Thank you, Marilyn. Now, I’ll highlight three key trends that will have a great impact on career services in the next five years:

Why these trends? Nearly 50 career services leaders from across the country identified them as the ones to watch. This finding is from a survey I conducted this fall with Tom Devlin, Executive Director at UC Berkeley’s Career Center.

As I share the trends and related ideas, I do so not to be prescriptive, but to stimulate your thinking. My aim is to provide food for thought.

SLIDE TWO: DISRUPTION

Trend #1: Disrupting the career center’s traditional role as gate keeper between employers and students

Just like AI and automation are disrupting the future of work, the proliferation of technology is rapidly transforming career services.

Traditionally, students and employers had to come to us or go through us to connect, but now we are seeing the acceleration of outsourcing of our campus’ employer relations functions.

For example:

- Career services used to be very proprietary with student credentials. But, we no longer have control. For example, with the introduction of handshake on my campus, 92% of students at UCI have elected to make their online profiles viewable to employers—we are not in the driver’s seat.

- Another example: on-campus-recruiting is very labor intensive and costly; at the same time online conferencing has become much more affordable, so more employers are foregoing a physical presence on campus and are using online tools to hold interviews. I-banks and some tech firms, who had a very large OCI presence, are at the forefront of this trend.

So where does that leave career services? Are robots taking over our jobs too?

Take a deep breath!

The good news: since our roles are not transactional, we will still have jobs! We will just have to rethink them.
SLIDE THREE: RELATIONSHIPS

For one, savvy employers know that recruiting is about relationships, and career services will continue to be where there is the greatest critical mass of students for employers to meet: at our campuses.

- So, we need to leverage that and rethink the ways we connect employers and students that help them build genuine relationships.

- So, instead of huge general career fairs, we will help employers find students via more niche fairs and we will help employers rethink how to use the on-campus interview function, not for 1:1 interviews, but for group meetups with targeted students.

- In addition, more employers will engage with us outside of pure recruiting. They will serve as consultants as well as hosts for job shadowing and treks in greater numbers.

Second, we will help employers navigate campus politics to find their way in to classrooms and other academic arenas, such as

- …Having them serve as sponsors for undergraduate research symposia where they can see first-hand how our students are applying classroom knowledge to real life problems.

- Another example: we can help employers go through the proper channels to align their internships in different countries with our study abroad programs.

Third, we will need to take a fresh look at alumni as employers.

- Do you know who your top ten employers of your alumni are? If so, have you met with them at their workplaces to develop recruiting strategies?

- Another thought: you may have geographically based alumni chapters at your school, but do you have an alumni chapter of HR and talent acquisition professionals for your campus? Probably not! Go back and start one: there’s an action item for you 😊

Before I give you too much homework, let’s talk about trend #2.

SLIDE FOUR: REALIGNMENT

Trend #2: Entering into new organizational structures for career services organizations

How many of you work in career services that have changed reporting lines in the last few years or so? (show of hands) You are not alone.

The latest NACE Career Services Benchmark Report, NACE states:

“Over the past 10 years, there has been movement away from housing the career services function in student affairs. In 2008, nearly 70 percent of respondents reported that their office was located in student affairs, compared with fewer than 50 percent of current respondents.”

All indications are that movement away from Student Affairs as well as new models for organizing our work will continue.
This trend prompts a few questions.

- **First, why is this happening?**

Enlightened universities are learner-centered. They recognize they have to elevate career services to respond to the vast majority of students’ primary reason for getting a college education: to advance their career goals.

Enlightened universities are also looking for better educational outcomes. Many studies have shown that when students have a sense of purpose and when they see the connection between their coursework and their futures, they are more likely to persist and have a favorable opinion of their alma mater. It’s because of desired institutional outcomes like these that these strategic realignments and elevations of career services are happening.

So, if you’re university is enlightened, be forewarned: you may be looking at a realignment or merger soon!

- **The next question realignments prompt is: what are the challenges and opportunities associated with a realignment or remaining where you are?**

I can speak from personal experience. This past October, my career center was moved from Student Affairs to the academic side of the house. The upside has been well worth it: this intentional move means I have a new supervisor who is very, very invested in our success. With that comes resources and an enhanced reputation.

The challenge is now that we are a priority, we are under much more scrutiny and have much less autonomy than when we were with Student Affairs. But now we are moving forward in ways I could have never imagined if we had remained where we were. SA people are wonderful people (they are my people! I have worked in divisions of student affairs for more years than I’d like to say), but often and rightly so, their attention and resources are focused on crisis management. Career services can be put to the side.

In any case, realignments and new organizational structures will present you with trade-offs. While you might not know what they are, know they are coming!

**SLIDE FIVE: ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Trend #3: Responding to demands for more accountability and evidence based decision making**

It used to be that few people outside of our offices were interested in our data. We were collecting input data (attendance at programs; numbers of appointments, etc) and satisfaction indicators to help us make internal decisions about how to use our time. We used to be the main driver in what constituted important data points.

That is changing. Our external constituents are greatly influencing the stories we need to tell and the data we need to collect to support them.

Let’s take our campus leadership. While knowing how many students utilize specific services and that they like them is still important, a story our campus leaders want to hear more about is: what is your return on investment?
Leaders want to see that your efforts result in what’s important to them, which is usually not very nuanced. They typically aren’t looking for learning outcomes or net promoter scores; they want to see that your efforts have:

- generated more opportunities for students, and
- that you spend your time and budget wisely.

**More opportunities:** If you are hitting your 60% knowledge rate with your First Destinations Study results, I salute you! You have outcomes to share. In any case, you can look to see if there are positive relationships between use of your services and any first destination employment data you may have. You can also do research via LinkedIn alumni pages to see where your students have found jobs and highlight these partners for upper campus leadership. You can present student success stories, especially ones that show the value of the majors on your campus that may be facing decreasing enrollments.

**Spending time wisely:** do you have strategic themes? They will help you spend your time wisely! …But only if you have thought of ways to measure them, and the metrics need to make sense to people who may not be entrenched in our business.

For example, if one of your strategic themes is: increasing access to internships, what’s your baseline number of internships on your CRM, or perhaps in your local area, and your growth target?

If one of your strategies is to scale services, what is your baseline student audiences and what is your growth target?

Are you starting to see a pattern here? Baselines and growth targets are something tangible your external supporters can understand.

And while you’re at it, it might be time to rethink how you capture participation figures—is it who shows up or inclusive of who signs up? If you send ALL of those who sign up related information, is it fair to say you engaged them? It's something to think about.

**Bringing it all together:** to influence leadership, you need to providing data that helps them interpret issues and shows off your impact. You can bring these targets and other key metrics together in an easy to digest and access dashboard.

By dashboard, I mean a highly visual depiction of no more than 10 consolidated data points. Your leaders are interested in TOTAL number of students served, TOTAL number of programs held, and TOTAL number of employer touchpoints.

For example, when it comes to employers, I suggest presenting a grand total of the number of employers who came to career fairs, did on-campus interviews, held information sessions, served on panels, listed positions, etc.

Since they are looking at the big picture—the institutional picture—leaders will be less interested in data for individual events and services and more interested in your total impact.
Handover to Drew

I hope this quick-fire overview of three trends has got you thinking! As I prepare to hand it over to Drew, it’s clear that we have challenges as well as opportunities that are driving all of us to change the ways we deliver our services and develop talent.

We are all in this together and we need to have these crucial conversations together! So, let’s turn our attention to Drew for the employer point of view. Drew, you’re up!