Seven Deadly Sins &
Seven Lively Virtues

of Educational Reform

Don't miss the weblinks in the lower right corner of each slide to find out more about what's working
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Culture
eats
strategy for
breakfast

— Peter Drucker

Death By Pilot

Deadly Sin #1

Death by Pilot

- Pilot projects are very effective at **diverting the energies** of the most talented people into work that affects a small percentage of our overall student population

- Even though research shows that the approach works, we argue that the costs are too great to be applied to all students (while we continue to pour **resources into things that we know don't work**)

Ask yourself:

How much more energy would it take to do something at scale than to do it for 10 students?
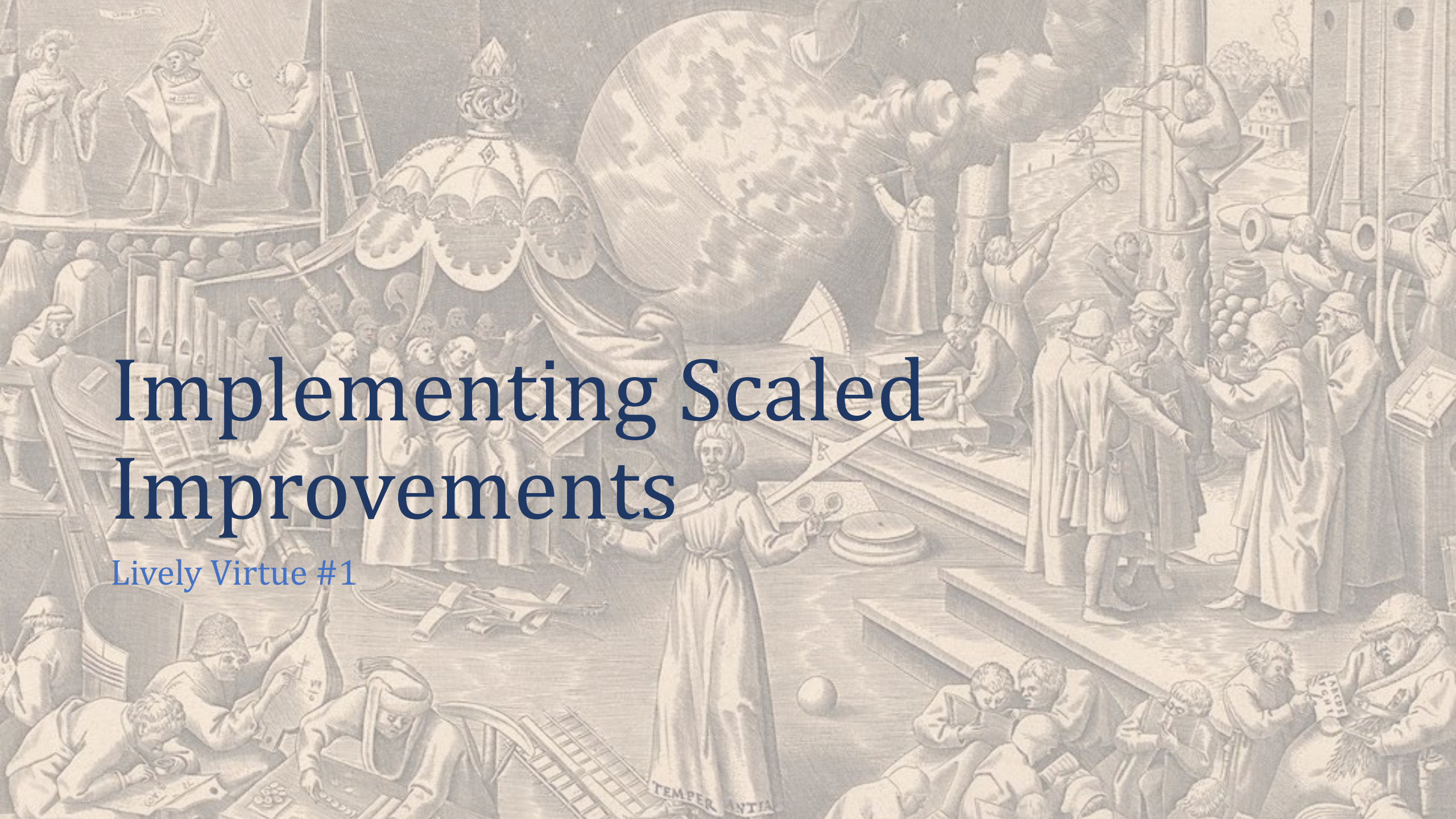
Implementing Scaled Improvements

Lively Virtue #1

Scaled Improvement: Workforce Resource Center

The consortium in northern Santa Barbara County jointly opened a one-stop center to provide guidance on educational and job opportunities:

- **Multiple partners** including Allan Hancock Community Education, Santa Barbara County WIB, the Employment Development Department, and Santa Barbara County Department of Social Services

- Individuals receive **a range of services**, including finding a job, identifying career goals and pathways, creating resumes, building interview skills, receiving unemployment benefits, and accessing training

- **10,000** people were served between fall 2014-fall 2016

http://aebgpracticeswithpromise.com/showcase_story.asp?id=1086

Hiding Behind Regulations

Deadly Sin #2

Hiding Behind Regulations

- Whenever someone says it's not allowed under various regulations, we often let the conversation stop, rather than **investigating what the rules really are**

- We treat regulations as immutable, rather than working to **fix the rules** that are getting in our students' way

Ask yourself:

Which of these rules are based in institutional policy and so could be changed in the near-term? How could the AEBG leadership be alerted to statewide rules that are problematic?

Changing the Rules

Lively Virtue #2

Changing the Rules: Skyline College

- In 2013, the college adopted a comprehensive **diversity framework**

- The framework empowered leaders to **examine** policies, practices, and procedures

- Leadership is now committed to examining current assumptions, with a refrain of **"We make this stuff up!"**

http://www.careerladdersproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Strengthening-Student-Success-2016_-Skyline-College-Promise-Redesign.pdf

Changing the Rules: Skyline College

The college has made changes to internal policies, including:

- Adjusting **hiring process** to incorporate a lens toward diversity, equity, and inclusion

- Creating **standards** of excellence for college leaders that are linked to college outcomes

- Developing **cross-functional teams** to support reform efforts

This structure has enabled the college to move forward on multiple fronts including guided pathways, dual enrollment, a promise program, and improved academic supports.

Blaming Teachers and Counselors

Deadly Sin #3

Blaming Teachers and Counselors

- We often point the finger at people who work with students most closely, even though they may **have not been engaged** in how educational institutions desire to change their practices

- Rather than approaching professional development as a critical component of achieving our institutional goals, training and coaching resources are generally **minimal and uncoordinated**

Ask yourself:

How can we build the engagement and skills of those who will be implementing educational reform policies, so they can be successful?

Investing in Professional Development

Lively Virtue #3

Investing in Professional Development: Valencia College

- Faculty led a process the identified essential competencies for educators, which are integrated into the **onboarding and tenure** process

- All new faculty, **including adjuncts**, create a learning plan and take 50 hours of professional development to build core skills, including conducting classroom action research

- Experienced faculty review research projects, to help support **ongoing learning**

Investing in Professional Development: Valencia College

Valencia College won the 2011 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, based on outstanding students outcomes.

Serving an annual headcount of 50,000, of which 70% began in basic skills and 46% are black or Latinx:

- **52%** of full-time, first-time students complete or transfer within three years (compared to a national rate of 40%)

- **46%** of underrepresented minority students complete or transfer (compared to a national rate of 34%)

Blaming Our Partners and Our Students

Deadly Sin #4

Blaming Our Partners

- Colleges may blame adult schools for sending us under-prepared students when recent cross-walking activities shows the bigger issue is **curriculum alignment**

- Because colleges may perceive adult education and noncredit programs as being less rigorous, students may be **forced to repeat courses**

Ask yourself:

How can we map pathways into credit college coursework so that we create opportunities for higher educational attainment?

Strengthening Partnerships

Lively Virtue #4

Strengthening Partnerships: Education to Career Network

The North San Diego Consortium joined together to analyze similarities and gaps in curriculum between adult schools and Palomar College, by:

- **Convening 40 faculty** to examine courses and, using a template, document alignment

- **Documenting alignment** to ensure that students don't have to retake courses and show various pathways within the broader consortium

- **Creating articulation agreements** for 28 courses

- **Examining outcomes** by comparing test scores and grades, collecting student and educator feedback, and tracking longer-term student outcomes

Allowing a Vocal Minority to Prevail

Deadly Sin #5

Allowing a Vocal Minority to Prevail

- When departments like math or English become the sole arbiters of the types of literacy and numeracy skills that students need, we may end up **offering the wrong classes** (what happened to geometry?)

- Because some practitioners are uncomfortable talking about money, we don't address the fact that our students are **seeking careers and living wages**—an issue made all the more urgent because our students are often living in poverty

Ask yourself:

How can we change the conversation to address the issues that are the highest priority to our students without eliminating opportunities for a degree?

Holding Everyone Accountable for Student Success

Lively Virtue #5

Holding Everyone Accountable:

Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District & South Texas College

In 2007, the K-12 district and community college joined together to make students ready for, connected to, and able to complete college.

- The superintendent identified leaders of college-going efforts at the school sites and gave them **larger roles** within the initiative
- To motivate principals, the district created **specific goals** and encouraged collaboration across sites to meet these goals
- Teachers were **trained** in a framework that was embedded into the curriculum and expectations were established for teaching quality in these areas, **reinforced** through peer observation
- Data **indicators** for college-readiness have been established at each grade level, which are used to **guide** school and college activities

Holding Everyone Accountable:
Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District & South Texas College

In a district that serves 32,000 low-income and primarily Hispanic students across 42 schools in three cities, within five years:

- The four-year graduation rate increased from 62% to **90%**
- The dropout rate declined from 18% to **3%**

http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/publications/materials/Sharing-Responsibility-for-College-Success-120114.pdf

Arguing over Data Definitions

Deadly Sin #6

Arguing Over Data Definitions

- It's important to understand methodology, but focusing on **edge cases** can prevent any meaningful engagement of the overall numbers.

- It's unlikely that we will have complete and perfect data sets, so we need to decide what a **reasonable threshold** for information is so that we can engage in conversation about the implications of available data.

Ask yourself:

How can we help our colleagues feel more comfortable with data, so that the conversation can also involve possible action steps?

Facing the Truth

Lively Virtue #6

Facing the Truth: Cabrillo College

- CTE Outcomes Survey revealed that only 22% of students in the medical assistant program got a job in their field of study

- Shared the data with area employers and learned that students needed stronger math and language skills—critical feedback that **had not been surfaced in advisory committee meetings**

- Revamped the program based on other allied health programs with **stronger outcomes**, including integrating contextualized math and English and implementing a cohort model, and results improved significantly
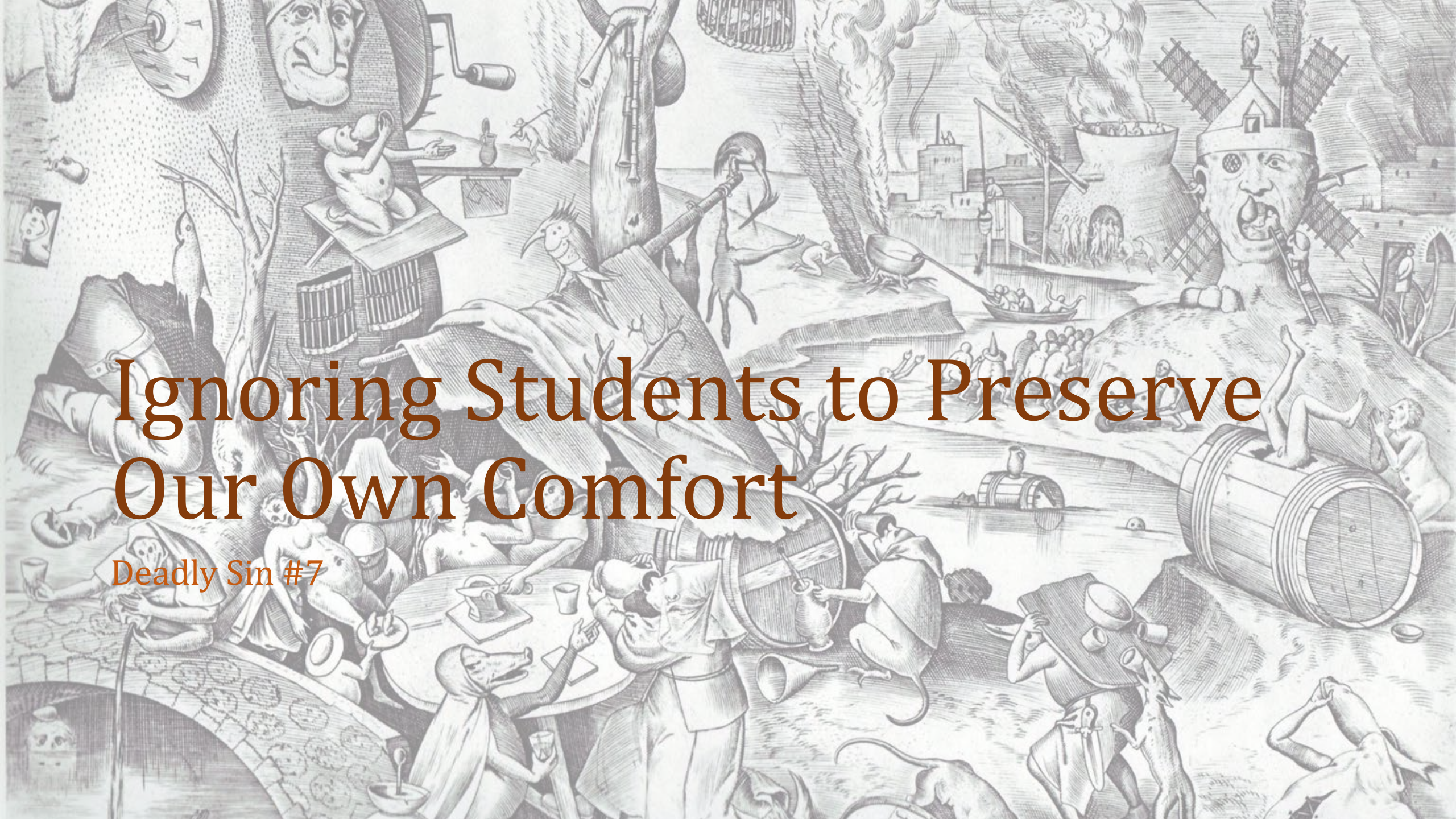
Ignoring Students to Preserve Our Own Comfort

Deadly Sin #7

Ignoring Students to Preserve Our Own Comfort

- Many of the changes necessary to improve students outcomes will require **giving things up and shifting what each of us does** within the institution

- Giving things up can be painful and uncomfortable, but it can also be freeing and bring us in **alignment with why we chose to work** at community colleges

- Most of these issues are **grounded in race** and deep divides in opportunity—we have to take these issues head on

Ask yourself:
What will this change in practice mean for our students, not just for ourselves?

Building Programs Around Student Needs

Lively Virtue #7

Building Programs Around Student Needs: Mendocino Consortium

- Historically, the Mendocino Lake Adult & Career Education consortium and Mendocino College **competed for students**

- Providers met in program-specific summits to identify **collaboration opportunities**

- ESL focused on **lack of services in rural regions**, choosing to align curriculum, purchase books and materials, and offer a noncredit college course at Anderson Valley Adult School

- Educators **leveraged** AEBG, SSSP, Basic Skills, and college apportionment funding, and tapped the expertise of both adult school and college staff to advise students on college enrollment

- The model is being **replicated** for HiSET courses at Ukiah Adult School

Building a Reform-Oriented Culture

What is one thing that you would be willing to change?

What have you already risked to do the right thing?

Who are your allies in making change?