



The Millennials Have Arrived!

Strategies for a New Generation.

by Lee Bollschweiler, Feb. 23, 2009

Adapted largely from a book written by Neil Howe and William Strauss called “Millennials Go To College”

http://www.bnet.com/2422-13950_23-196738.html



Past & Present Generations

- ◆ The Lost Generation (Born 1883-1900)
- ◆ The G.I. Generation (Born 1901-1924)
- ◆ The Silent Generation (Born 1925-1942)
- ◆ The Boom Generation (Born 1943-1960)
- ◆ Generation X (Born 1961-1981)
- ◆ Millennial Generation (Born 1982-2002(?))
- ◆ Homeland Generation (Born 2002-?)



What do we know about the new generation of students attending college campuses across the nation?



The Millennials will ...

- ◆ Rebel against the styles and attitudes of the previous generation (eg. Gen-Xers)
- ◆ Correct for the excesses of the “parent” generation (eg. The Boomers)
- ◆ Fill the social role vacated by the departing or grandparent generation (eg. The Silent Generation)



Millennial Stats

- ◆ Largest generation – already over 90 mill
- ◆ Reflects Boomer attitudes – wanted children
- ◆ Most racially and ethnically diverse
- ◆ Color-blind
- ◆ Busiest generation
- ◆ Hard to target in the marketplace because of parent-child co-purchase



...and more stats

- ◆ Fewer M's have worked outside the home
- ◆ They face the highest college costs
- ◆ Attendance at church is up
- ◆ Alcohol, cigs, illicit drug use down
- ◆ Suicide rates are down
- ◆ Serious crime and violence is down
- ◆ Abortions and unwanted preg. are down



The news is good...

- ◆ Millennials are optimists – not pessimists
- ◆ They are rule-followers – not breakers
- ◆ They are not self-absorbed
- ◆ They are very trusting
- ◆ They are not neglected
- ◆ They are not stupid
- ◆ They have a strong direction



Students we now see coming to college are:

- ◆ Close to their parents
- ◆ Focused on grades and performance
- ◆ Focused on extracurr/summer activities
- ◆ Service-oriented
- ◆ Interested in interactive learning
- ◆ Growing interest in acad. areas that lead to stable jobs - Math/Science is up
- ◆ Insistent on regulated environ; conventional



Millennials' Persona – 7 Core Traits

- ◆ Special
- ◆ Sheltered
- ◆ Confident
- ◆ Team-Oriented
- ◆ Conventional
- ◆ Pressured
- ◆ Achieving



How should we respond?

- ◆ Develop coping strategies in the following areas:
 - Recruiting and Admissions
 - CAMPUS LIFE
 - In the CLASSROOM

Millennials are Special





Implications for RECRUITMENT

- ◆ Recruitment literature needs to appeal to parents more than before
- ◆ Special orientation programs for parents
- ◆ Outstanding living and eating
- ◆ Stress how M's will play a special role in the world – stress our campus' traditions, standards, involvement in community/nation
- ◆ Personalized attention



Implications for **CAMPUS LIFE**

- ◆ Keep helicopter parents engaged after students are accepted and enrolled.
- ◆ Keep parents connected to student life
- ◆ M's set high standards for housing – private rooms, amenities,...
- ◆ Activities on-campus to keep them joined with peers



Implications for the **CLASSROOM**

- ◆ Notice that students on cell to parents
- ◆ Professors become stand-in parents
- ◆ More personal attention – office hours, e-mail, advisement
- ◆ Constant feedback throughout course
- ◆ Electronic classroom to keep them connected with each other
- ◆ Set high standards for their instructors

Millennials are Sheltered





Implications for RECRUITMENT

- ◆ Campus Security is important
- ◆ Students want to feel safe
- ◆ Campus drug/alcohol/smoking rules are expected
- ◆ Students want to feel “close” to community, sometimes “close to home”
- ◆ Benefits of a University but with a “small college” feel



Implications for **CAMPUS LIFE**

- ◆ Students willing to relinquish liberties for safety
- ◆ Zero-tolerance rules for student behavior
- ◆ Smoke-free zones enforced
- ◆ Healthy life-style encouraged – healthy food in cafeteria; rec./group sports
- ◆ More access to mental health care



Implications for the **CLASSROOM**

- ◆ Roll call is back!
- ◆ Longer college week is back – 5 days
- ◆ MWF schedule is popular, offering more structure
- ◆ Students and parents paying attention to classroom policies – fair grades, etc.
- ◆ Parents/students scrutinize faculty opinions in classroom - careful!

Millennials are Confident





Implications for RECRUITMENT

- ◆ Advertisement should be positive – “You can do” attitude
- ◆ Advertise how people can realize their dreams – students can work wonders!
- ◆ Reflect college as a place where capable people gather, discuss, grow, succeed
- ◆ Focus on men – show how college equips them for a career; track local economy and reflect statistics of hiring
- ◆ Encourage some males to take a year off



Implications for **CAMPUS LIFE**

- ◆ Rah-rah is back! School songs, proms, ...
- ◆ Rituals of recognition and celebration
- ◆ To face difficulties of retaining men, get them involved in campus life. Create activities for socializing; technology or math clubs; computer-gaming tournies.
- ◆ Team-work activities



Implications for the CLASSROOM

- ◆ Millennials fear the danger of “standing out” in the classroom, so creativity or risk-taking is threatened at this time.
- ◆ To retain men, more hands-on learning or service learning
- ◆ More team-work and consensus building
- ◆ Beware of grade-inflation (tends to occur more in team environment)

Millennials are Team-Oriented





Implications for RECRUITMENT

- ◆ Students expect non-stop connection to peers (digital – cell, internet, wireless...)
- ◆ Think peer-pressure again- want to attend with friends; no longer non-conformists
- ◆ They seek racial/ethnic diversity – “trans-racial”
- ◆ Affirmative action based on race is not as valuable as AA based on income.
- ◆ Advertisement should portray UNMLA as a Unifier– same standards for everyone on campus



Implications for **CAMPUS LIFE**

- ◆ Growth in on-campus housing and clubs as a way to strengthen social connections
- ◆ Digital connections: blogs, computer games, cell phone swarming, networking
- ◆ Watch out for loners – independence valued less today than friendship/connections
- ◆ Campus-wide projects – volunteer projects or service activities
- ◆ Policies to level income playing field



Implications for the CLASSROOM

- ◆ Team teaching/team projects very natural for M's
- ◆ Learning communities very effective
- ◆ Work as individuals on smaller assignments, then pool results into a final team project/presentation
- ◆ WebCT, podcasting, etc. expected
- ◆ Increased interest in traditional careers that lead to longevity on the job, health insurance, etc.
- ◆ Boomer women stayed home; M's will work
- ◆ Increased interest in social sciences

Millennials are Conventional





Implications for RECRUITMENT

- ◆ Believe in institutional trust, community standards, personal responsibility
- ◆ Students want a school that represents their values – where they will fit in
- ◆ Students want to “feel” the school is creative, but also want well-established faculty, curriculum, traditions
- ◆ Think Hogwarts!



Implications for **CAMPUS LIFE**

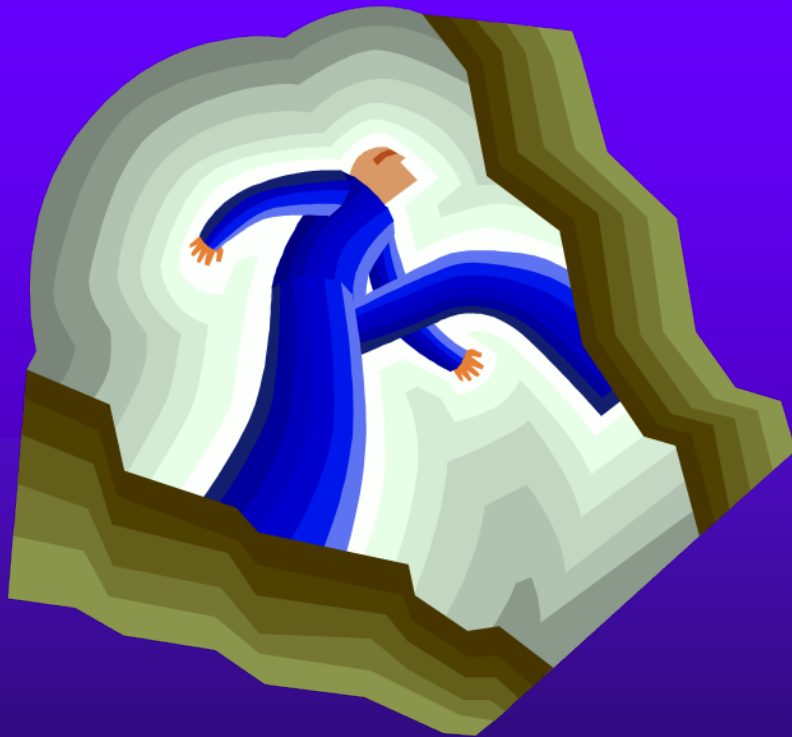
- ◆ They want the faculty/staff to meet the same standards set for them – good quality, prepared, on-time, competent.
- ◆ Rule-bound world expected – they will even tattle on infractions
- ◆ They may use more vulgarity, have poorer manners, etc., but they learned them from Gen-X or Boomers – they are good followers!



Implications for the CLASSROOM

- ◆ They seek balance in their academic lives – less likely to specialize in one field and more likely to focus on common body of knowledge.
- ◆ Less value in originality and more value in simplifying and managing the world.
- ◆ Beware of generation gap – M's accused of being robots, sheep, mechanical – not activists like Boomers/GenXers
- ◆ Value professionalism over passion – leave politics out of the classroom.

Millennials are Pressured





Implications for RECRUITMENT

- ◆ Highly stressed generation – pressure for good transcripts, test scores, attendance
- ◆ Intensely focused on prep and planning for the future
- ◆ They want their efforts to pay off!
- ◆ Advisors expect to hold hands, plan carefully, insure good outcomes
- ◆ Recruitment literature should reflect good outcomes for hard work, but with balance of fun/fitness activities on campus.
- ◆ They want to know how much \$ they will make with specific degree; placement stats for each degree
- ◆ Safe space without parents.



Implications for **CAMPUS LIFE**

- ◆ Stress a balanced life to help avoid burnout
- ◆ To avoid sleep deficit (at an all-time high in M's), offer fewer morning classes and on-campus fitness activities.
- ◆ Offer informal fitness on-campus such as wiffle ball, croquet, volleyball, etc.
- ◆ Social activities - music, movies, walk-a-thon
- ◆ Chill-zones around campus



Implications for the CLASSROOM

- ◆ Concerns for cheating result from high pressure
- ◆ Cheating is at an all-time high
- ◆ Problem is with shared information, especially as a result of team projects
- ◆ M's are accustomed to getting help
- ◆ Teachers need to have clear policy up front

Millennials are Achieving





Implications for RECRUITMENT

- ◆ Record high # of students applying for college, and most are prepared so many are turned away.
- ◆ Many colleges are raising their standards as a result
- ◆ Boast good academics, diverse community life, good extracurricular activities, leadership opportunities



Implications for **CAMPUS LIFE**

- ◆ Build extracurricular opportunities!
- ◆ Opportunities for them to perform or show off
- ◆ Need space for their creations – computers to store their digital creations/web pages/daily blogs/etc.
- ◆ Watch out for drug use that helps them succeed



Implications for the CLASSROOM

- ◆ Prefer tasks that allow them to measure objective progress
- ◆ Spell out clear goals, define objective measures of success, explain possible strategies, structured team work, frequent feedback.
- ◆ M's may feel overwhelmed by big/lengthy projects – need step-by-step guidance.
- ◆ Integrate technology into every subject
- ◆ M's respond to creating real-world products – like to work as they learn, hands-on (and college gets to “boast” some of the students’ products)



Where do we go from here?

- ◆ We know we will be seeing this generation for about 20 years – this is not a short timeframe!
- ◆ As time passes, more parents will be from Gen X (rather than Boomers) – they are more demanding than Boomers and insist on more accountability.