

Leading a Campus
TOWARDS
STUDENT SUCCESS

Dr. Daniel Ruarte

Provost & VP of Academic Affairs

George Bostanic

COO & VP of Student Life

INTRODUCTIONS

Name

Position

University

WHY THIS SESSION?

Dr. Daniel Ruate

Provost & VP of Academic Affairs
Life Pacific University

George Bostanic

COO & VP of Student Life
Life Pacific University



LIFE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY



1923

Established

500+

Students

80+

Faculty + Staff

SAN DIMAS. CA

Location

Mission:

Life Pacific University is an institution of biblical higher education existing for the transformational development of students into leaders prepared to serve God in the Church, the workplace, and the world.

Facts:

- Foursquare Heritage
- Hispanic Serving Institution
- 20+ TUG, Online, Graduate Degrees, Certificates
- 6 Athletic Programs
- 60% First Generation College Students



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**01 Retention Among
College Students**

**02 Building the Right
Infrastructure for Success**

**03 Overcoming Obstacles
& Celebrating Wins**

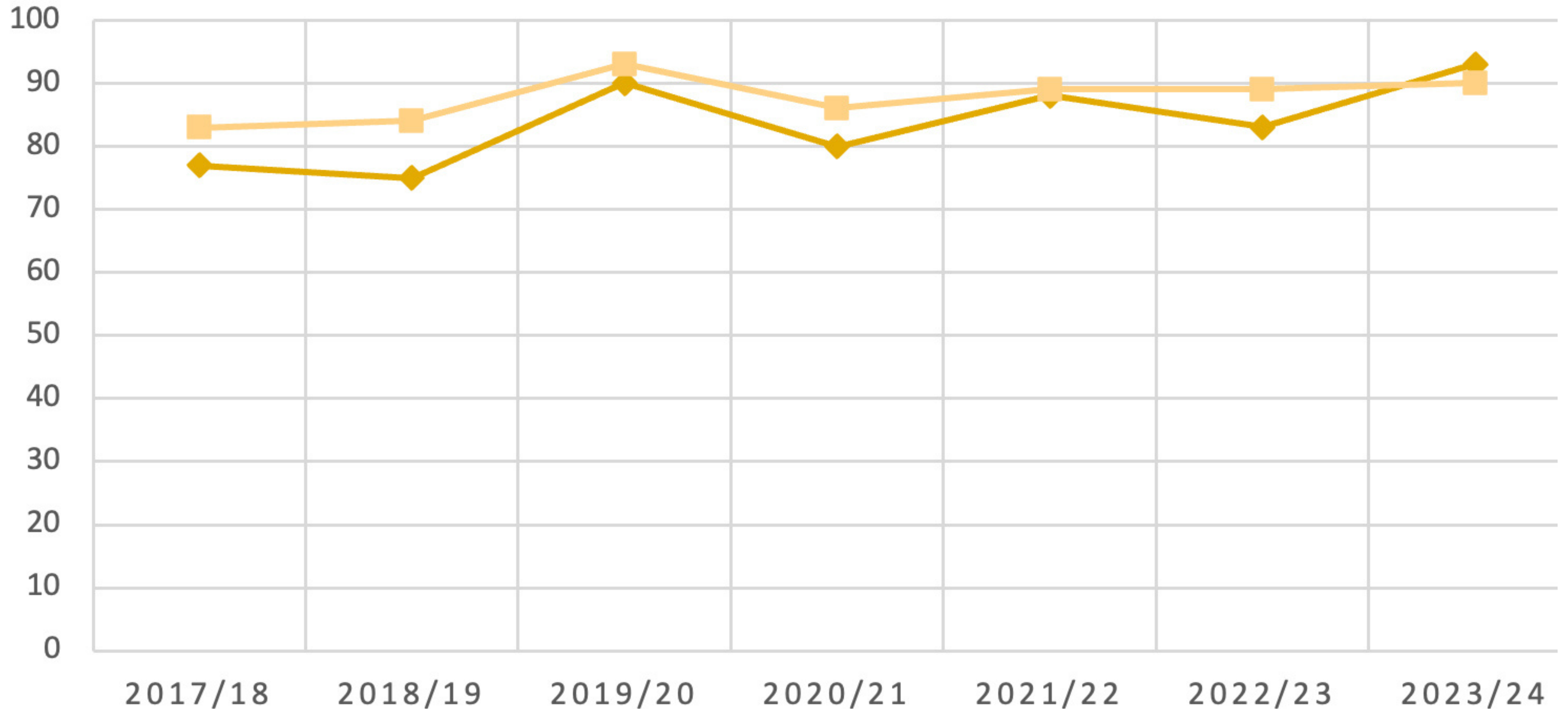
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RETENTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

Dr. Daniel Ruarte
Provost & VP of Academic Affairs

7-YEAR RETENTION DATA- LPU

◆ Incoming Freshman ■ All Students





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THE REALITIES & NEEDS

- Campus-wide collaboration is important for Student Success (Student Life + Academics).
- Retention data reports are a strong metric for institutional leadership.
- Retention challenges are common in Higher Education and will continue.
- Overall retention at 2-year institutions 2019/20 at 61% (NCES, Condition of Education 2022, p. 2).
- Establishing retention goals is important (LPU retention goal 75% and above).



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BUILD THE RIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE

George Bostanic
COO & VP of Student Life

BUILD THE RIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Develop a Committed Committee**

- What is a Committee?
- “a group of people appointed for a specific function, typically consisting of members of a larger group.”

(Oxford University Press, 1989)

- **Collaborate with Faculty and Staff**
- **Breakthrough Department Silos**
- **Incorporate Key Positions Around the University**
- **Find committee members with diverse skills and perspectives**



1

Build a Retention Committee

BUILD THE RIGHT INFASTRUCTURE

“

*Committees are important in the University system because they democratize the decision-making process and assist management in arriving at useful and meaningful decisions
(Nwachukwu, 1988)*

”

ERSS COMMITTEE

2023-2024

- President
- Provost & VP of Academic Affairs
- COO & VP of Student Life
- VP of Enrollment
- Dean of Institutional Effectiveness
- Director of Residence Life
- Director of Financial Aid
- Director of Athletics
- Director of Diversity and Reconciliation
- Director of Global Life and Engagement
- Online Programs Specialist
- Head Librarian + Academic Support Center



BUILD THE RIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Make Data-Informed Decisions**
 - Define your Strength Areas
 - Define Areas of Concern and Weaknesses
 - Assess yearly trends
- **Develop Retention Initiatives Each Semester**
 - Assign Committee Members' Initiatives to Complete
 - Have clear deadlines and point person for the initiative
 - Follow-up often on progress
 - Only concentrate on 5-8 throughout the entire year
- **Reference and Incorporate your Strategic Plan with your Retention Plan**
- **Be Willing to Change and Adapt Your Plan**



2

**Develop a
Retention Plan**

BUILD THE RIGHT INFASTRUCTURE

“

*Universities are complex and they face the
challenge of change as they struggle to
adapt and serve a changing world in which
they find themselves.
(Ogbogu, 2013)*

”

BUILD THE RIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Meet Consistently and Bring Value to Meetings**
- **Share the Purpose and Goals of the Committee**
- **Develop Action Items During Each Meeting**
- **Set an Atmosphere for Engagement and Participation**
- **Allow Members to Grow and Assign Meaningful Tasks or Initiatives**
- **Ensure Christ is at the Center of All Decisions Made**



3

Invest in Committee Members

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OVERCOMING CHANGE & CELEBRATING WINS

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OVERCOMING CHANGE & CELEBRATING WINS

“

Students are more likely to feel valued within a university if lecturers and tutors know their name, are interested in their work and treat all students as equals. Additionally, students will feel like they can seek assistance and help from staff when faced with problems if they feel respected by staff. If these difficulties are not reported or resolved, then this often leads to students dropping out.

(Strauss, 2019)

”

OVERCOMING CHANGE & CELEBRATING WINS

- **Post-Covid Realities**
 - Recognize that institutions have changed
 - What areas are at risk of impacting student experience and retention?
- **Develop a Culture of Embracing Needed Change**
 - Expect the unexpected...be flexible to switch gears
- **Stay Mission True...Do Not Drift**
- **Be proactive in addressing issues, not reactive**
 - Set clear goals and objectives
 - Identify potential gaps and concerns
 - Have an atmosphere where it is ok to fail but develop contingency plans

”

Internal change is not keeping pace with the external change and volatility organizations are facing (Kotter, 2021)

”

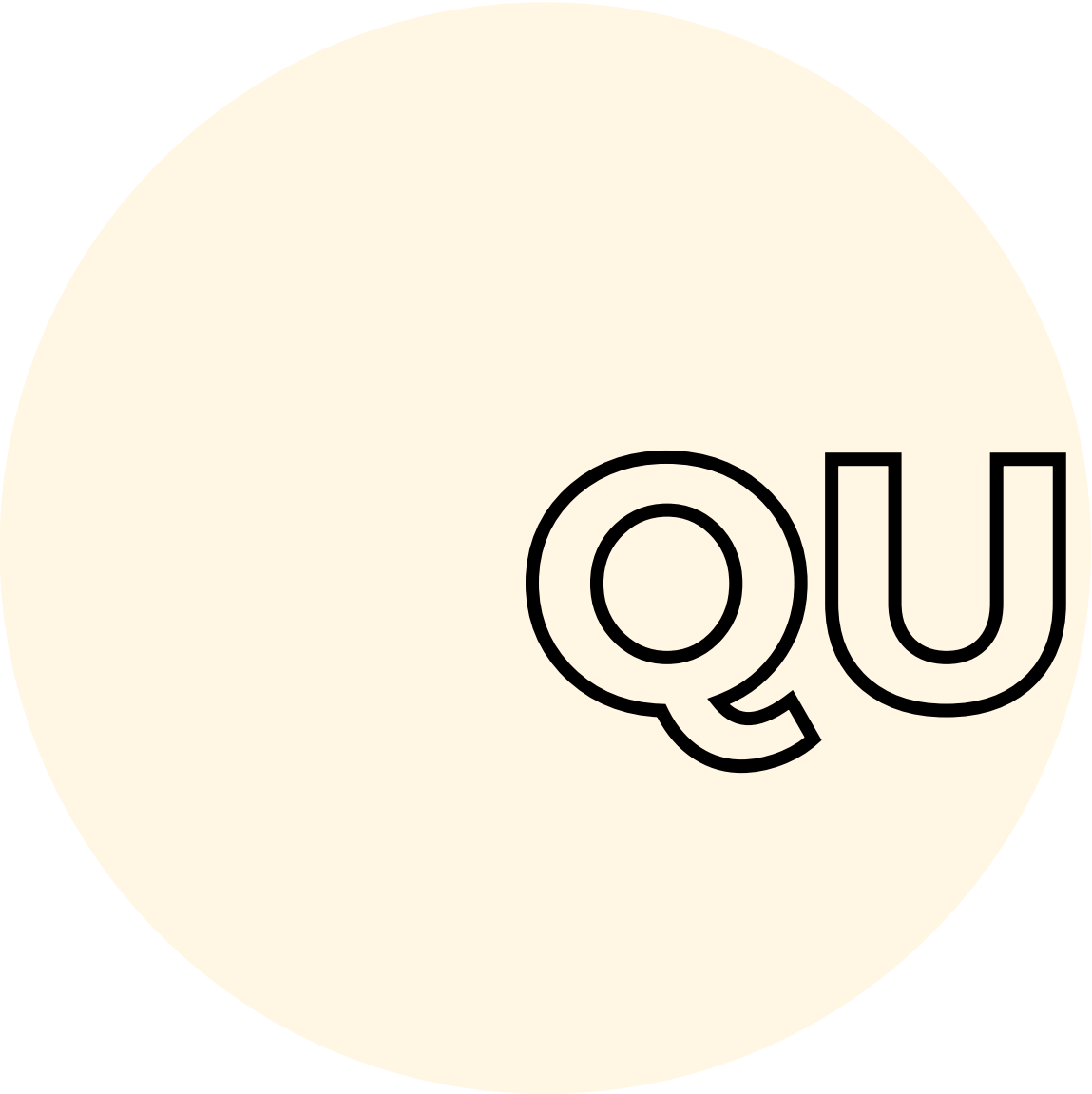


When celebration becomes part of the organizational culture it awakens the spirit and companies can in turn reap benefits such as improved employee morale, commitment and hard work.
(Lockhart, 2000)



OVERCOMING CHANGE & CELEBRATING WINS

- **Develop a Celebration Culture Within Your Institution**
 - Celebrate Faculty and Staff throughout the year
 - Publically call out Faculty and Staff who are living out your desired culture.
- **Recognize the small and mundane tasks that Faculty and Staff do to support Student Success.**
- **Set Vision and Culture at the Beginning of Each Semester**
- **Conduct regular assessments with team members**



QUESTIONS?

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ABHE CONFERENCE - 2024

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THANK YOU!

Dr. Daniel Ruarte

Provost & VP of Academic Affairs
druarte@lifepacific.edu

George Bostanic

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gbostanic@lifepacific.edu

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