

Introducing the Thrive Method

An experience-first solution to address
student success at the campus system level



Berklee
College of Music





We know that when students thrive, our institutions thrive; and, when institutions thrive, our students thrive.

Each reinforces the other, like the component parts in an ecosystem.



But right now, both are
struggling.

The Problem

Too many solutions are bolt-ons that perpetuate our current way of doing things— ignoring the lived realities of today's students.



The Question

How might we engage students deeply in their educational experience, helping them to make the absolute most of the money, time and energy they invest in their learning and development?

In other words, how might we help them to thrive?





The master's tools will
never dismantle the
master's house.

Audre Lorde



The Solution

We need a new set of tools—tools that help us develop a mindset to intentionally design and improve the lived student experience.

KNOW ME. GUIDE ME. LAUNCH ME.



To **know** students well, to **guide** them to the right paths, knowledge, people and resources, and to **launch** them into the world prepared to fully realize their personal, creative and career potential is to **see** them as **a whole person thriving on a unique journey.**

Introducing The Thrive Method

An 'experience-first' solution to reimagining student success. Incubated at Berklee College of Music, this shared philosophy and approach builds inclusive campus ecosystems and delivers supportive experiences all along the student journey.



Universal
Student-First ROI

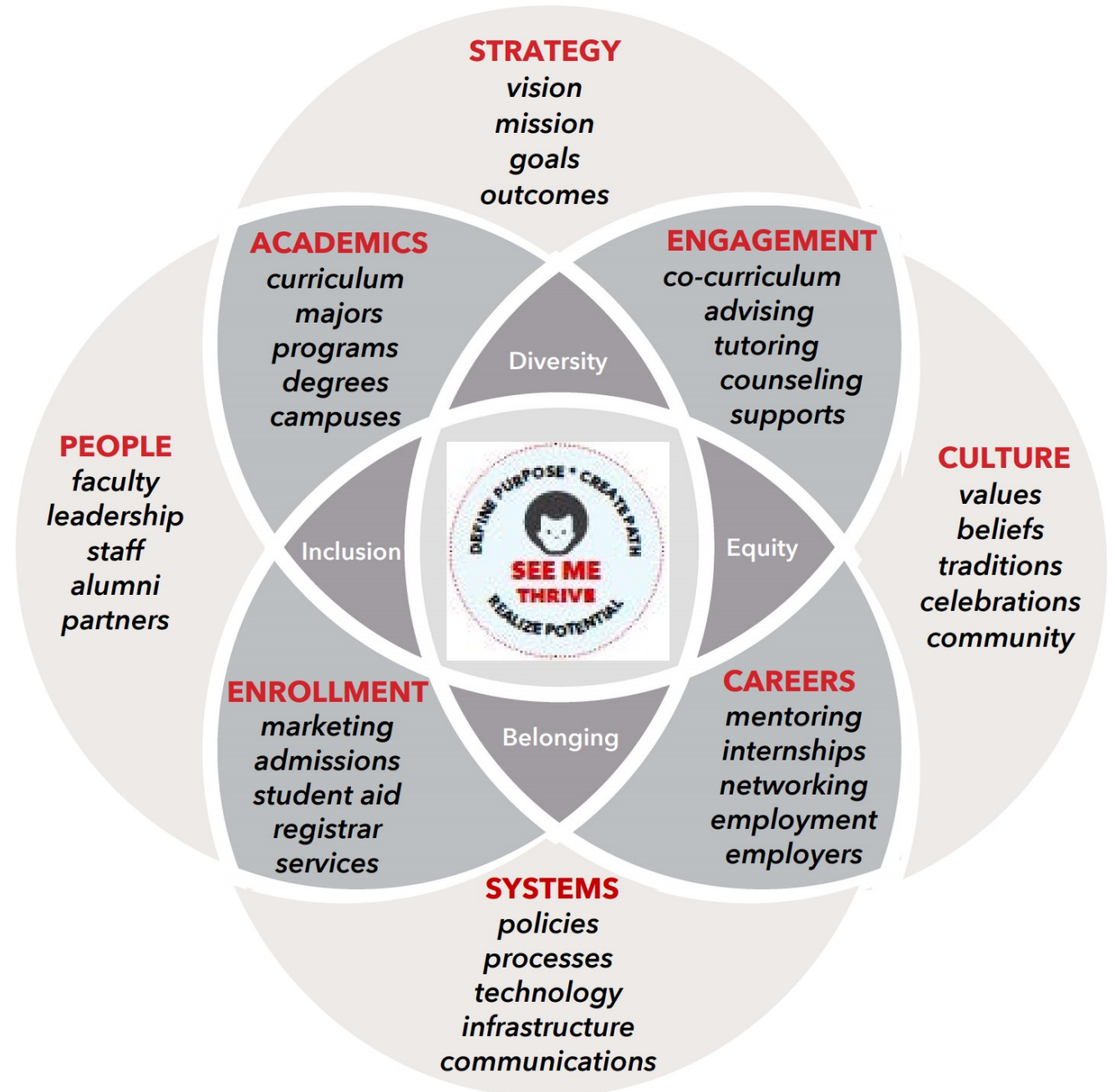
Engage in
high-quality
equitable
experiences

Graduate at
higher rates
with less
debt

Leave
prepared for
sustainable
successful
careers

How it Works

The Thrive Method turns campus stakeholders into campus experience designers, working as cross-functional teams to assess the whole system - reinforcing components, imagining new possibilities, and co-creating a connected system that adapts to the student (and not the other way around!)



Phases of the Thrive Method

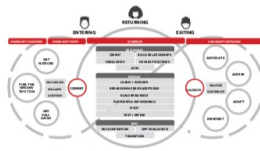
Evaluation Phase

1

KNOW STUDENTS



Elements of Thriving



Engagement Experience

The first step is to deeply understand who we are designing for, how they are measuring up to the elements of thriving, what their journey truly entails, and what outcomes are important to them and to us.

2

KNOW OURSELVES



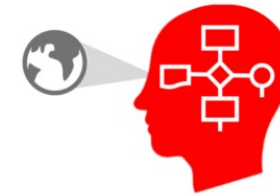
Organizational and Ecosystem Frameworks



Using the Thrive Method's Organizational Frameworks as a guide, assess roles, guiding principles and structures to identify what needs to be nurtured, evolved, adapted, connected, or built from scratch.

3

CHECK MINDSETS



Mental Models

With a deeper understanding of student's lived experiences and a formative assessment of 'thrivability' in hand, do any long-held beliefs/patterns need to shift to get to desired behaviors and outcomes?

Phases of the Thrive Method

Design Phase

4

IDEATE, PILOT, LEARN

Thrive Method Planning
Template

SHIFT MINDSET What belief or pattern needs shifting?				
KNOW STUDENTS	STUDENT FOCUS Who are we designing for?	THRIVE STRATEGY To achieve what strategy goals?	ALIGN WORK	
	THRIVE ELEMENTS To support which Thrive Elements?	CAMPUS LEADS To form the best partnerships?		
	STUDENT LIFECYCLE Where and when in the lifecycle?	PRACTICE CHANGE To guide which high-impact practices?		
	SUCCESS OUTCOMES Driving what student success results?	WAYS OF WORKING To unify which ways of working?		
IDEATE + PILOT What type of prototype to try?				
PLAN FOR LEARNING How did it go? What tells us it's working? What needs adjusting?				

Capture key takeaways from each phase in the Thrive Method planning guide to shepherd ideation, piloting, and iteration processes. Use the findings as guiding principles for decision-making and learning. Build capacity to engage students and each other in the work.

The Method in Detail

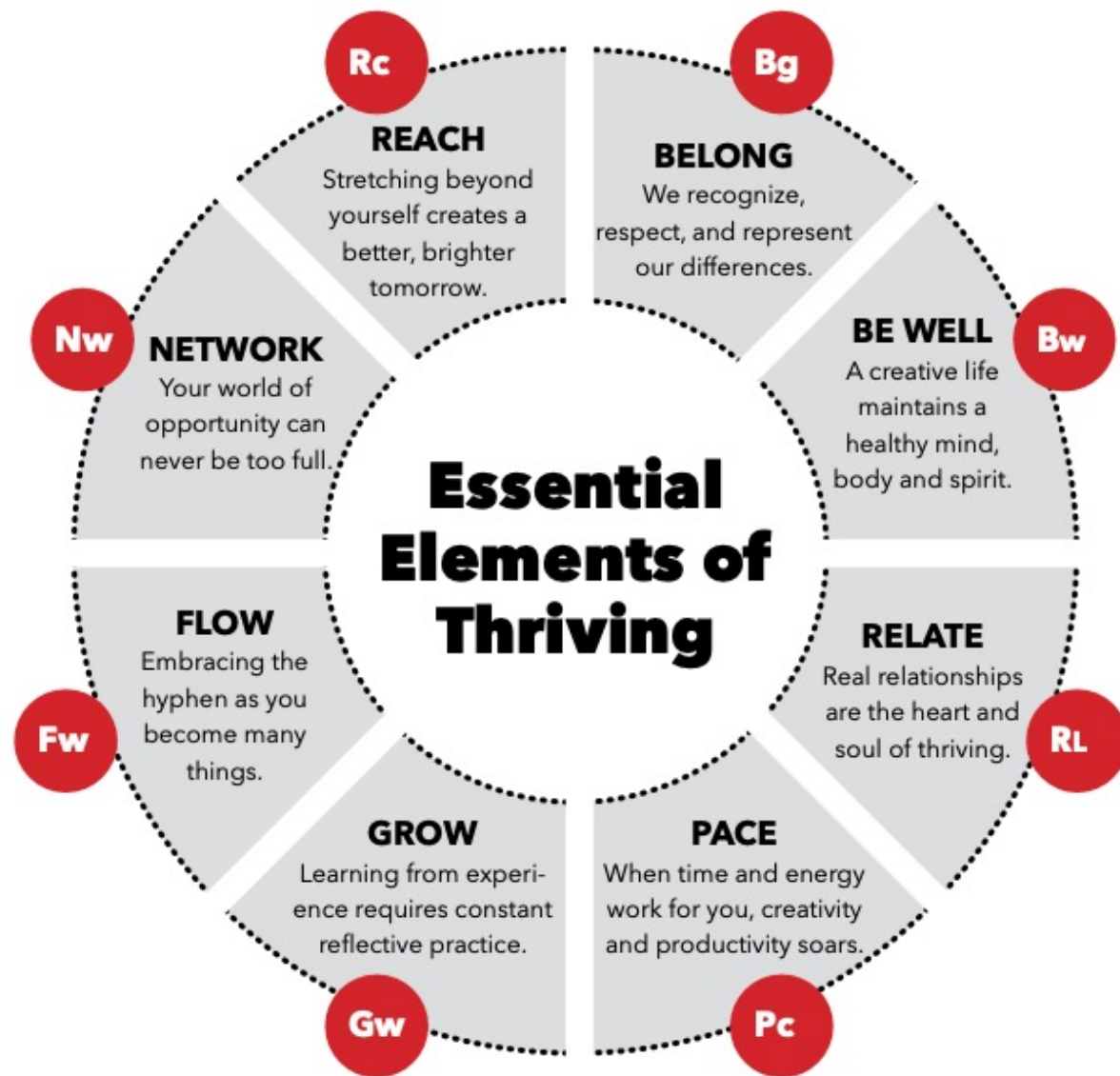
1

KNOW STUDENTS

A shared definition of what it takes for students to THRIVE.

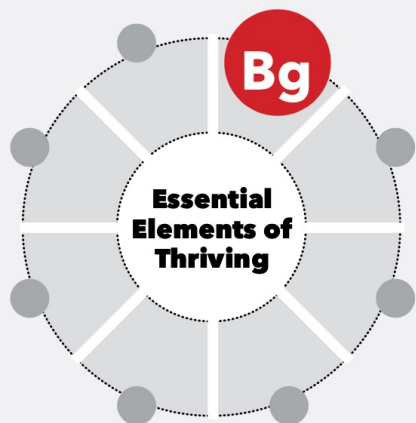
Extensive research with a diverse student body at Berklee identified 8 essential elements of a thriving student experience. Elements that are always interacting with one another to deepen and enrich the whole.

While not meant to be exhaustive—the world that surrounds today's students is simply far too complex—the elements call attention to the overall experience we must intentionally design. They encapsulate organizational behavior to model, values to adhere to, and ultimately, the experience to deliver —no matter race, background or circumstance.



1

KNOW STUDENTS



BELONG
We recognize,
respect and represent
our differences.

Bg

/see me thrive/

To confidently be yourself and learn and grow at your best possible rate requires a culture and environment that reflects you in countless ways. From the language, images, symbols, and histories we present; to the pedagogy, curriculum, clubs, and events we offer; to the students and faculty and staff we enroll or hire; we are committed to removing inequitable barriers that create a burden to carry. You belong to a thriving community of global artists who know what it means to feel recognized, represented, respected and accepted.

STUDENT VIEWPOINTS

"Diversity of network and community go hand-in-hand. For black students, there aren't enough of us. I do understand that we are adults and figure things out. That's what we do as humans. But at the same time, if I don't have those people around me, how can I feel like I'm a part of a community?"

"I cannot make a connection with someone that is different from me if those people are not here. I don't hire people at Berklee. I do not accept students. That's not something I can control. But to learn and grow with people who are the same AND different from you is important."

THOUGHT STARTERS

TRY IT!

MAKE IT PERSONAL

How am I helping myself and my students seek, create, navigate and/or enrich interactions with those from diverse identities and cultural backgrounds?

MAKE IT A COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

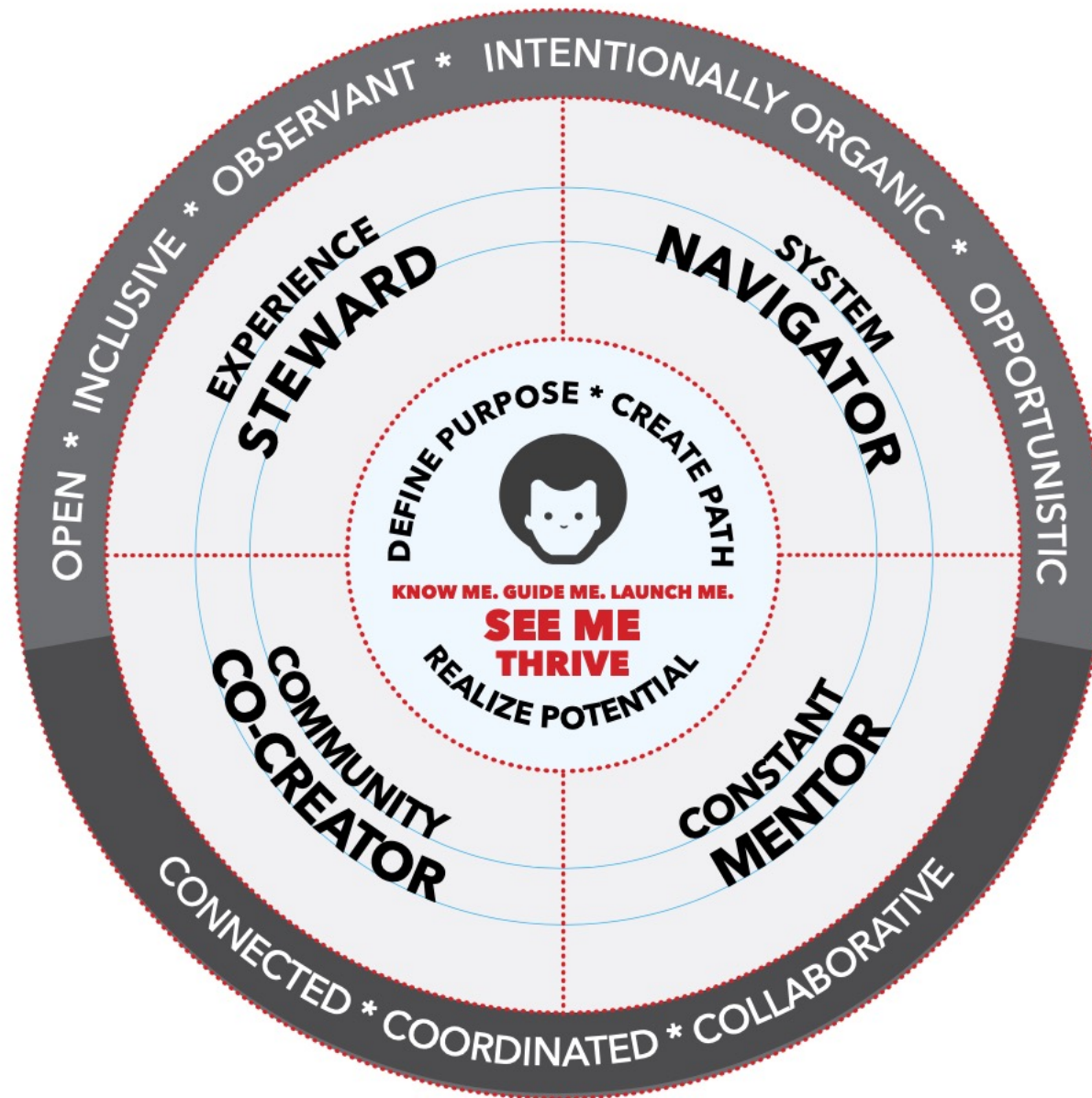
Students will thrive when they see opportunity and see themselves in it. How might we explicitly address the need for equity-building solutions within a new or existing curricular or co-curricular experience?

2 KNOW OURSELVES

What does it mean for an institution to THRIVE?

Using the THRIVE organizational assessment framework, stakeholders learn how they are operating against the key tenets of a thriving institution.

The tenets include a set of defining roles, key engagement principles, and modes of teamwork.



3

CHECK MINDSETS

What beliefs or patterns need shifting to unify our ways of working?

Knowing students well and seeing them as a whole person on a unique journey of thriving allows us to examine deeply held beliefs about student experiences and our role within those experiences.

AN EXPERIENCE STEWARD

Understanding the lived realities of our diverse student body and using insights about their experiences to shape the work we do and how we do it. Evolving how we connect and align our work as our understanding of what it takes for students to thrive grows.

A SYSTEM NAVIGATOR

Combining vast know-how of all that Berklee has to offer with knowledge of each student to connect them to the right learning experiences, networks and resources.

A COMMUNITY CO-CREATOR

Keeping connection and relationships at the core of all we do builds thriving communities of practice capable of co-creating together in service of our students.

A CONSTANT MENTOR

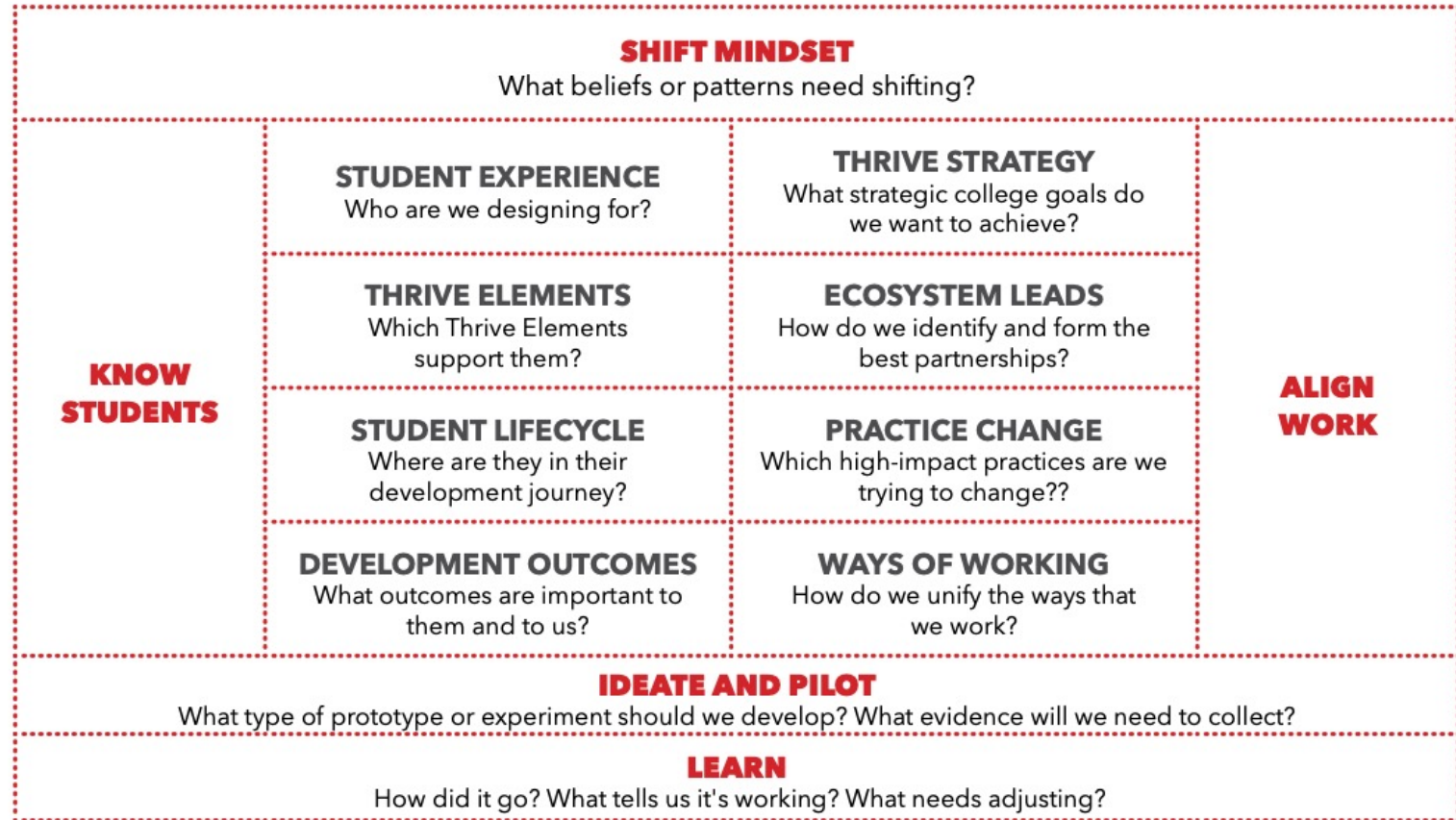
Helping all students engage deeply in their educational experience to learn the process of defining purpose, creating a path and realizing potential personally, artistically and professionally. Helping students to thrive.

4

IDEATE, PILOT, LEARN

Intentional action to help students thrive

With an understanding of who you are serving, the mindset shift required, and the ways to align work, you can move on to taking steps to make it real. The Thrive Method template provides building blocks to help you sketch and pilot intentional Thrive experiences.



**KNOW ME.
GUIDE ME.
LAUNCH ME.**

**SEE ME
THRIVE**



The Opportunity: Flip the System Together!

Together with seasoned experience designers, you will engage students and stakeholders from the entire student lifecycle to iteratively:

- Raise your understanding of the lived student experience
- Better support students' developmental journeys
- Shift critical barrier-setting mindsets
- Align or unify ways of working together
- Guide pilot work and build momentum for change

Let's Talk Results

The Method in Action

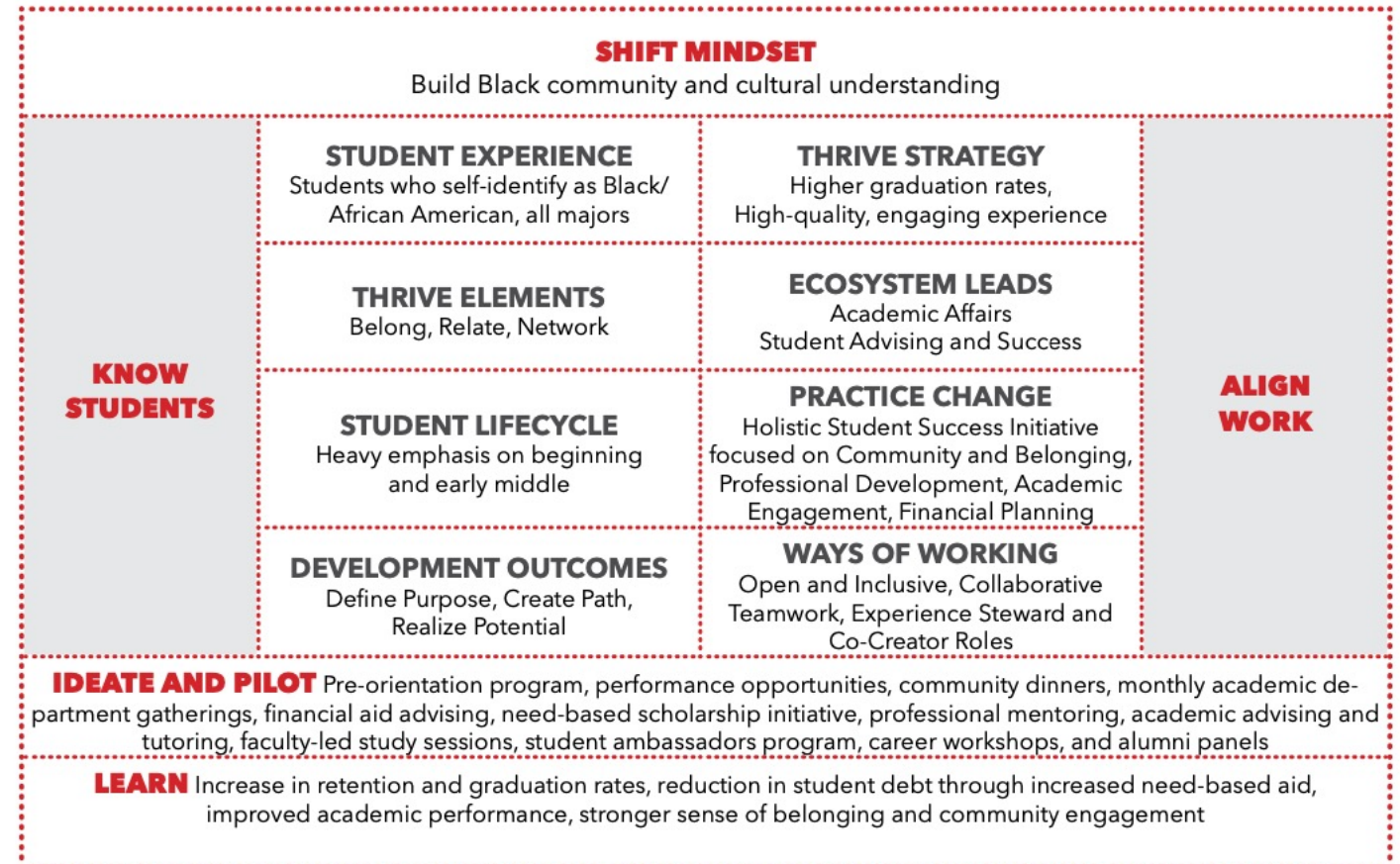
1

Advance Outcomes for Black Students

Activate the Thrive Method to build Black community and cultural understanding through African performing arts history and tradition

THE CHALLENGE

Acknowledge, reflect, and connect Berklee's self-identified Black students to the roots and contributions of the Black cultural diaspora inherent in Berklee's origin story and innovative curriculum. Create a community while simultaneously recruiting, retaining, and increasing graduation rates—rates which are consistently lower than peer rates.



1

Advance Outcomes for Black Students

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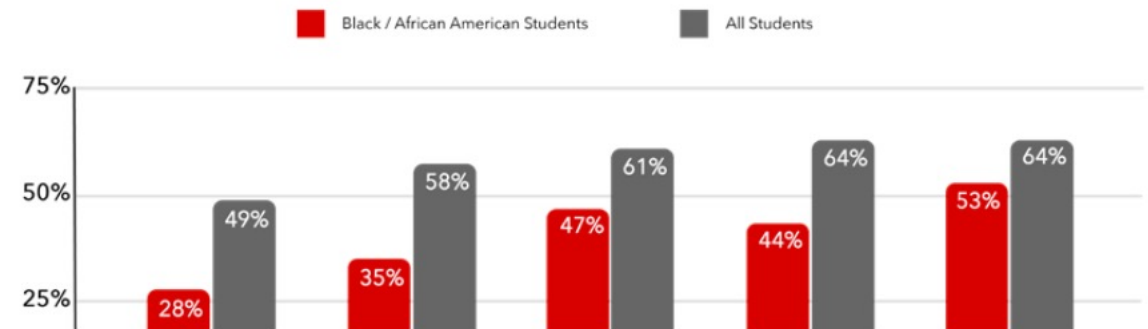
THE RESULTS

The Black Scholars Initiative (BSI), a holistic student success initiative, fosters a strong sense of belonging and cultural understanding on campus through academic, social and cultural programming. Through signature pre-orientation and year-long programming, BSI creates community and networking opportunities, supports academic engagement and professional development, and assists with financial needs and literacy.

15%
Drop in DFW
rates

50%
Reduction in annual
family debt levels

100%
BSI cohort retained
from 1st to 2nd year



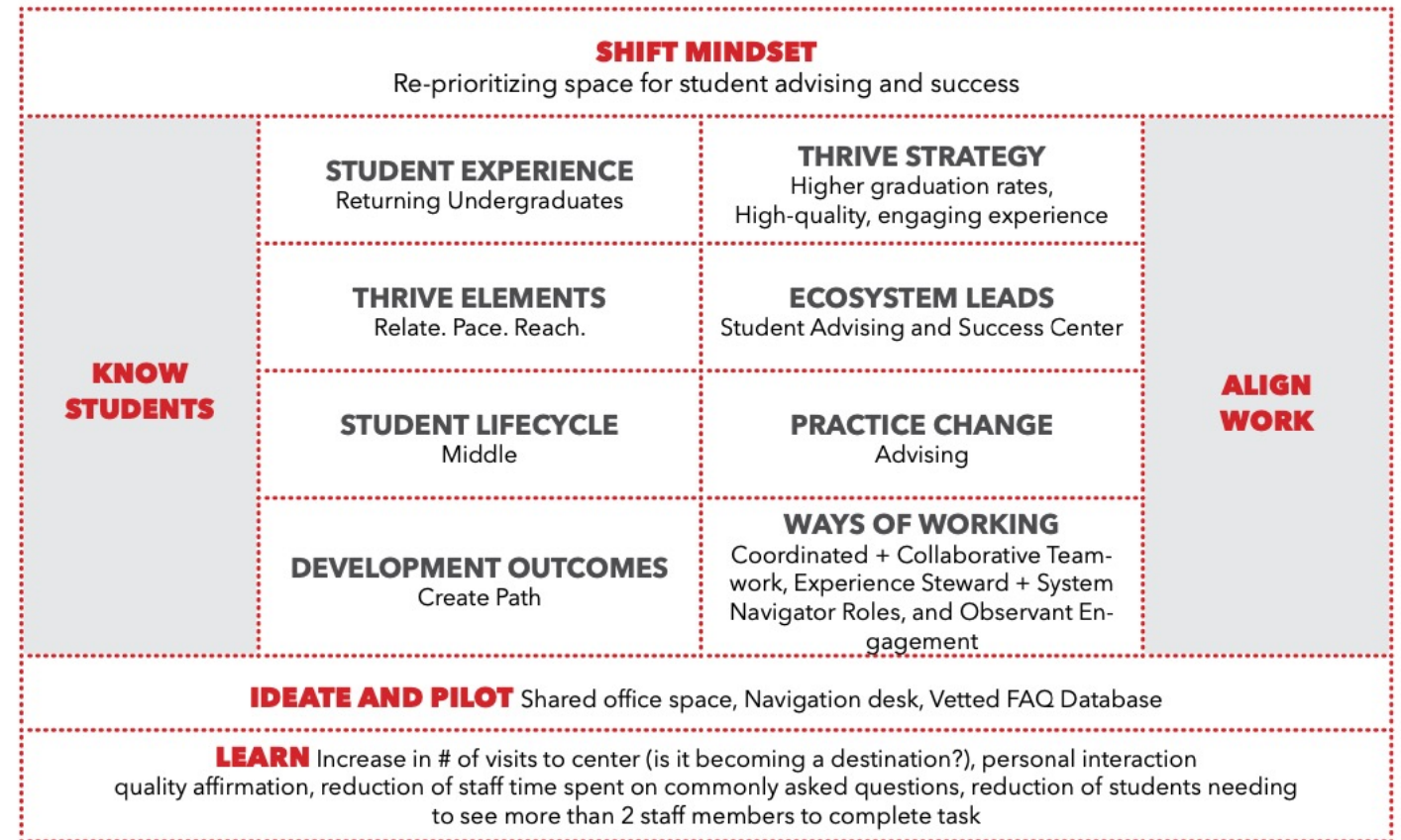
2

Create a Gateway to Advising

Activating the Thrive Method to re-imagine the environment and frontline experience for Student Advising and Success

THE CHALLENGE

Transform a space remodel into a catalyst for the redesign of the student advising and success frontline experience; help recently merged departments of academic advising, international students services and study abroad, disability services, and the registrar come together as one team.



2

Create a Gateway to Advising

Activating the Thrive Method to re-imagine the environment and frontline experience for Student Advising and Success

THE RESULTS

A center that prioritizes the student experience—making space an active part of that experience while supporting and encouraging staff connection and collaboration; automation of the routine to free up staff time for relationship building; implementation of collaboration technologies; new learning and development paths for staff and student employees.

+1206
Student appointments
from Fall 2016-2018

92%
of entering students ready to
start class on Day 1

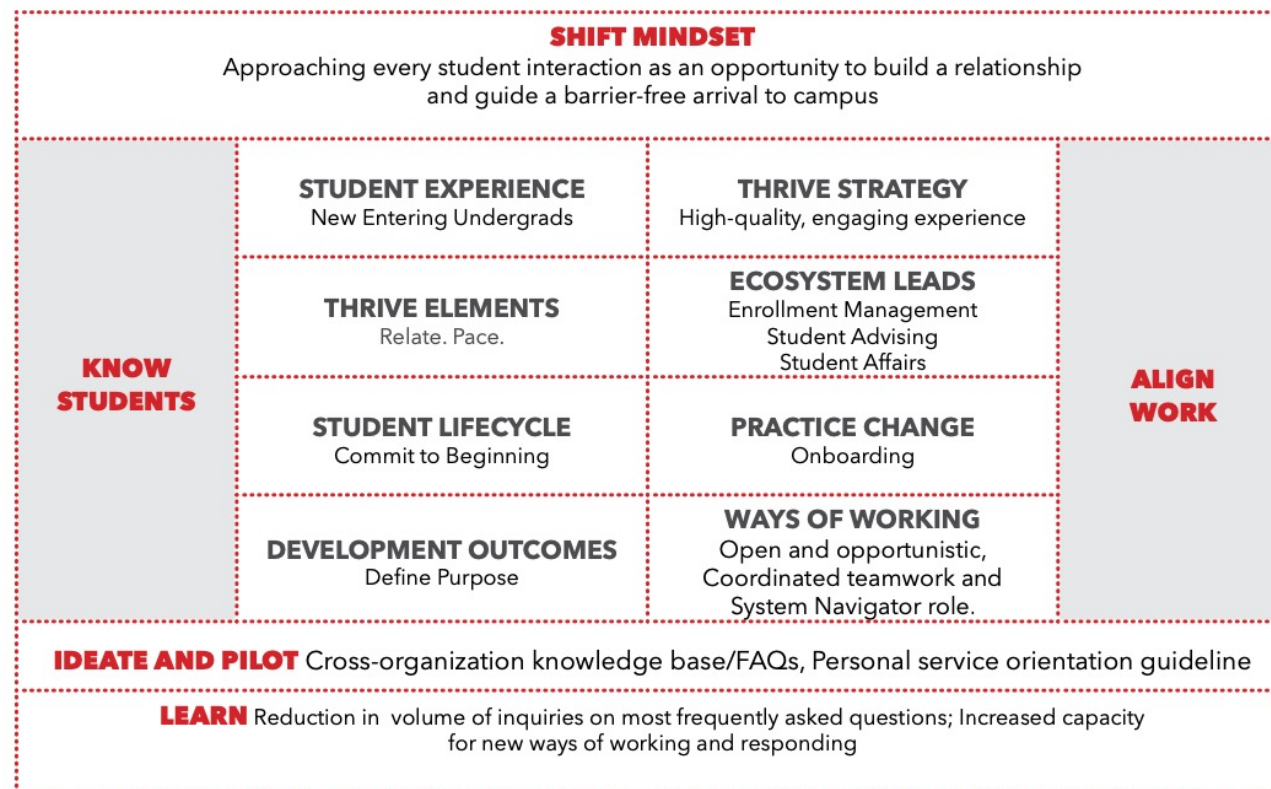
3

Become Better System Navigators

Activating the Thrive Method to create exceptional onboarding experiences for entering undergraduate students

THE CHALLENGE

Provide accurate and timely information, and responsive, student-centered service levels for new entering students during the onboarding process. Create tools to help staff develop and sustain an experience steward mindset and personal service orientation in each and every transaction with students.



3

Become Better System Navigators

Activating the Thrive Method to create exceptional onboarding experiences for entering undergraduate students

THE RESULTS

Four separate but interconnected efforts:

1. Better integrated and coordinated external student communications
2. Vetted and validated cross-organization knowledge-base and FAQs
3. Personal service orientation guidelines
4. Implementation of real-time, collaborative messaging and information-sharing tools.

92%
of entering students
ready for class
on Day 1

15%
increase in
a sense
of belonging

11%
increase in
Orientation
enjoyment

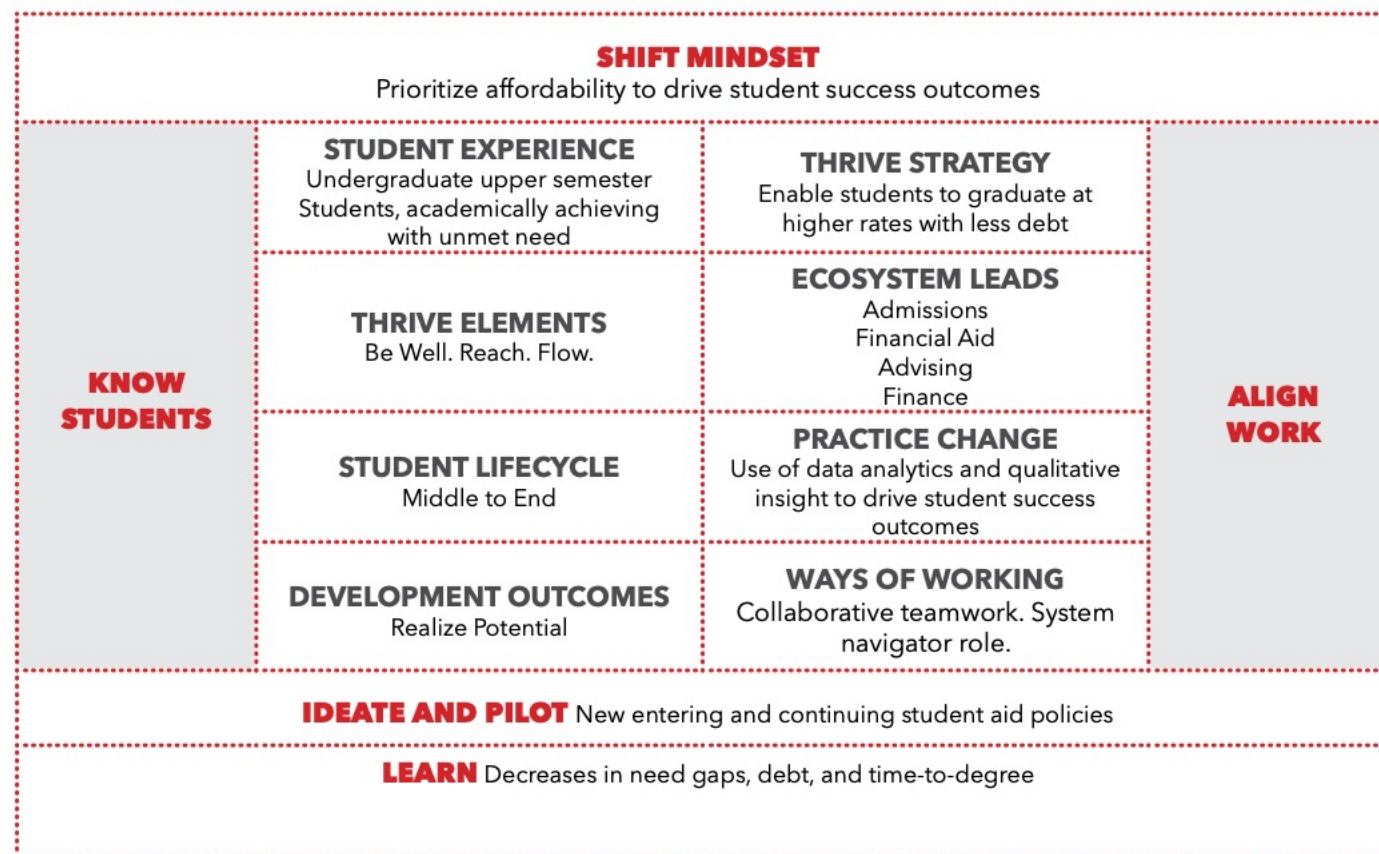
4

Create a Thrive Scholarship Program

Activating the Thrive Method to design a new need-based aid program that increase graduation rates and reduce debt loads

THE CHALLENGE

Even after institutional scholarships, 1,100+ domestic FAFSA filers remain with \$26.4mm in unmet tuition need. For this reason, 66% of students who demonstrate academic success but have significant financial constraints have considered leaving Berklee. Many do not complete their degrees despite taking on significant student and family loan burden to finance their education.



4

Create a Thrive Scholarship Program

Activating the Thrive Method to design a new need-based aid program that increase graduation rates and reduce debt loads

THE RESULTS

Continuing student aid policies resulting in substantial reduction in student debt and family debt, increased retention and overall satisfaction. In its first program year, student debt level was reduced by 39% for students and by 38% for families, program retention rates were 97% and 98% of students report they can meet the renewal standards for the Thrive scholarship.

\$46K
average debt
per student at time
of award

97%
retention rate for
First Year cohort

40%
reduction in
student debt level

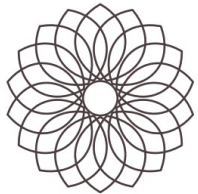


Ready to THRIVE?



Berklee
College of Music

Founded on jazz, the music of the African diaspora, and a dedication to contemporary music, Berklee is a singular institution for the study of the performing arts. Berklee is a place where artists come together to innovate and collaborate, and where artistic and cultural diversity is embraced and celebrated. This ethos permeates all aspects of Berklee—from teaching and learning to administration and governance—and is fundamental to the Berklee experience.



kinetic seeds

Working at the intersection of innovation and behavior change, Kinetic Seeds is a design consultancy tackling complex educational challenges. Our approach is to unearth powerful insights and opportunities generated by design-thinking, participatory design, and equity-minded storytelling. We purposefully work with partners who seek to cross boundaries and share their work with others. In our network, we are all driving toward the same goal—equal opportunity for all students.

kindred
the studio for deeply human experiences

Improving lives for the better, it's the promise of human-centered design, yet, one that many organizations and technologies struggle to deliver on. At kindred, we work with you, the world shapers and changemakers who want to build something exceptional together. We help you develop deeply human experiences that take on problems worth solving. We work with you to bring back empathy, flow, conversation, humor, community, connection, reflection, and well-being to the products, services, and relationships you strive to create.