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# Beyond GPA: Exploring Factors of Student Thriving to Elevate Student Success

*Dana M. Horne*





# Today's Objectives

Introductions

What is success?

Graduate Thriving Quotient

Application to practice

Disclaimer







# The Challenge

- ▶ How do we assess “success”?
  - ▶ GPA
  - ▶ GRE/MCAT/LSAT/Other cognitive assessments
- ▶ How do we assess “potential”?
  - ▶ Recommendations
  - ▶ Personal Statements
- ▶ What does “success” look like in a graduate program?





# Scenario

You have ONE seat remaining – *Who do you offer admission to?*

## Student A

- ▶ 3.98 UG GPA
- ▶ High GRE Score
- ▶ Strong Letters of Recommendation
- ▶ Strongly written personal statement
- ▶ Average Interview

## Student B

- ▶ 3.24 UG GPA
- ▶ Low to Average GRE
- ▶ Strong Letters of Recommendation
- ▶ Average written personal statement
- ▶ Strong Interview





## But what if you knew more... – *Who would you offer admission to?*

### *Student ?*

- ▶ Strong interpersonal skills
- ▶ Strong self-reflection
- ▶ Engaged in school/university committees
- ▶ Internship/Practicum site rave about student's ability and performance
- ▶ Average test/papers scores
- ▶ Accepts and applies feedback

### *Student ?*

- ▶ Poor interpersonal skills
- ▶ Poor self-reflection
- ▶ History of disruptive behaviors in both classroom and Internship/Practicum
- ▶ High test/paper scores
- ▶ Closed off to feedback





But what if you knew the following – *Who would you offer admission to?*

## Student B

- ▶ Strong interpersonal skills
- ▶ Strong self-reflection
- ▶ Engaged in school/university committees
- ▶ Internship/Practicum site rave about student's ability and performance
- ▶ Average test/papers scores
- ▶ Accepts and applies feedback

## Student A

- ▶ Poor interpersonal skills
- ▶ Poor self-reflection
- ▶ History of disruptive behaviors in both classroom and Internship/Practicum
- ▶ High test/paper scores
- ▶ Closed off to feedback





# What are indicators of success?

- ▶ GPA
- ▶ Scholarship (financial)
- ▶ Scholarship (academic – publications/presentations)
- ▶ Elite Internships/Fellowships
- ▶ Leadership Positions
- ▶ Engaged in school/university community
- ▶ Degree Completion Rates
- ▶ Other Factors:
  - ▶ Grit
  - ▶ Determination
  - ▶ Perseverance
  - ▶ Resiliency
  - ▶ Employability
  - ▶ Well-balanced
    - ▶ Time management
    - ▶ Self-Care
    - ▶ Strong support network







Beyond what we know from historical literature, what might predict success in a graduate program?







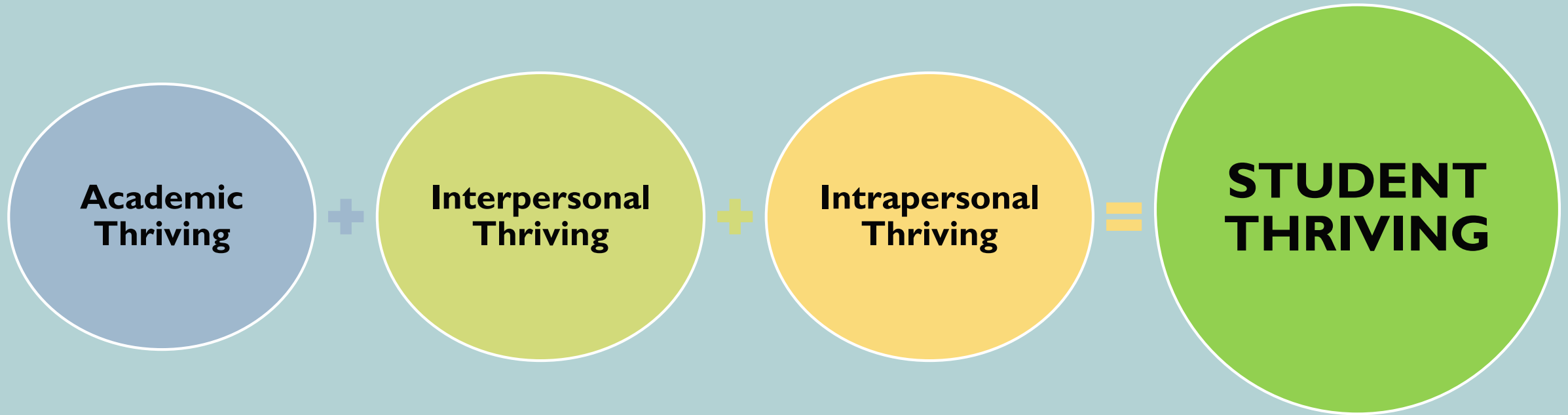
# Concept of Thriving

Students who demonstrate high levels of interpersonal, intrapersonal, and academic well-being tend to experience greater success and are described as students who thrive.





# Thriving





# Thriving

According to Schreiner (2012), thriving students are fully engaged in the learning process, as evidenced by:

- ▶ investing effort to reach important educational goals, managing their time and commitments effectively, connecting in healthy ways to other people, [and being] optimistic about their futures, positive about their present choices, appreciative of differences in others, and committed to enriching their community. (p. 5)





# Domains of Thriving

## Academic Thriving

Academic Determination

Engaged Learning

## Interpersonal Thriving

Social Connectedness

Diverse Citizenship

## Intrapersonal Thriving

Positive Perspective







# Graduate Thriving Quotient





# Graduate Thriving Quotient

Please rate your agreement with each of the items.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel as though I am learning things in my classes that are worthwhile to me as a person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can usually find ways of applying what I'm learning in class to something else in my life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Once I start a project, I stick with it until I am finished.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find myself thinking about what I'm learning in class even when I'm not in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other people would say I'm a hard worker.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel energized by the ideas I am learning in most of my classes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know how to apply my strengths to achieve academic success.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The Graduate Thriving Quotient is available through The Thriving Project:

<http://www.thrivingincollege.org/thethrivingproject/>





# What Studies Have Found

- ▶ Petridis (2016)
  - ▶ Explored the relationships among department climate, student-faculty interaction, family-friend support, and a psychological sense of community, as well as how these relationships contribute to the variation in graduate student thriving.
  - ▶ Finding: Students' psychological sense of community was the largest predictor of thriving, followed by the support of family and friends and a positive department climate.







# What Studies Have Found

- ▶ Horne (2016)
  - ▶ Explored the relationships between emotional intelligence and student success in a Masters of Social Work program.
  - ▶ Findings: A students' pre-program levels of emotional intelligence were significant predictors of Graduate Thriving Quotient total mean scores, indicating that pre-emotional intelligence predicts thriving in a graduate MSW program. Additionally, students' end of year emotional intelligence correlated with their levels of thriving in an MSW program.







# Application to Practice – Student Services

Create environments conducive to graduate students' success and well-being:

- ▶ Increase opportunities for students to engage in school initiatives, committees, research projects with faculty.
- ▶ Provide professional development opportunities to grow students inter and intrapersonal skillsets
- ▶ Build a community of support among students, faculty, and staff
- ▶ Increase and support opportunities for students to connect with their peers both in formal and informal settings





# Application to Practice – Admissions

Beyond cognitive measures, how could student success or potential for thriving be screened:

- Letters of reference that include behavioral based questions
  - “Describe a situation in which Student A overcame a challenge”*
- Reference questions that assess beyond academic ability





# Questions?

Dana M. Horne, EdD  
University at Buffalo School of Social Work  
dhorne@buffalo.edu  
(716) 645-1229

THANK YOU!

