Across the Generations: Advising Tips for Dealing with Millennials
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We are all individuals but each generation has its characteristics
So too for the Millennial Generation
As you continue in college, what type of student will you be?

- same as most students
- better than most students
- one of the best

Comparison between 1997 and 2002:
How good do you think your work is?

- 0%
- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- same as most students
- above most students excellent

1997

2002
My classes have been interesting to me.
Recent classes of first-year students had increasingly higher HS GPA, HS rank, ACT/SAT scores than the 1997 entering class.
Yet the past three entering classes report less certainty, motivation, and confidence about themselves and their college career than earlier classes
Literature search and dialog with informed colleague led us to determine mindset not limited to UCCS first-year students
At colleges across the country, “hovering and hyperinvolved helicopter parents” are tying up faculty and staff time and hampering students’ development of self-reliance and responsibility.
Generation of students born in 1982 or later as “trophy kids” who are overprotected, sheltered, optimistic, pushed to excel, and taught to avoid personal risks

Children who have become fragile and dependent young adults; controlled/organized play, liberal diagnoses of disabilities (mental health and learning disabilities), and over-emphases on self-esteem prevent them from developing important leadership and decision-making skills.

Role of the cell phone “as an umbilical cord” keeps students in perpetual contact with their parents, preventing the development of coping strategies to deal with the responsibilities of adulthood.
Beloit College Mindset List, 2007

http://www.beloit.edu/~pubaff/mindset/

• Iraq/Afghanistan have always been in the news,

• AIDS screening tests have always been available,

• A Banana Republic refers to a store rather than a puppet government, and

• Automatics refer to weapons instead of transmissions

- Young adults evaluate college courses in terms of “how much fun they were” rather than on the level of academic challenge.
- Today’s young people have underdeveloped decision-making abilities, and as a result many make decisions too impulsively.
- Their rash decisions are made frequently without much thought to consequences.
Levine (2005) Ready or Not, Here Life Comes

- Argues that colleges have not yet made an effort to understand the mind-set of the new generation.
- “(We) misread and therefore mismanage countless developing minds.”
The Digital Age takes over where “Helicopter Parents” leave off —


- Millennial are characterized by their use of portable techno-gadgetry and a desire for multi-sensory multi-media curricula

• Millennials are “smart but impatient” … “(t)hey expect results immediately” … they “expect to be able to choose what kind of education they buy, and what, where, and how they learn.”

- San Diego State University study encompassing 16,475 college students nationwide who completed the Narcissistic Personality Inventory between 1982 and 2006.

- College students today are more narcissistic and self-centered than preceding generations

- “We need to stop endlessly repeating ‘You’re special’ and having children repeat that back,”

- “Kids are self-centered enough already.”

• Narcissists tend to lack empathy, react aggressively to criticism and favor self-promotion over helping others.
Millennials Acting Out

• Two-thirds of first-year students not returning for second year earned at least one bad grade (D, F, W)

• The majority of non-returning first-year students earned only one bad grade

• Average GPA for non-returning students was 2.23
A recent example of the millennial mind set -

Professor Chambers,
I was going to tell you this today in class, however, I will not be able to make it to class today. I do need to let you know though that all next week I will not be here because my family and I are going on vacation. I thought I would let you know in case anything important was going to take place next week. I will be back in class on April 19. I was wondering also since I'm going to miss three classes if maybe you could print out a copy of the power point slides from your lectures for me? Let me know and I'm very sorry that I won't be able to make it to class today. Thanks for your patience and understanding.

Sincerely,
Heather
Hypothesis

• Part A – Non-returning first-year students could go on from the single ego-deflating experience (earning a bad grade) to become better students. Instead of accepting the bad grade and moving forward with their studies, they perceive UCCS as an unsupportive place and quit college.
Hypothesis

• Part B – Faculty and advisors are unaware of the changing character of first-year students. We have treated them the same for years and years with good results. Why change the routine now?
Hypothesis

• Part C – Mel Levine is correct, “we misread and therefore mismanage countless developing minds”
Implications

• Increase awareness of the changing characteristics of first-year students

• Seek epistemological and pedagogical principles found among the disciplines of the campus that may well serve these developing minds
Implications

Construct and implement faculty and advisor development to

1. increase sensitivity for first-year student,
2. change teaching to reflect different learning styles, and
3. strengthen early intervention
References

See NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources website:
(www.nacada.ksu.edu/Clearinghouse /Advising Issues/) for related information
Mike Opper Recounts Some Interactions with Millennials
Your turn

1. Are the implications correct?
2. Some other real life examples…
This slide show is available at:
http://www.coconino.edu/instres/specialreports.htm