increasingly interdisciplinary, consisting of general education requirements in addition to courses in the major. Students enrolling in a major in college x will take courses in college y, complicating budget projections and course planning. Students migrate between programs as their interests change, pay varying amounts as they shift from part-time to full-time, and so on. And in outcomes, their career prospects may be wide and varied. And much of what they are seeking and paying for is a broader student experience beyond the academic program itself.

Our graduate programs, by contrast, are more straightforward in the courses that will be taken, in what sequence, and the college offering those courses; they are more predictable in the time it will take to complete the program; more defined in the price that will be paid for the entirety of the degree. And the career outcomes, the desired outcomes for which the degree is pursued, are in many ways more proscribed. The degree, the academic product, is what the consumer is seeking with greater singularity of purpose. In that sense, it is a far easier in GEM to conceive of the academic product in an integrated way and tightly couple it with a price point, map multi-year course demand, and connect the program with outcomes, and so on.

All of this is just to say that if SEM is about achieving greater integration, there are parts of GEM that make that task easier and parts that make it harder. But the pursuit of integrated approaches to things that otherwise are disparate, disconnected and decentralized is very much the challenge of developing an EM approach to graduate programs. It is the source of the friction that makes the job of the GEM leader so challenging—but again, therein also lies the rewarding pleasures of the profession.

The 3rd I of SEM: Innovation

The 3rd I that defines SEM is innovation. Our goal is always innovation that is responsive to changing times, not innovation for its own sake.

As I noted earlier, in the more decentralized GEM context, faculty and program directors are often more engaged in the marketing and recruitment process, and they are often full of ideas of how to more “creatively” go to market. Some of those ideas fly in the face of the experience and judgement of marketing professionals or are pursued independent of any evidence of what works and what does not, leaving us to ask: As we pursue innovation, how do we tap into the passions of our graduate program directors/faculty about their programs all balancing it with the professionalism and expertise of the EM team?

In the more decentralized GEM environment, how do we develop and execute innovative strategies and bring those innovations to scale when they need to be deployed in service of so many different programs? As we seek to innovate in digital marketing and advertising strategies, or bring new CRM systems on-line, or new approaches to admission decision-making, or introduce new scholarship or discounting or innovative pricing strategies. In all these things, the challenge in GEM is multiplied many times over because we typically have to work to get each and every program director and every faculty on board before we launch any innovation.

In my opinion, the innovation that most matters in GEM is not so much in marketing and recruitment efforts but in the development of the academic product itself. Graduate programs can be very agile in introducing innovative approaches to curriculum and delivery. That’s not always the case because many programs bear the burden of accreditation requirements that have the net effect of a grand homogenization of curricula across all institutions, a homogenization that suffocates innovation. One of the challenges of GEM is how to market an academic product when accrediting boards often leave so little room for real innovation in the customization and differentiation of the program.
But in fields where professional accreditations do not shackle our innovation, there is tremendous room for targeted, differentiated academic programs tied directly to career fields in ways that are simply harder to create in baccalaureate programs. In our School of Computing at DePaul, for example, in response to the rapidly changing workforce needs and career opportunities, our faculty routinely rolls out new masters’ degrees in network security, cybersecurity, digital arts and film making, predictive analytics and more to respond with innovation to new market opportunities. But it is not only in tech fields where innovative programs can be developed; at any one time, we have over a dozen new graduate programs in some stage of development across our ten colleges. Our challenge as GEM leaders is providing faculty with good market research on the viability of innovative programs and securing the resources to successfully launch and support them. One of the wonderful advantages of GEM is that the measures of market share, market presence and penetration are quite direct and discernable, enabling a level of innovation that is both more compelling, targeted and manageable than undergraduate programs.

Your task as a GEM leader is to be the catalyst for market-responsive innovation in your graduate programs. In fact, the value you will realize from this conference will surely include identifying from colleagues innovative ideas that are working at other institutions and bringing those ideas back to your own campuses. Bottom line, it is innovation that energizes GEM as it ensures that an institution’s programs are responding to rapidly changing external challenges and opportunities.

The 4th I of SEM: Information

And this brings me to the fourth I: Information. One of the greatest pleasures and treasures of GEM is in the area of information and one of the most significant opportunities the GEM leader has for shaping graduate enrollment is in cultivating an informed enrollment and marketing strategy.

The greatest challenge—and therefore the greatest opportunity—we face is that most institutions simply have more data on undergraduate students than graduate students. We collect more data on undergrads through our application and enrollment processes, survey them more often about more things, and simply know more about them and about what works best in achieving undergraduate enrollment goals through our marketing, recruitment, admissions, aid and retention strategies. On most campuses I visit, for example, nearly everyone can cite changes in the number of high school graduates in the region as demographic determinants of future freshmen enrollment, but few are as deliberate in looking at the changing number of GMAT test-takers, for example, as determinants of future enrollments in graduate business. As another example, every president and provost I know can cite the graduation rate of freshman cohorts but few can cite the degree completion rates of their graduate programs. Everyone knows the socioeconomic and racial/ethnic diversity of their freshman classes but few know these outcomes for their grad programs. I can go on and on.

But this need not be the case. It is the result of the fact that we just do not make the deliberate effort and investment to become better informed about our graduate programs and populations. In some cases, it is the result of forces in our industry that constrain our ability to work with greater intelligence. In our law schools, for example, the extraordinary constraints we face in how our data come to us through LSAC handcuffs us in doing any of the kind of market research that we desperately need at the institutional level to navigate the very turbulent environment we are in for JD programs. But that is a topic for another day.

Let’s explore some of what distinguishes GEM in this regard.
For example, one critical part of marketing strategy is identifying and segmenting the target audience of prospective students. In undergraduate programs, this is fairly straightforward; while they may be highly diverse demographically and socioeconomically and in terms of academic preparation, what they are seeking in their college aspirations is pretty uniform. And in some graduate programs it is just as easy to understand the target audience. For example, graduate programs in nursing have a very clear, distinct market, namely practicing nurses with a baccalaureate degree seeking career advancement. Graduate business programs in taxation also have a fairly definable target audience. But in other areas, it is more difficult to profile the target audience for graduate programs. In our graduate programs in education, for example, we have both career-changers and teachers looking for additional certification or advancement. In some graduate business programs, we have seasoned managers as well as freshly-minted liberal arts grads looking for a graduate business degree for employability. Developing a more informed approach to defining and segmenting the target audience for graduate programs is one particular challenge we face and it is a fertile area for developing more informed strategy.

In a similar vein, sometimes identifying who is paying for the graduate degree and how they are doing so is also more challenging. For the traditional undergraduate, we know that family financial circumstances are critical when students file for aid as dependents. But in GEM, sometimes it is harder to know who is paying and how we should price those programs and aid those students. Is it their own resources and current income? Employer tuition assistance? Totally through student loans? Are parents still in the equation? In terms of the critical information about who is paying for our program and how, we tend to know a lot more in the undergraduate than in the graduate arena. It is an information void we can certainly fill, but few do so.

On that same theme, a perpetual information challenge for GEM relates to program pricing. Unlike with traditional undergrads, in GEM we have fewer opportunities to highly differentiate a student’s net price through sophisticated aid leveraging that optimizes yield for different segments of students through carefully balanced price discounting down to the individual student. That is a lot of EM jargon, but the fact is that this has become a dominant strategy in undergraduate enrollment management that is not so straightforward with grad students. That is partially because the yield rates are already so high in most graduate programs that it is impossible to recover marginal net tuition revenue through discounts designed to bump up yield and thereby recoup net revenue through growth. In graduate programs, the focus therefore is more on competitively pricing the programs without all of the obfuscation that comes with complicated aid strategies. Both require extensive data analysis to inform and evaluate strategy, but the focus is very different. Again, getting good data to inform our pricing strategies may be more difficult for graduate programs—but not impossible, and it takes a deliberate effort by the GEM leader to push for that.

A SEM perspective recognizes that our programs exist in an increasingly competitive arena and the way we must inform strategic enrollment planning is through competitive intelligence. Our undergraduates are applying to more and more and more institutions as they explore their college options and any one institution’s competition is growing more diffused. Graduate students typically have a smaller choice set and typically narrow their choice set to a couple of options before applying. For example, our applicants for undergraduate business degrees face a dizzying array of viable options while our apps for the MBA program have fewer options. As a result, building and sustaining competitive intelligence and evaluating comparable brand distinctions or competitive position is more manageable at the graduate level. One of the measures of your success is competitive market position, and one of the pleasures of GEM is that this is pretty straightforward in some graduate markets.
Another dimension of competitive positioning that GEM depends upon is defining the value proposition or the brand value of the program itself. At DePaul, we work exhaustively with our graduate programs to help them define and sometimes develop a differentiating position in their market, identifying the kinds of experiences students have that create value and define the brand. Such an exercise is one of the most data-driven things we do, and it is one of the most rewarding parts of GEM. It all depends upon how successful you are in advocating for the same level of investment in brand research that is often committed to undergrad programs.

I could go on and on about the challenges in GEM of staying informed through research about market trends, assessments of learning and career outcomes, enrollment dynamics, program development, and so on. Suffice it to say that these are often untended vineyards and under-resourced efforts, but therein lies your opportunity for impact as a GEM leader. As a result of the fact that at some campuses so little is done in this regard, you can produce significant short and long-term results from even modest investments of time and effort in a comprehensive research agenda. But it takes your advocacy for that to happen.

Let me leave you with this one anecdote and imagery about what the GEM leader’s role is in bringing about a more informed approach to enrollment management.

I often tell a story I once encountered about a university president who likened his campus to that of a cavalry regiment on the frontier in the old movie Westerns. He noted that real power at the fort did not rest with those who had all the trappings of power, who had the fullest breadth of command and held clear positions of authority. No, real power and real influence in the old Westerns rested with one person who had no obvious authority or apparent base of power at all and who was not even part of the line of command, namely the scout. The scout had none of the authority but all of the influence, since he was the one person who knew the terrain, who knew the enemy, who by living at the fringe of the organization had all the critical information and thereby the most sweeping influence. Those in formal command ignored the scout’s information only at their peril.

In so many ways, SEM is higher education’s equivalent of scouting. It is about being attuned to market realities; about understanding students and parents and employers; and about translating our internal and often arcane academic vernacular and idiosyncratic jargon to audiences that often speak an entirely different language altogether. It is also about bringing to those at the core of the organization and those with the authority—be they the faculty or the executive leadership—valuable intelligence and insight about the competition and about the customer, about market dynamics and demographic futures, about looming threats and new opportunities far off on the horizon or right around the bend. Therein lies SEM’s real influence and real value—and it is no less true in GEM. Your role in your organization is to be the scout—and that is perhaps the greatest pleasure and treasure of the work we are called to do.
CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while there is much that is different and distinct in GEM, much is the same as we find in SEM efforts in traditional undergraduate programs. In both:

- We have the opportunity and obligation to create greater intentionality, planfulness, accountability and purposefulness in our enrollment management efforts.
- We have the opportunity and obligation to find opportunities for integration of effort without losing the importance of differentiation and distributed ownership.
- We have the opportunity and obligation to innovate, to challenge the status quo and the taken-for-granted assumptions that sometimes stifle innovation of effort and, in particular, capitalizing on great opportunities for curricular innovation.
- We have an opportunity and obligation to bring intelligence and information to the management and planning for the enrollment future of our academic programs.

I encourage you to use these four I’s of GEM as you listen and learn from your colleagues and the presenters throughout this conference, seeking ways you can bring greater intentionality, integration, integration and information to your work.

While all of these things characterize institutional success in EM both at the undergrad or the grad/professional arena, it is the differences and distinctions of GEM that you live with every day. And it is in these differences where I hope you find as much excitement in your work as you may find occasional frustration. By being here at this professional conference, you are well on your way to exploring the measures of success, which is the theme. And I hope that in addition you can identify and enjoy the pleasures and treasures of GEM as well, the greatest of which are the opportunities you have to bring about new ways of doing business to our graduate and professional programs that can help our colleges and universities thrive.

In all of this, I wish you the best. Please use this conference to glean inspiration and ideas from your colleagues. I look forward to doing the same over the next two days.

Thank you for your kind invitation for me to join you today.

For comments, questions or more information: dkalsbee@depaul.edu