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Gray Associates Announces Predictive Analytics for Schools to Forecast How Curricular Changes Impact Revenue and Margins Across the Institution

New technology helps schools to make choices in the best interest of the whole institution

CONCORD, MA, April 7, 2021 – Today, GRAY Associates launched a groundbreaking predictive analytics module that works seamlessly with Gray's PEP (Program Economics Platform) application. The new module enables schools to accurately forecast how changes to programs, will affect the economics of the institution–down to the section level. This is intrinsically important, but highly complex to analyze, so it has rarely been done before GRAY developed this specialized module, which is easy to use, fast, and cost-effective.

Currently, predicting the effects of program changes is vital for institutions that are facing budget issues and need to know how program cuts will change their financial results. The effects are not obvious. In our analysis of thousands of programs, most cuts reduce costs, but program revenue falls further than cost, which makes the budget problem worse. Sadly, these ill-advised cuts are all too common, because institutions simply do not have the tools to assess the effects.

The analytical challenge is that students in a given major usually take courses throughout the university; as a result, a change in one program will affect enrollment in dozens of courses, many of them outside the department in which the major is housed. Changes in enrollment, in turn, affect the number of sections and instructors required, but only if the sections are so full that a new section must added, or become small enough to consolidate. Gray's system predicts these effects, taking into account ideal, maximum, and minimum class sizes.

While analysis is complex, the system is easy to use. Schools simply enter the potential changes in enrollment in a program and watch how the decisions ripple across general education courses, electives, and courses in the major itself. The predictive model

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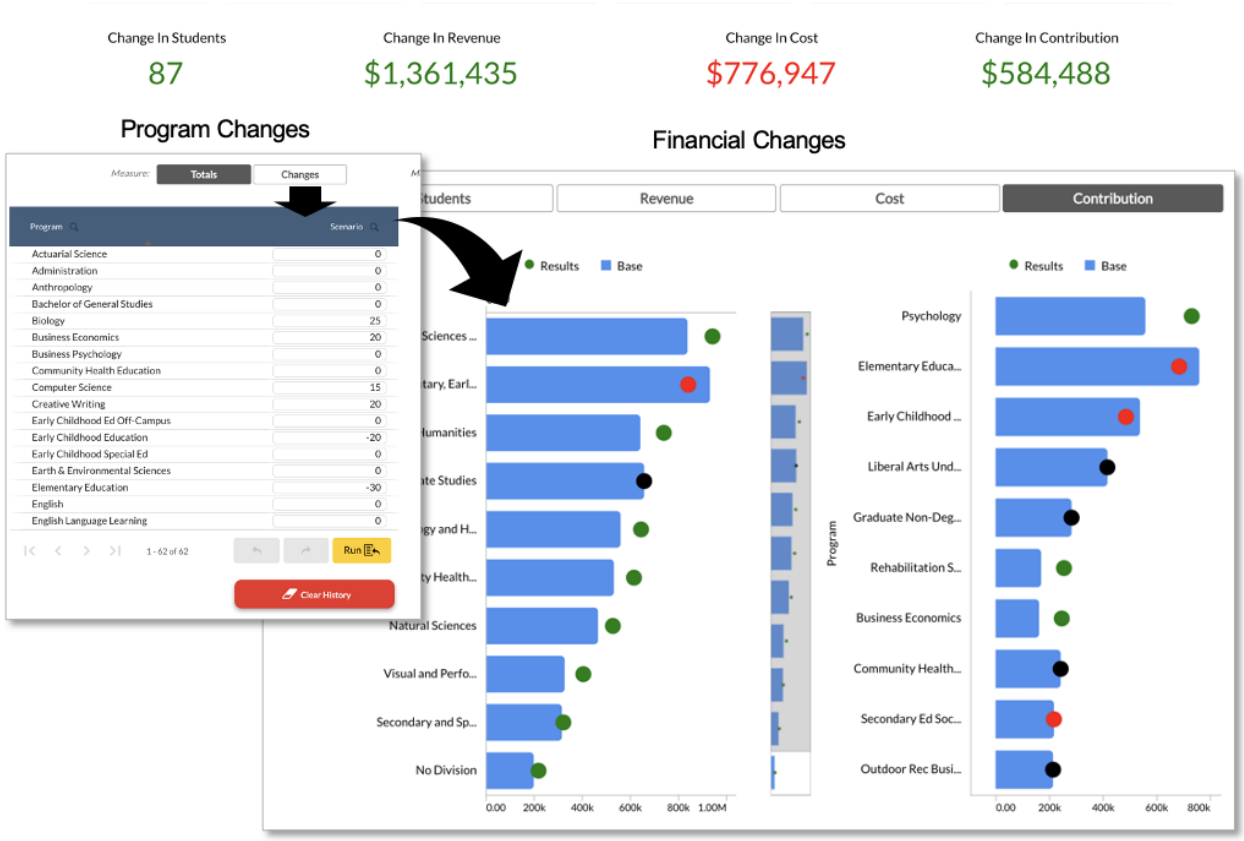
estimates where sections could be cut or should be added, and the associated changes in teaching loads, instructional costs, and classroom space. Planners can test one program change, or dozens at a time.



Gray Associates CEO, Bob Atkins says, “When schools make program decisions, the implications are complex and spread across the organization. If a school cuts a Philosophy program for example – it is often based on the mistaken assumption that small programs lose money. When Philosophy is cut, inadvertently the school removes students from 100-level English or Statistics classes too. So, the economics of decisions are fundamentally mis-estimated. Our predictive analytics solves this so schools can predict the wide-spread economic and financial impact of their decisions.”

The ability to make accurate predictions is crucial during a crisis, like the pandemic when institutions need to make fast, far-reaching program decisions. Gray’s predictive analytics module quickly estimates the effect of these changes and helps institutions avoid mistakes and find winning solutions.

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About Gray Associates

Gray Associates helps colleges and universities make data-informed decisions about their academic programs. Gray's software integrates the best data on student demand, employer needs, and competitive intensity for the market served by each institution. Faculty and administrative leaders use the software to score, rank, and evaluate programs in a collaborative process that builds consensus on programs to start, sunset, sustain, or grow. With Gray's tools and processes, institutions identify paths to increase enrollment, revenue, and efficiency, while investing in their mission and strengthening relationships among faculty and administrators.

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