LEARNER

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EDUCATION

ACHIEVE

SUCCESS

NONTRADITIONAL

ADULT

HIGHER

FAMILY

IMAGINE

Featuring
A Nontrad Story:
Shannon Brumfield

"Restructuring Higher Education for the Future: Transforming the Traditional College into the Non-Traditional College" - A Look Back on ANSTHE 2019

THE ASSOCIATION FOR NONTRADITIONAL STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION (ANTSHE)

From the President

Dear members and friends of ANTSHE,

What a wonderful experience and opportunity that I was afforded to meet so many talented and highly motivated nontraditional students as well as faculty, administrators, and support staff from across the globe that share one common goal, provide the opportunity and path to successful educational attainment for adults that desire and/or need a college degree. Our cover story for this edition of The NonTrad, "Restructuring Higher Education for the Future, Transforming Traditional Colleges into Non-Traditional College", is a shining example of how the realm of higher education has changed and continues to change since the inception of ANTSHE over 22 years ago. This issue addresses many fascinating topics such as: success strategies for the non-traditional student, establishing connections between the classroom and a career, PTSD and the non-traditional student, state initiatives to bring back adults who stepped off their academic path and so much more.

As ANTSHE prepares for our 23rd Annual ANTSHE Conference to be hosted at the Embassy Suites in downtown Indianapolis, Indiana, we are extremely excited with the sessions that are already scheduled and to hear from some very talented academic practitioners and researchers in the country. The release of this issue of The NonTrad, is founded on the premise of our last conference theme of "Restructuring Higher Education for the Future, Transforming Traditional Colleges into Non-Traditional College". Yet our biggest accomplishment is you, the reader of The NonTrad, the visitors to our website, and attendees/participants at our conferences, because you appreciate the value of higher education for all, not just one segment of our society.

I am very proud of this latest issue and sincerely hope that you will continue to partner with ANTSHE, whether you are a faculty member, administrator, or learner, as we are entering a very exciting time for ANTSHE. Not only are we providing academic assistance, support, and financial opportunities with scholarship, but we are not only stating the issues facing higher education and the adult learner, but we are beginning to pose potential solutions to these challenges. If you are familiar with ANTSHE, come experience the growth of the organization and share in the new directions that we are going in. If you are not familiar with ANTSHE, this is a great time to experience for yourself what ANTSHE can do for your institution, your nontraditional students, and yourself. Please visit our website at www.myantshe.org, or please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I look forward to seeing you in beautiful Indianapolis in April!

Scholarships & Awards

Scholarships
ANTSHE seeks to promote leadership and campus involvement, academic and personal success, and community engagement by offering scholarships to its student members. Candidates will have contributed to the enrichment of their college and/or local community and demonstrate their continued contribution to their college and community. An active ANTSHE membership is required for the scholarship applicants. ANTSHE will be awarding more academic scholarships than ever this year and in the years to come. Current scholarships:

    -Founder's Scholarship for Graduate Students
    -Kazimour Scholarships for Undergraduate Students
    -The President's Scholarship
    -The ANTSHE Board of Directors Scholarship

Awards
ANTSHE recognizes outstanding student members, academic professionals, professors, and student organizations with the "President's Award", "Brick Award", "National Treasure Award", "Annual Student Recognition Award". Visit www.myantshe.org for more information on ANTSHE Awards.

Being a successful nontraditional student can be a daunting task at times. Learning to balance school, family, work, and personal life is reminiscent of a circus juggler. During my career as a nontraditional student, I have adopted some key skills. They are strength, perseverance, mentors, time-management, and goal setting. They are skills that are a must for not just the nontraditional student but success in general. My current adventure began in 2017. After fourteen years of marriage, my divorce was final in 2018. Throughout my marriage, I lost my self-respect, self-confidence, but most of all, I lost who I was. Out of spite and necessity, I returned to school to finish my degree. In June of 2019, I finished my bachelor's, and the following July, I began my executive MBA.

Overview

The Nontrad Journal® publishes original contributions related to the academic and professional programs and services that aide and support nontraditional student success. The Nontrad Journal's target audience includes leaders in higher education, academic professionals, faculty, administrators, as well as nontraditional students in higher education.

The Nontrad Journal encourages submissions regarding trends in higher education that have a direct impact on nontraditional students, evaluation of programs that support nontraditional students, studies of model programs, and investigations of effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of programs conducted in "real world" settings, as well as, descriptive studies of "cutting edge" programs, especially those informed by the lived experience of the nontraditional student, are also welcome.

Topics within the purview of The Nontrad Journal include:

• Stressful events in adulthood that influence degree non-completion of the adult student.
• The role of quality assurance for non-traditional student learning.
• Curriculum and syllabi development to include accomodating mental health and learning disorders.
• Learn how decisions are really made.
• Learn what it takes to support reentry college women.
• Extended campuses and blended learning methods that connect across campuses.
• Business employers' perceptions of the quality of for-profit higher education.
• Thoughtful approaches to increase mattering in non-traditional students.
• Faculty support: facilitating social cohesion and student retention in adult learners.

Journal overview: All articles submitted to this journal are peer-reviewed. ANTSHE has a single blind peer-review process in which the reviewers know who the authors of the manuscript are, but the authors do not have access to the information on who the peer reviewers are.

This journal is devoted to research articles of the highest quality in all areas of higher education as they pertain to the nontraditional student.

Submission information: Information can be found on the journal's information page at http://www.myantshe.org/publications

Digitized archive: ANTSHE maintains a digital archive of the back issues of The Nontrad Journal. Most back issues are freely available electronically with fully searchable content with an ANTSHE membership.

Any inquiries concerning a paper that has been accepted for publication should be sent by email:
Lori Viar, Communications Officer,
communications@antsheboardofdirectors.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

-ANTSHE helps nontrads gain recognition on their campus.
-Provides academic support through our resource center.
-Works with groups and clubs to gain funding from student government associations.
-Mentors nontraditional students to be able to achieve academic goals.

Become an ANTSHE Member

A community of nontraditional students, academic professionals, and administrators, working together to build a support network for nontraditional students, addressing important academic issues, and focusing on trends that will help nontrads tackle the every day challenges they face in their educational journey.

Join. Connect. Learn

Individual Membership

An Individual Membership at ANTSHE is perfect for the nontraditional student or professional who wants to be a part of a community of other nontrads and academic professionals with varying degrees and professions. This membership provides nontrads and academic professionals with the following benefits:

•Access to exclusive web resources •Discounted conference fees •Eligibility for scholarships and awards •Free webinars •Professional development opportunities, with preferences for speaking at ANTSHE Conferences •Publishing opportunities •Mentorship with academic professionals from various fields of academia •Research guidance •Access to ANTSHE's newsletter, eNews, the annual publication, The Nontrad Journal, and much more.

Institutional Membership

ANTSHE institutional members join many other prestigious colleges and universities in support of nontraditional students, adult learner programs and research that are a vital component of higher education. As an Institutional Member of ANTSHE you will benefit from:

•Three academic professional memberships ($225 value).
•ANTSHE notifications and publications to include: The Nontrad Journal, ANTSHE's annual publication containing articles, research, white papers, and everything pertaining to nontraditional students, and, the ANTSHE inquirer quarterly newsletter, and access to ANTSHE's eNews page featuring topics that pertain to adult students.
•Website access to shared organizational documents such as the By-Laws, Member Voting Privileges for both professionals and students.
•Conference Registration Discounts ($50-$100 savings per registrant)
•ANTSHE Website recognition
•Up to 250 student memberships (students must be members of a recognized non-traditional student campus organization) and most importantly...
•Student members are eligible for all ANTSHE Scholarships!
•Opportunities to Publish in the Nontrad Journal
•Institutional members quality for ANTSHE awards
•ANTSHE Mentoring Program that provides assistance to institutions and ANTSHE members on different levels, discussing anything from interests, job applications/resume writing, grant applications, research, etc.
•FREE webinars pertaining to nontraditional students, higher education, and more.
•Eligibility to run for ANTSHE Board
•Opportunity for academic professionals at your college/university to be recognized nationally for their work in adult learner programs, or in any academic role that contributes to the success of nontraditional students, through ANTSHE's Awards Program.
•Special preference given for speaking at ANTSHE Conferences.

www.myantshe.org/membership

Student Spotlight
ANGELA LAHR

Lean Six Sigma Student Spotlight: Angela Lahr
Healthcare Executive Embraces Lean Six Sigma to Improve Effectiveness and Efficiency

RAs the health industry continues to grow, people like Angela Lahr play an increasingly vital role. As the Associate Vice President of Clinical Operations at Evangelical Community Hospital in Lewisburg, Pa., she oversees a large number of departments, and focuses on running them as effectively and efficiently as possible.

In 2019, Lahr completed Villanova University's Certificate in Lean Six Sigma program and passed her Lean Six Sigma Black Belt exam to become a Certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt professional. Her journey through the program provides insight into how earning a Lean Six Sigma certificate or certification can help elevate a leader's skills.

"Go big or go home," Lahr said of her decision to pursue her Black Belt certification. "I wanted to be able to lead improvement initiatives and help teach and guide teams to continue to improve on their own."

A Long History in Healthcare
Lahr's responsibilities at Evangelical Community Hospital include overseeing Cardiopulmonary Services, Cardiovascular Services, Imaging, Laboratory, Pharmacy, Rehabilitative Services, and The Heart and Vascular Center.

Lahr has worked at the Hospital for 30 years. She started her career as a Phlebotomist as she attended school to become a Medical Technologist (MT). She then moved into administrative roles, starting as Assistant Director of Laboratory Services, then moving up to Administrative Director of Laboratory Services before attaining her current job.

She first heard of Lean while working as an MT. She received training in the basics of the methodology, and found that, "the principles simply made sense to me, and I quickly began to embark on quality improvement initiatives by applying Lean principles."

Lahr soon decided she wanted to build on her basic understanding of Lean and Six Sigma and decided to research Lean Six Sigma training programs. "I wanted a certificate to support my belief in both methodologies as a means to make efficiency and quality improvements in healthcare," she said.

Lahr, a veteran of the Navy, said that Villanova's commitment to military members and veterans were deciding factors in her decision to enroll.

Below, Lahr talks about her career, Lean Six Sigma's application in healthcare, and her experience in Villanova's Lean Six Sigma program.

What was your favorite class and why?
My favorite class was Lean Six Sigma Black Belt. It was intense, but very engaging. It pulled all the concepts together and I felt well prepared to take the [Black Belt certification] exam.

What surprised you most about taking Villanova's program?
The intensity of the program surprised me but was very fulfilling. I have taken other online programs from other universities and Villanova's classes are challenging, but very organized. All the information you need is in the curriculum.

What was your most valuable takeaway from the Lean Six Sigma program?
The importance of being able to lead a team and teach concepts is essential to a Black Belt.

Can you describe some ways Lean Six Sigma is applicable in healthcare?
The opportunities are endless. Currently, [at Evangelical Community Hospital] we are engaged in restructuring the supply chain process from order entry to delivery to the nursing units. This restructure is employing Kanban, 5S and other Lean principles to reduce floor stock and level the workload for the storeroom staff.

How do you apply Lean Six Sigma in your role at Evangelical Community Hospital?
Much of our Lean Six Sigma wins are in the moment – small changes that have a profound effect on the end product. For example, we are in the process of building new nursing units. Having a solid understanding of Lean Six Sigma principles guides decision-making throughout the design process. Spaces are designed to facilitate a Lean environment.

Do you have a favorite Lean Six Sigma tool or concept
The 5S tool is my favorite. 5S seems to be the tool that has the ability to reduce the stress in your day. When you do not waste time looking for key tools to perform your job, frustration is minimized, and the day seems to go smoother.

(The 5S tool refers to sort, set in order, shine, standardize and sustain, and is a methodology that seeks to create a workplace that is clean, uncluttered and well-organized with reduced waste and optimized productivity).

What is one fun fact about you?
I will not hesitate to 'Lean Out' anything, even the simple stuff. There was an employee appreciation event at the hospital that included free ice cream for the employees. I was helping serve when I noticed we were tripping over and bumping into each other. I called for a pause, reorganized the ice cream and supplies, then we resumed serving in a one-piece continuous flow process. Sometimes it is just the simple things.

How is your employer benefitting from the skills you've learned?
I frequently am asked to look at processes outside my areas and offer advice. From within my areas, I work with the Directors to identify processes that have opportunity for improvement. I then guide them along by offering "just-in-time" education on specific Lean principles. When needed I apply the Six Sigma principles to the data we collect to analyze their improvement efforts.

Complete 2 Compete Year One: Implementation and Successes of an Adult Degree Completion Initiative

By Drs. Millard J. Bingham, Carlos Wilson, and Gloria Smith

A New Start. Approximately 31 million Americans have completed some college credit without earning a degree or credential. Almost 300,000 Mississippians who attended a public university or community college within the past 15 years have completed some college courses without earning a degree (mississippi.edu/ihl). Complete 2 Compete (C2C) is an initiative being done in conjunction with all of the public universities in Mississippi. There is a need to increase the educational attainment of citizens throughout our nation. We in higher education do a great job at creating barriers to degree attainment. In order to address some of these barriers, the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), and the Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB) partnered to identify target groups, implement adult learner services and re-engage adult students to help them complete their degrees. Complete 2 Compete is an initiative that is beginning the work of removing as many barriers as possible.

"Helping former students complete their degrees gives them the opportunity to compete more successfully in today's job market," said Dr. Glenn Boyce, Commissioner of Higher Education. "Current workforce studies have shown that most post-recession jobs are going to those with a postsecondary degree or credential of value beyond high school. I cannot think of anything more worthwhile than partnering with the community college system to help identify and reach out to adult students. This initiative can have life-changing results for many Mississippians" (Ulmer, 2016).

"Numerous studies show a correlation between the level of education attainment and lifetime earnings, health, and economic vitality," said Dr. Andrea Mayfield, Executive Director, and Mississippi Community College Board. "Employment opportunities and wages increase as level of education/training increases. An educated, well trained workforce leads to increasing employment rates, and a better quality of life for people. Working people earning sustainable wages have the means to improve the economy through local spending and tax revenues. Business and industry efficiency and productivity levels increase, which also drive local and state revenues. Education and training is the catalyst for employment, increased earnings, successful business, a thriving economy and a strong State budget. Education and training attainment is the key to quality of life" (Ulmer, 2016).

The initiative started officially in August of 2017 with the launch of the Complete 2 Compete website and tracking database. For the initial effort, Mississippians who attended a public university or community colleges within the past 15 years were identified: (1) more than 32,000 former students age 21 or over may have enough credits to earn a postsecondary degree with no additional coursework and (2) more than 127,000 former students can earn either an associate or bachelor's degree with some additional coursework (Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, 2017). These potential students were invited to apply to the program through a targeted marketing campaign which contacted students through direct mail and emails containing a personal URL. The general population was also allowed to apply for the program through the msc2c.org website.

Through the marketing efforts, the state as a whole enjoyed an overwhelming response in the form of C2C applications. If applicants meet the minimum requirements for eligibility, a personal C2C coach guides the applicant through the quickest pathway to a degree. The coach is responsible for making contact with applicants, reviewing transcripts, helping the student select the best program or determining if the student has met degree requirements with no additional coursework and assisting with the C2C financial assistance applications. Students are able to readmit into previously attended degree programs across the university, the nontraditional student friendly Bachelor of Science in Professional Interdisciplinary Studies Program, or the Bachelor of University Studies, an adult degree completion program designed specifically for Complete 2 Compete participants.

Through the efforts of the state office and individual institutions' C2C coaches, students have begun to return to the state's community colleges and four-year institutions to "Complete" their degrees. There have been more than 33,800 website hits since the launch in August of 2017. To date, 728 students have re-enrolled in degree programs and more than 1,173 participants have earned their associates or bachelor's degrees (Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, 2017).

The Need for Adult-Serving Programs. Nontraditional students or adult learners are the new majority in the classroom of higher education (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2016b). This population accounts for more than 71% of students enrolled in all of higher education ("Characteristics," 2017; Sheehy, 2013). In 2013, 12 million nontraditional students were enrolled in higher education, and it is projected to rise 14% to 14 million students by 2024 (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2016a). By 2019, college entry by "adult learners" is expected to increase up to 28% (Markle, 2015).

In the for-profit sector alone, nontraditional students account for an average of 78% of those enrolled (Arbeit & Horn, 2017). As of 2014, 1.3 million students were enrolled in for-profit schools, an increase from 200,000 students in 1990 (NCES, 2016b), and an increase of 217% from 2000 to 2014. Enrollment growths of adult learners in the public and private nonprofit institutions are projected at 26% and 25%, respectively (NCES, 2016b).

Who are the adult learners or nontraditional students walking the campuses of various colleges and universities? The definition of nontraditional students or adult learners varies among scholars and institutions. The National Center for Education Statistics (2015), defines a nontraditional students as individuals meeting one or more of the following characteristics: delayed entry into higher education for one or more years, attends college part-time, is employed full-time, has dependent(s), is financially independent, is a single parent, or does not have a high school diploma. Students who are age 25 and older, commuters, transfer students, veterans, and military-related service personnel typically fall into the nontraditional category as well.

Horn (1996) defines "nontraditional" on a continuum based on the number of these characteristics present. Students are considered to be "minimally nontraditional" if they have only one characteristic, "moderately nontraditional" if they have two or three, and "highly nontraditional" if they have four or more. As a whole, nontraditional students are predominantly women who belong to a racial-ethnic minority group and have less educated parents than traditional students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). Other scholars define adult learners or nontraditional students as individuals who are at least 25 years old, attend school part-time, work full-time, a veteran, have children, have major responsibilities and roles that compete with their studies (e.g., parenting, caregiving, and community involvement), wait at least one year after high school before entering college, have a GED instead of a high school diploma, first-generation student (FGS), enroll in non-degree programs, or have reentered a college program (NODA, 2017; Ross-Gordon, 2011). No matter what characteristics are used to describe nontraditional students or adult learners, they are returning to school primarily for career-related reasons while having other major responsibilities and roles (Panacci, 2015).

Nontraditional Students Returning to School. A study conducted by the Lumina Foundation entitled "Returning to Learning" states that "adults' success in college is key to the future of America. The report analysis indicated, without new efforts to educate the 54 million Americans who do not hold degrees, the United States will continue to fall behind other nations" (Thomas, 2012, p.1).

The enrollment of adult students at colleges and universities is increasing because adults are concerned about their careers, the needs of their family, and they want to gain knowledge for self-improvement (Bauman, S.S. M., Wanlg, N., DeLeon, C.W., Kafentzis, J., Zavala-Lopez, M., & Lindsey, M.S., 2004). Reevaluation of life goals (Justice & Dornan, 2001) and increased opportunities for advanced education (Haggan, 2000) also contribute to the increase in adult learners at institutions of higher learning. Redd (2007) predicted that this trend will continue, and a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education (NCES, 2009) projected an increase of 19% in enrollment of adult learners 25 and over. A study conducted by the Lumina Foundation (Lumina, 2009) revealed additional factors contributing to the increase in the enrollment of adult learners, such as (a) the need to earn a degree to advance in their current job (42.%); (b) the need to support a family, including single parenthood (21.0%); (c) the need to develop marketable skills to earn more money (11.3%); (d) the need for a midlife career change (10.9%); and (e) a change in family status (9.6%). Other factors included the development of critical thinking skills and personal enhancement.

Aslanian (2001) reported that the number of 18 to 24¬year-old students increased by just 41% between 1970 and 2000, whereas the number of adult learners 25 years and older increased by 170%. These adult learners are overflowing colleges and universities in order to (a) learn a new trade or profession, (b) remediate basic skills, (c) master computer operations, or (d) gain new knowledge (Osgood-Treston, 2001). Osgood-Treston (2001) related that a large number of adults are returning to higher education because institutions are reaching out to them by offering attractive programs designed specifically for adult students. The number of nontraditional students at institutions of higher education will continue to increase, in contrast to the number of traditional full-time students (Choy, 2002).

Barriers and Issues Faced by Nontraditional Students. Nontraditional students or adult learners attending school for the very first time face different barriers and issues as compared to traditional students because they are older and typically balancing jobs, families, and school (Bidwell, 2014). Time management is a major barrier for adult learners as they struggle to find a balance between maintaining their family and financial obligations while still performing well in school (Ross-Gordon, 2011). The Lumina Foundation found family and work responsibilities the two highest-rated barriers for adult learners to return to the classroom (Erisman & Steele, 2012). Other barriers faced by adult students include child care, finances, health issues, and transportation (Erisman & Steele, 2012). Work and family commitments are other challenges. Many nontraditional students generally work part-time or full-time to pay their expenses, others manage households and are parents or caregivers to siblings and relatives, and they may also have other constraints due to personal responsibilities or health problems. Overall, nontraditional students are much more likely to maintain employment responsibilities and/or have family obligations while enrolled (Ross-Gordon, 2011).

Because nontraditional students are older, most of them struggle with transitioning back into the classroom, have problems with skills like note taking, test taking, reading textbooks, time management, and teacher expectations (Higgins, 2010; Ross-Gordon, 2011). Many of them lack foundational writing and math skills that they would need for the duration of their programs (Erisman & Steele, 2012).

Situational barriers can be especially challenging for low-income nontraditional students because they often receive inadequate K-12 education college preparation. Colleges and universities often require remediation courses for such students to bring their skills up to a college-functional level. However, extra college courses cost money and create an added burden on students' time, which may discourage nontraditional students to persist with their education (Kezar, Walpole & Perna, 2015). Also, technology can be intimidating to many nontraditional students, especially if they do not use technology in their daily lives (Bell, 2012; Regier, 2014). Many adult learners are not familiar with technology which is now a required tool in academia. Research has shown that veterans and mature learners frequently need additional technology training in order to be successful in college (Ellis, 2013).

According to a study conducted by the Lumina Foundation, more than half of the students surveyed stated that fear kept them from even trying to return to school (Erisman & Steele, 2012). Once classes have started, many experience various anxieties related to the classroom like attending classes with younger students, guilt over missing events in their family's lives, selfishness, and low self-esteem (Erisman & Steele, 2012; Perna, 2016). Many felt misunderstood at home because relatives did not understand why they were going to school. Many felt that they were not

supported by family members (Perna, 2016).

Dispositional barriers such as fear about having inadequate learning abilities, anxiety over fitting in with younger students, low self-esteem, embarrassment, difficulty adjusting to college, and fear of failure (Cross, 1981) are all barriers faced by nontraditional students. These barriers are the most problematic of all the barriers to learning. Cross (1981) suggests that this category is far more influential in student participation and success in school. Receiving emotional support and feeling welcomed by the campus community can make the difference on whether nontraditional students persist and attain their degree, or not.

Institutional barriers include inconvenient class times and office hours, inadequate career planning for adults, and a lack of opportunities for campus involvement that accommodate interests and needs of nontraditional students (Fairchild, 2003). These and other potential barriers have been used to suggest academic and social services that may benefit nontraditional students. In this research, several potential institutional barriers were investigated in relation to use of services.

Faculty and staff may create barriers to persistence for nontraditional students by not providing equal support to all students. Many nontraditional students feel that they are not supportive and welcomed by staff and faculty. Also, nontraditional students encounter faculty members who are unfamiliar with adult learning and development and teaching methods best suited for this population (Pelletier, 2010). Townsend and Delves (2009) explained that adult learners "who made connections with faculty and staff...had a richer educational experience and were more positive about their transition back to college" (p. 104).

Environmental factors such as finances, support from family members, childcare services, transportation needs, working full-time, transferring from a 2 to 4 year college are some of the biggest challenges faced by nontraditional students trying to complete a degree (Jeffreys, 2007; Bean & Metzner, 1985). Female adult learners with dependents find it very emotional because of the pressure of balancing work, family responsibilities, and other life circumstances while attending school. On the contrary, nontraditional female students report higher levels of life satisfaction than traditional students. (Carney-Compton & Tan, 2002).

Adult Degree Completion Programs. Adult Degree Completion Programs (ADCPs) are becoming increasingly relevant in higher education and growing at a rapid pace across the nation (Taylor, 2000). The adult degree completion programs are designed to prepare adults for the workforce, encourage personal and professional growth, assist in coping with problems and issues faced by adults, assist companies and organizations in adapting to change, and provide opportunities to examine community and societal issues (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). Also, adult degree completion programs are designed to assist adult learners complete their program of study as soon as possible by offering alternative class schedules, shortening the traditional semesters, organizing student cohorts, and accepting credit for prior learning experiences (Task Force, 2000). Common characteristics of adult degree programs include: distance (online) options, evening course options, weekend course options, test-out (CLEP and DSST) options, and college credit for prior learning in the workplace.

The U.S. Census Bureau (2008) reported that 53.8% of men and 61.1% of women between 25 and 29 years old have some college but no degree. Because of the large number of adults with some college and no degree, many institutions are developing and implementing adult degree completion programs to meet the needs of adult learners returning to college. It is estimated that 25% of adult students will be enrolled in accelerated degree-completion programs within the next twenty years (Wlodkowski, 2002).

Many adult degree completion programs acknowledge and award college credits for military training, workplace experiential learning, certifications, licenses, and other experiential learning through a Prior Learning Assessment portfolio credit. These portfolio-based credits have been empirically shown to accelerate pace to degree and improve percentage of graduation of those adult learners that engage in and receive credits for prior learning (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, 2011). The curricula of many adult degree completion programs strive to develop intrapersonal (self-concept) and interpersonal (relationship) dimensions of a student. The introductions of these innovative programs tailor a unique approach to working adults that want to finish a baccalaureate degree.

Who Can Participate in Complete 2 Compete? In order to participate in the Complete 2 Compete program, students must meet several minimum requirements (Bullock, Prestwood, and Kimble, 2017). Because this program is designed with the goal of helping students complete, students entering bachelor programs must:

•have previously completed at least 12 hours of college level coursework from an accredited institution;
•be at least 21 years of age before entering into the program;
•have been out of college for at least 24 consecutive months prior to starting the program, and
•have not completed a post-secondary degree.

Individuals who have earned an associate's degree may still participate only if they have earned more than 90 hours which qualifies the student for the Bachelor of University Studies Program. However, these individuals may not receive the C2C grant. Residents of the state of Mississippi who meet the minimum requirements are eligible to apply for tuition assistance grants whether they attended an in-state, out-of-state, public, or private institution before applying to the Complete 2 Compete program. Interested individuals who live out-of-state and attended one of the state funded institutions of Mississippi may participate in the program, but are not eligible for the tuition assistance grant (Bullock, Prestwood, and Kimble, 2017). As stated earlier, participants who have earned more than 90 hours are eligible, but not required, to seek the Bachelor of University Studies degree, Those who have met the minimum requirements and have completed less than 90 semester hours are allowed to select any of the other available degree programs on campus.

Benefits of the C2C Program. It is not difficult to find benefits of earning a college degree: qualification for more employment opportunities, increased potential salary throughout career, access to graduate degree programs, or just a sense of self accomplishment. The avenue to earning those degrees is not always as simple, especially for adult and nontraditional students. According to Wilson and Smith (2018):

This study has revealed that these students, most of whom often attend school part-time, are a part of an increasingly changing demographic in American education, and those numbers are expected to increase. In order to serve this population, the necessary support services must be in place. Supporting a nontraditional student leads to his or her successful matriculation in a higher level degree-seeking program. The success of these nontraditional students is important for their communities, families, and even to the health of the nation (Lumina, 2007). This study has provided the factors that influence participation in education by nontraditional students. Some of these factors are career development, finances, distance, and time. (p. 45).

The benefits of the C2C program provide several levels of support to those students who are interested in returning to school after stopping out. Major benefits of the initiative include but are not limited to re-engagement to post-secondary institutions, a C2C coach/advisor, educational grants, flexible degree options, credit for prior learning, and grade forgiveness (Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, 2017).

The Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning and the Mississippi Community College Board partnered in collecting and providing a data set of students who had attended the state funded post-secondary institutions in Mississippi. This data included 15 years of students who attended but stopped out before earning degrees (Bullock, Prestwood, and Kimble, 2017). The Complete 2 Compete program launched by reaching out to these students using targeted marketing in an effort to re-engage the student with previously attended institutions. As students were contacted, there were four main target groups:

1.Reverse Transfer Associate degree - students who may be able to graduate with an associate degree needing no additional coursework.

2.Bachelor's degree with no additional coursework - students who may have enough credits to satisfy baccalaureate degree requirements without having to take additional hours.

3.Associate degree with some additional coursework - students needing to enroll in additional courses to complete their associate degree.

4.Bachelor's degree with some additional coursework - students needing to enroll in additional courses to complete their bachelor's degree.

Marketing for the first two target groups started with mailers containing a pURL (personalized URL) that allowed students to apply for the program through their own personalized website (Bullock, Prestwood, and Kimble, 2017). Re-engagement was also supported by multiple layers of radio and television commercials, mailers, emails, and the launch of the Complete 2 Compete website.

When students apply to the C2C program their information is populated into a Complete 2 Complete coach's dashboard and initial contact and/or appointment is made. A Complete 2 Compete Coach is a person(s) selected by each institution to act as a guide for students through the processes required for degree attainment. At Jackson State University, these processes include deciding eligibility, evaluating previous credits for status of degree attainment, connecting students with proper offices at the institution, advising and enrolling students, submission of applications for the C2C Grant, and tracking the students' progress in the C2C dashboard. The C2C coach requests transcripts from all previously attended institutions to determine eligibility and how close a student may be to earning their degree. Once it has been decided that eligibility requirements have been met, student provides information on degree program in which they are interested. The coach may evaluate all of the student's previous credits by applying them to the adult degree completion program or work with student's original department or other degree program advisors to request an evaluation. The coach also determines whether to move student forward or if the student should seek a degree at a partner institution where the 30 hour institutional residency requirement has possibly been met. Coaches may refer students to one of the other state institutions through the dashboard system allowing the coach from that institution to take the lead on the student's path to degree attainment. Once completed, the transcript evaluation(s) is shared with the student, and the quickest path to degree is decided upon by student and coach. For bachelor degree evaluations, students fall into two categories: needs additional credits or no additional credits needed. Students who need additional credits are advised to apply for transfer admission or readmission to the University and enroll in courses needed. If no additional credit is needed, the students work with original department or University Studies advisor to begin graduation clearance process. The coach works closely with student and admissions to get the student admitted/readmitted and properly coded as a C2C student. In the coaches' dashboard, students are tracked at every step in the process including those who may be ineligible or who decline.

One of the barriers for students returning to schools is often financing one's education. Working with adult and nontraditional populations, we often find that students are no longer eligible for financial aid. The Complete 2 Compete program has secured a $3 million dollar grant that allows the program to assist students by offering a $500 grant to those that qualify (Bullock, Prestwood, and Kimble, 2017). The requirements are that the student is qualified for the C2C program, is a resident of Mississippi, has not earned a post-secondary degree, has fully completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and has fully completed Mississippi's State Financial Aid application. For students that have met these requirement, even not being eligible for state or federal financial aid, a $500 grant can be used to satisfy previous balances at state funded institutions in Mississippi or pay for books or tuition when the student enrolls. Initially the grant was a one-time award, however students are now allowed to apply each semester for the assistance.

A Degree for Nontraditional Students. Another of the benefits of participation in the Complete 2 Compete program is the availability of a flexible degree program. As students decided to reconnect to higher education in hopes of earning a post-secondary degree, IHL and the state's universities began work to make a degree more attainable. The Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning approved IHL Policy 521 in the fall of 2017 allowing for the development of a 120 hour adult degree completion program (Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2019). Jackson State University submitted a degree proposal for an adult degree completion program which was approved in January 2018 and the name was changed in June of 2018 for statewide uniformity to the Bachelor of University Studies. The Bachelor of University Studies is available to all students who have met all eligibility requirements of the C2C program and have earned at least 90 credit hours prior to applying to the program.

The benefit of such a program is that it allows the maximum use of a student's previous coursework. Working with adult students, it is often found that they have changed majors and even transferred schools multiple times. In these instances, students are returning to school with very varied academic backgrounds.

Providing an interdisciplinary program that allows for flexibility in coursework needed for degree completion may shorten the path to degree, therefore encouraging returning students that a degree is indeed attainable. The Bachelor of University Studies is 120 semester hours requiring the minimum of: 30 credit hours of General Education Core Curriculum (IHL Policy 512 Core Curriculum), 30 credit hours in residence at the awarding institution, and 30 hours of upper-level (300-400) coursework (Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2019). Students participating in the adult degree completion program are also allowed:

1. to transfer any college-level academic credit coursework, including courses in which the grade of "D" was earned, to satisfy degree requirements;

2. to participate in any grade forgiveness programs at the admitting institution; and

3. to earn up to 25% of degree requirements through Prior Learning Assessment or Competency-Based Education (Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2019).

To be more accommodating to adults who work full time, Jackson State University offers the Bachelor of University Studies in face-to-face, hybrid, and fully online delivery formats. Students can enjoy taking classes with their peers through day, evening, and weekend classes. They are allowed to take a mix of face-to-face and online courses, or students may choose the fully online track, offering the program entirely though the Canvas learning management system.

The Impact of C2C at Jackson State University. Since the launch of the Complete 2 Compete program in 2017, Jackson State University has received C2C applications from more than 2,600 potential completers. By the end of the spring 2019 semester, 1,066 had initiated some type of action: set up an appointment, had previous credit reviewed, requested previous schools' transcripts, been admitted, enrolled in classes, declined, or been considered ineligible. There were 59 students enrolled in classes in the spring of 2019: 42 students majoring in University Studies and 17 majoring in other degree programs. As of May 2019, 74 students have earned a bachelor's degree from Jackson State University as a result of participating in the Complete 2 Compete program. One of the amazing accomplishments of the program is that 26 of those

graduates needed no additional coursework.

Conclusion. The field of higher education must do a better job of serving our nontraditional students. Historically, we have designed systems to accommodate 18-21 year olds, but this demographic is no longer the norm in higher education. Adult learners returning to college need support systems in place that facilitate their successful matriculation. Colleges and universities are adjusting policies and procedures to accommodate adult learners, but the pace is agonizingly slow. Holistic systems must be put into place that remove barriers and deploy the necessary supports to foster nontraditional student success. The Complete 2 Compete program that has been implemented throughout the public colleges and universities in Mississippi has proven to be a successful method of aiding adult learner post-secondary degree attainment success.

"The Complete 2 Compete program could potentially award 200,000-plus Mississippians with college degrees, including 28,000 students who have enough credits to earn an associate's degree with no additional course work and more than 100,000 former students who can earn either an associate's or bachelor's degree with some additional course work" (Norwood, 2017). To date the C2C program has awarded 1,173 college degrees and the program has only been in existence for less than two years. Presently, 734 students are enrolled in C2C, so the degree attainment numbers will continue to grow (msc2c.org).

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Congratulations ANTSHE's 2019 Scholarship Winners!

For over 21 years, the Association for Non-Traditional Students in Higher Education has been awarding scholarships to motivated and committed non-traditional student members of the organization. In addition to the scholarships awarded March 2018 at the annual conference, ANTSHE has awarded over $100,000 in scholarships. The following Scholarship Winners were announced at the 21st Annual ANTSHE Conference in March.

President's Scholarship

The President's Scholarship is awarded to a graduate student that demonstrates need and achievement. ANTSHE Congratulates Jason Ponte, a student at Purdue University Global, the 2019 Winner of the President's Scholarship. Jason has contributed to the enrichment of his college and demonstrates his continued contribution to his college and community. Congratulations Jason and Thank You for your support of ANTSHE. Best of Luck with your educational journey!

Kazimour Scholarship for Undergraduates

The Kazimour Scholarships are awarded to non-traditional students who demonstrate strong academic achievement. Must be a non-traditional undergraduate student member of ANTSHE. Congratulations Rodney Farmer Edward, College of Osteopathic Medicine, Winner of the 2019 Kazimour Scholarship for Undergraduates. Thank you for your contribution to your college and for your support of ANTSHE!

Kazimour Scholarship for Graduates

The Kazimour Scholarships are awarded to non-traditional students who demonstrate strong academic achievement. Must be a non-traditional graduate student member of ANTSHE. ANTSHE Congratulates Tiffany McCloskey, NorthWest Arkansas Community College, Winner of the 2019 Kazimour Scholarship for Graduates. Thank you for your contribution to your college. Congratulations and Thank You for your support of ANTSHE!

ANTSHE Board Scholarship

The ANTSHE Board Scholarship is awarded to a non-traditional student who is enrolled as a full-time student in a four-year program of study at an accredited college or university in an undergraduate program, and demonstrates their contribution to their college and community. The 2019 Winner of the ANTSHE Board Scholarship is Molly Mcguire, Ball State University. We Congratulate Molly and Thank you for your support of ANTSHE!

The Barry Gilmore Scholarship 2019

This scholarship was created in memory of Barry Gilmore of Charlotte, NC. Barry was a beloved friend and colleague of ANTSHE who passed away September 12, 2018. He served not only as the Director of Community Relations (Business Liaison), and as a primary liaison with civic and business organizations within the community, he was also a dear friend. He was a true advocate for adult learners and had a way of making everyone smile. In establishing this scholarship for 2019, Barry's family and friends wish to recognize the dedication to continued education and community service that Glynis Boyd Hughes demonstrates at Virginia Commonwealth University. Congratulations Glynis! We appreciate your dedication to helping others on campus and your support of ANTSHE!

Invest in the future of a non-traditional student: Leave a legacy. Show your support for non-traditional students. Please consider sponsoring an ANTSHE scholarship. Have you ever thought about having a scholarship awarded in your name or to honor a loved one?

Contact Dr. R. Lee Viar IV to learn about some of the scholarship and/or sponsorship opportunities available at ANTSHE 301-991-2222 or president@antsheboardofdirectors.org

Dialogue Regarding College Students with PTSD

By Darby Munroe

PTSD in college students can have a myriad of effects on student learning. Because of hyper vigilance, negative feelings, isolation, disassociation, sleep disturbances, or self-destructive behavior, students with PTSD can struggle to live independently and manage courses at the same time (Love, Levin & Park, 2015). People with PTSD spend energy and time avoiding things that remind them of the trauma or being aroused and symptomatic once triggered. Professors and university staff that do not recognize and comprehend this holding pattern might have a hard time understanding why the student is struggling so much. Students with PTSD might have problems focusing and staying organized. They could also become frustrated easily and miss deadlines. This can cause issues while registering for the correct classes, making payments on time, and turning in work. Having sufficient guidance should be offered, instead of having to navigate the administrative and admissions work alone (Zinger & Cohen, 2010).

PTSD has been shown to effect verbal memory, word recall, digit span, coding speed, and intelligence (Parslow & Jorm, 2007). This can affect student achievement, especially if they are continually experiencing intrusive symptoms.

PTSD can cause neurological deficits in the hippocampus, and greatly effect working memory, making it hard for students to focus and stay on task. The symptoms can be exacerbated by stress, which can spiral out of control when student grades drop, and they fall behind in their work (Parslow & Jorm, 2007). Students with higher working memory will be able to filter and manage intrusive thoughts and symptoms better. However, students that are not in therapy and lack healthy coping mechanisms will continue to struggle with their roles and responsibilities. Students may take on too much too soon after the trauma and become overwhelmed. If they do not have support from their professors and the university, they might drop courses, programs or end up failing (Zinger & Cohen, 2010). Studies have shown veterans have lower completion rates and lower than average GPAs, compared to their peers (Gonzalez & Elliott, 2016). The lower GPA can be from turning in work late, doing poor on a quiz or test, or missing class (Bryan, Bryan, Hinkson, Bichrest, & Ahern, 2014). These issues are common for students with PTSD, and not only the veterans mentioned in the study.

Another concern for students with PTSD is how others perceive them and how they might be triggered. People with PTSD from military or abusive backgrounds might come from very strict, authoritarian situations (Zinger & Cohen, 2010). They might need time to transition or acclimate back to regular life, and they possibly could struggle with the varied demands of academia on their own, after being told what to do for so long. A related concern would be potential triggers from authoritarian figures, from admissions, to campus security, to professors. Students might react when there is no perceived threat and be punished or judged because of an issue they are trying to process. Most people with PTSD will not have an arsenal of healthy coping mechanisms when reentering society. Without knowledge of this, it could lead to potential issues between a struggling student and staff. Professors surveyed either did not feel comfortable in dealing with students who have PTSD, or they were uncomfortable with how they got the PTSD (Gonzalez & Elliott, 2016). This bias can result in aggravating the symptoms of the students. Basic assumptions about

students with and without PTSD must be scrutinized and tested (Schwarz, 2002).

Furthermore, students from low income, at-risk areas might have higher levels of PTSD. Witnessing violence affects developmental stages necessary for success in schools and work. Students with PTSD can suffer from impulse control, leading to high risk behaviors, like substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, and suicide (Netto, Cavalcanti-Ribeiro, Pereira, Nogueira, Santos, Lira, . . . Quarantini, 2013). Universities need to recognize the insurmountable variable at-risk youth overcome to even get there and be successful in a college environment.

One last concern about students with PTSD at colleges: In order for students to receive services, they have to ask for the help. Many might not even know they have PTSD or are too embarrassed to advocate for themselves. Students with PTSD also have to go through a rigorous identification process. They do not all have the disability designated through the government or military (Gonzalez & Elliott, 2016). They might not have been to doctors or therapists for treatment. Some students with PTSD might deny the issue is real because they are not ready to deal with it yet; in which case, time or intense circumstances may be needed to prompt those individuals to seek help (Saunders, 1999). Often, a student might spiral out of control or hit rock bottom before recognizing and admitting there are larger issues at play that they need help with. Once this is acknowledged, sharing relevant information is needed for effective communication to begin (Schwarz, 2002).

RECOMMENDED INTERVENTION
Sanders' Five Stages of Dialogue Model can be used as an action plan universities can use to create and implement appropriate interventions for students with PTSD.

1) Deciding to Engage
The first step towards addressing students with PTSD on college campuses and in university classes is to admit that they exist. Not everyone who has a disability is going to come forward and self-identify as needing services. Not everyone who has PTSD is going to recognize they have it or be able to advocate for themselves until they understand there is a name for what they are experiencing. Professors and faculty might be more comfortable teaching and working as usual but need to understand the circumstances and rates at which students with PTSD are enrolled in their programs. So it will take acknowledgement and action from both the students and the universities in order to begin the process.

Each student with PTSD will be coming from different circumstances. They might be from the military, from an abusive family, or survived a natural disaster. They could have grown up in a violent neighborhood or have been raped. There seems to be a correlation between how severe and lasting the trauma was and students identifying it and disclosing it (Smyth, Hockemeyer, Heron, Wonderlich, & Pennebaker, 2008). Students might hold on the to trauma, and only speak about it when they are ready, usually when they recognize the impact it is having on their daily life. When students with PTSD do decide to get help, the university can be there ready to help, making the connections between prevention and

support services and their direct effect on student performance (Eisenberg, et al, 2016).

2) Mapping Relationships and Naming Problems
Since this is a widespread issue, and the studies that have been done were random and isolated, each university will need to perform their own surveys in order to meet the unique needs of their student body. Some campuses may have more military veterans, others more students from the inner city, and others still a larger female population. Currently, students with disabilities can utilize the services and resources available through each university's disability services department, however these are not always meeting the needs of students with PTSD. The Wounded Warriors Initiative tried to address this issue by encouraging schools to adopt alternate approaches when working with student veterans. This does not however address all students that might have PTSD. When analyzing the problem, both students and faculty need to understand the root cause of the PTSD and how that affects school dynamics. Diving deeper into this will unveil how PTSD shapes social and classroom situations (Saunders, 1999). By focusing on specific examples of how PTSD affects students differently, faculty and staff obtain a better understanding of the situations and can all be on the same page when creating an action plan to address the issues (Schwarz, 2002). Universities can make surveys available at different points in the enrollment process, and well as when classes start and during the semester. This will only work, though, if students with PTSD are brave enough to be honest about their struggles and agree to seek help.

3) Probing Problems and Relationships to Set a Direction
Hopefully, students with PTSD will seek help before the semester begins. Getting services and resources in a timely fashion also makes a difference towards student outcomes. The sooner a student can get plugged in to programs that will help, the better that student will do during the semester (Love, Levin & Park, 2015). Too often, a student will not reach out for help until after it is too late to turn in a project, they have missed too many classes, or if they have failed a final. Professors should be on the lookout for problematic students and offer suggestions about services before the problems get too out of control and the student cannot return.

Additionally, each university should probe existing and needed programs to see what might benefit students with PTSD. Campuses that provide strong prevention, coping, and therapy programs have a lower rate of maladaptive behavior from PTSD. Future traumas, like sexual violence, are lower where there are services and resources in place (Eisenberg, Lust, Hannan, & Porta, 2016). Knowing what resources already exist and what resources are needed help the universities move in a direction to be able to help students with PTSD.

4) Scenario Building
Once problems and issues have been identified, universities can focus on scenarios that will give them clarity on where they are and what they need to do in order to fix the problem at hand. Both students with PTSD and university faculty and staff will need to be included in the process. This should be a brainstorming phase.

Treatment for PTSD and other mental health needs should be a priority. Visiting counselors and support groups that are available on campus can be beneficial to help meet ongoing mental health needs. Students can also learn from their peers about additional resources and services through these meetings, that they might not have learned of on their own. Having counselors on campus would provide students with the resources they might not have sought out because of time, expense and travel (adding more to their stress and symptoms).

On campus therapists should use evidence based programs, like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Eye Movement Desensitization and Preprocessing (EMDR) (Love, Levin & Park, 2015). These have been proven to have the quickest results and high success rates. Effective coping strategies should also be taught and practiced. These include attending therapy, muscular relaxation techniques, meditation, and breathing exercises (Fu, Chen, Wang, Tang, He, . . . Li, 2013).

Programs could be put in place to teach students and faculty about PTSD, its causes and symptoms. Some students benefitted from education about PTSD. For example, after surviving a natural disaster, students learned there were millions of others all over the world with similar experiences, and it helped the students feel less weak, knowing they were not alone in their struggles (Fu, et al, 2013). Many students do not come forward and ask for help because they are embarrassed, or they do not know how severe their problem is, or because they want to prove to themselves and others that everything is okay. Education about these struggles can help them to see what they are feeling is a normal response to trauma and that it is okay and healthy to get help recovering from it. Other students that are more resilient have positive coping mechanisms in place to help them deal with staying organized and their emotions and triggers (Love, Levin & Park, 2015). These can be taught and practiced not only in therapy, but also in support groups, and instilled into lectures from professors who have their student's best interests in mind.

How a classroom and program are set up can also make a positive difference for students with PTSD. A Universal Design setting would allow for the flexibility students with PTSD need (Gonzalez & Elliott, 2016). In such a setting there would be more dialogue between students, their peers, and faculty and staff. Using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as a basis, institutions can focus on the basics first: shelter, food, and safety. Professors can create safe environments for all students to feel welcome in, whether they participate or not. Schools can provide group-meeting places, online groups and services, and peer study groups for ongoing support and accountability. Flexibility in instructional models and mastery of concepts is important for students who might struggle with different types of assignments. Utilizing multimedia, tutors, and alternative assessments, students can still show mastery of the subject matter in a way that will not stress them out or demand focus they do not have.

This would require ongoing training for faculty and staff. Most professors are used to doing things a certain way and may not know how to effectively accommodate a students with a disability. They can work closely with the disability services office and ask their peers for

help. If it is a student who is aware of how PTSD affects his learning, then the professor and student can work together on a plan in case the student needs accommodations during the semester. Additionally, sensitivity training for professors and admissions, along with the student body at large, could help students with PTSD to not feel so alone and targeted (Zinger & Cohen, 2010). If others did not judge mental health issues and getting help so harshly, more students would come forward to ask for the help they need, if they knew they would be accepted and not discriminated against.

Lastly, students with a secure self-concept manage better after trauma. Students who can identify their issues and problem solve will do better then ones who are dysfunctional. Surveys like the COPE Inventory can be utilized to help students and faculty identify negative coping patterns. (Lemieux, et. al, 2010). Experiences, cognitive factors, and environment all need to be taken into consideration. The university setting can either be a safe and welcoming place, or it can be scary and overwhelming to a student with PTSD. To know if the support and resources available are effective, monitoring coping mechanisms over time should be continually studied.

5) Acting Together

Once the dialogue is underway, and scenarios have been discussed, all involved will decide if the problem is ripe and ready for action. Because PTSD in college students has already been studied and is acknowledged as a problem for universities, it is a problem that should be attended to. This is the time for both student and faculty and staff of universities to take action. Here is where their relationships unite to collectively solve the problem together.

One study showed students benefitted from close supervision, ongoing support, and information, which could include prevention services (Lemieux, Plummer, Richardson, Simon, & Ai, 2010). Depending on the available resources and services, universities could adapt current programs or create new ones to ensure student needs are getting met. These programs could be custom tailored to meet demographic needs. Ongoing social support and psychological help are the best predictors for student success with PTSD (Fu, et al, 2013).

The results of another study showed that it is important for professors to have relationships and ongoing contact with the military outside of the classroom and academia (Gonzalez & Elliott, 2016). If they understand how it operates, they can be more empathetic towards veterans and more willing to help them in class. Some professors must also put their bias aside, if they dislike war and the military, and treat all students the same, because they all deserve the right to an education. The same stances could be said about other sources of PTSD, like formerly abused children or women. Faculty would benefit from ongoing relationships with local agencies, so they can better understand and serve their students.

Identifying PTSD on college campuses can be done through several methods, but one of the most efficient ways is to screen students on a regular basis, through voluntary surveys. Training for screening is important, because many students will not be able to come forward for help, since avoidance is a characteristic behavior of PTSD (Netto, et al, 2013). Screening for adverse experience can streamline the referral process, and target students who could benefit most form help and services (Smyth, et al, 2008). In addition to screening, professors can watch for clues, like patterns of late assignments, missed classes, and assessment scores as a means to screen for students who are struggling in and out of the classroom (Bryan, et al, 2014). Moving forward, when continuing a dialogue, universities must put forth reasoning and intent in regard to the problem (Schwarz, 2002). Part of an action plan could include language in the university's mission statement, and on each professor's syllabus, that lets students and faculty know they are aware of the connection between PTSD and student struggles and achievement and list the resources and services that are available. Students can be encouraged to self-advocate for themselves if professors to include statements on their syllabus, prompting students to notify instructors of any conditions or accommodations that would be helpful during the semester (Gonzalez & Elliott, 2016).

CONCLUSION

By using Saunders' Five Stages of Dialogue Model of Facilitation, and some of the available research studies on students who have PTSD in college, universities can create their own action plans to meet their specific student needs. The dialogue process should include advocacy and inquiry. It should be uncomfortable, and explore taboo issues (Schwarz, 2002). PTSD on campus is a reality most people, students and staff, would like to ignore. However, the goal of schools is to educate, and that goal will not be met with high efficiency and

awards unless PTSD in the student body is addressed and treated.

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Key Skills to Nontraditional Student Success
a nontrad story

By Shannon Brumfield
EMBA Candidate, Jack Welch
Management Institute

Being a successful nontraditional student can be a daunting task at times. Learning to balance school, family, work, and personal life is reminiscent of a circus juggler. During my career as a nontraditional student, I have adopted some key skills. They are strength, perseverance, mentors, time-management, and goal setting. They are skills that are a must for not just the nontraditional student but success in general. My current adventure began in 2017. After fourteen years of marriage, my divorce was final in 2018. Throughout my marriage, I lost my self-respect, self-confidence, but most of all, I lost who I was. Out of spite and necessity, I returned to school to finish my degree. In June of 2019, I finished my bachelor's, and the following July, I began my executive MBA.
The first key skill is to find your strength. In early 2017, I realized my marriage was broken beyond repair, and I began counseling to work on my marriage and myself. Two years into my marriage, I gave up my career in IT to become a stay-at-home, homeschooling mom. I was depressed and worried about my future. If my marriage fell apart, I had no way to earn a living. Due to my lack of recent credentials, I couldn't prove I had kept up with technology. One day while researching homework for an upcoming counseling session, I read this statement; "Today, I have the power to change my story." That one quote encouraged me more than any other thing that someone said to me, or I had read. It was a life-changing event. I realized I was in charge of my future, and my success or failure depended on me.

At this time, my ex and I were separated, and I knew I would need some way of supporting myself and my children. In my search for work, I found several positions in Project Management that sounded very promising but required a degree. For several years I talked about returning to school to finish my degree but was discouraged by my ex. I began researching schools where I could get an online degree in Project Management. Strayer was the best option. This search for employment and returning to school is where I found my strength initially. Now, I find my strength in other things like my children, my friends, and my hobbies. Occasionally, I have to look back at that phrase and remember why I began this journey.

*"**PERSERVERANCE** is stubbornness **with a purpose.**"*

The second is perseverance. In June 2019, after 31 years and five schools, I completed my bachelor's degree. Josh Shipp, a youth motivational speaker, says it best when he says, "perseverance is stubbornness with a purpose." By nature, I am stubborn, so this phrase speaks to me. We all have those days; you know the ones I mean. Those days when you're ready to throw in the towel on life but don't give up; persevere. After returning to school in July of 2017, I was struggling with self-doubt and confidence issues, not just about school, but all aspects of my life. My first assignment was due in one of the first classes, and I was so worried about it. Would it be good enough? Would I fail it? I tend to be an obsessive, perfectionist. So, I worked on my first assignment and redid it a couple of times to make sure it was right. Even though I missed a few points, I still made an 'A.' That was a huge confidence booster. I finished my first quarter with a 4.0. My second quarter, I took three classes instead of just two and finished with a 4.0 again. I was invited to join the honors program. At the end of the Fall quarter, I was on the President's List and invited to join Golden Key and SCLA honor societies. I joined both of them in December of 2017.

During that first quarter, I had an excellent professor; Prof Katherine Weber. Without her encouragement and interaction, I don't know that I would have continued to pursue my degree after that first quarter. At the end of the quarter, I asked her if she would be my educational mentor, which leads me to my third point, mentoring. Find one, but also be one. During my life, I have found that having a mentor is essential to my success. I have had several mentors in the different organizations I have been a part of and other areas of my life. I recently returned from a leadership conference in Australia where mentors were called coaches, and in reality, that is what a mentor is. Mentors challenge you. They also encourage you when we need it. They offer advice, even when it isn't asked for, and they offer criticism, whether you want to hear it or not. Not only was Prof Weber gracious enough to accept my offer of being my mentor, but she has also become a friend and confidant.

Because I know how important it is to have a mentor, or two or three, I feel that it is vital to be a mentor. As an Honor student, I considered myself to be a student leader of Strayer University. It is our responsibility to become mentors to other students and encourage them in their educational journey. One of the perks of being an Honor student is that I was invited to be a part of Strayer programs. One program I was invited to apply for is Strayer's Peer-to-Peer Mentoring pilot program. I applied and was accepted to be a mentor. Whether you mentor someone officially, as through the program, or unofficially, being part of someone's support group can be as rewarding to you as it is to your mentee. Recently, I sent an email to Professor Weber, thanking her for all the support and encouragement she has offered me over the couple of years I have known her. She told me she had learned as much from me as I have from her.

Number four on my list is time-management skills. With all the juggling that goes in the lives of nontraditional learners; work, marriage, children, and school, we should all become students of time-management. Part having effective time management skills is finding a sound system that works for you. If you go on the internet, you can find a plethora of tools to help you with time-management, everything from digital apps and programs to handwritten planners. It may take some time, and it may end up being a combination of digital and analog, but the right tools will help tremendously with time-management. For me, I use an adaptation of a bullet journal. I used to use a digital-only system, but when I returned to school it didn't help me keep up with my work daily. I now use a Japanese planner, in which it has monthly and weekly entries. It does take a few minutes each week to organize the next week, and about five to ten minutes each morning to plan my day, but I find that I am so much more productive and can keep my schoolwork in balance with the rest of my life. On those days that I need a creative outlet, I can spend a few more minutes in my planner to make it pretty and an expression of me.

We can't discuss tools to help motivate us without discussing goals. Our journeys are moot points without goals. Goals need to be SMART – specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time. It is cliché, I know, but it works. In one of the organizations I am involved in, I have a goal of being a wing commander. I spoke with my mentor, and we worked out a plan of action to achieve that goal. When my mentor and I first began discussing my goal of being a wing commander, I had most of the qualifications, but I didn't have any command experience. I had been a deputy commander, but not entirely in charge. The position came open for a group commander in my area, so I applied. I received my appointment to the position in November of 2016. In my illustration, the specific goal is to be a wing commander. It is measurable by being

able to tick off boxes for requirements of being a wing commander. With the right background, it is attainable and is relevant to furthering my career in the organization. It is timed, as the current wing commander's term will end in 2024.

Applying this same process, I have set goals for my academic career. Initially, I set goals to finish my degree and be able to get a job. Earlier I discussed my perfectionist personality, and my perfectionist personality had me set new goals. After the Fall quarter, and my second quarter of earning a 4.0, my goals changed to not just obtaining my degree, but graduating with a Laude recognition. By the end of Winter quarter, my goal changed to a specific recognition. I modified it to graduate Summa Cum Laude. Another goal I had was to be the valedictorian for the graduation to be held in Atlanta in October 2019. I was not selected to be valedictorian, but I to be the bachelor's degree banner carrier.

"Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go," a quote by T.S. Eliot that is written in my planner as one of the quotes that personally inspires me. My goals may sound very lofty; wing commander, graduate Summa Cum Laude and Valedictorian, but if we aim high, and prepare ourselves, we will reach our target. I'm not saying every goal is a given, especially in something like being the Valedictorian, where part of the process depends on decisions made by others and not just myself. But if I didn't set the goal and didn't try, then I would never know if I could achieve it. I love the band Queen, so of course, I saw the film Bohemian Rhapsody.

While trying to talk the group into performing at Live Aid, Freddy Mercury tells the other members "all I know is that if we wake up the day after this concert, and didn't do our part, we're going to regret it to the day we die." I know one thing, I am tired of regrets in my life, so my goals may sound lofty, but I can at least say I tried, and who knows, I might just get it. In May of 2018, an email went out asking for applications for officers for the Strayer Chapter of Golden Key. I looked at the list of requirements for each position and knew I qualified for all of them. In reality, my self-confidence was low, and I didn't think I would get one of the posts. I decided to use the application process to gather experience in writing a resume. It had been twenty years since I had to write a professional resume, and times have changed in what employers want. Since I was using it as a way to gain resume writing experience and didn't think I would even be considered for a spot, I thought, why not apply for the top position? So, in a pretty much "what the heck, I'll give it a try," moment, I applied for the president position, and I got it. Being the president of Golden Key has opened the door to other opportunities such as going to New Orleans and Australia for a leadership conference.

The keys listed to my success is not all-inclusive, there are many other keys like having a support group, but these are the main ones that I continue to use even after finishing my degree and working on my MBA candidacy. Strength, perseverance, mentors, time-management, and goal setting will not only help you get through your journey as a nontraditional student but also other aspects of your life. If you apply these keys and supplement your list with additional keys that have worked for you in the past, I know your journey will be one of success.

Student Spotlight
ROBERT DELGADILLO
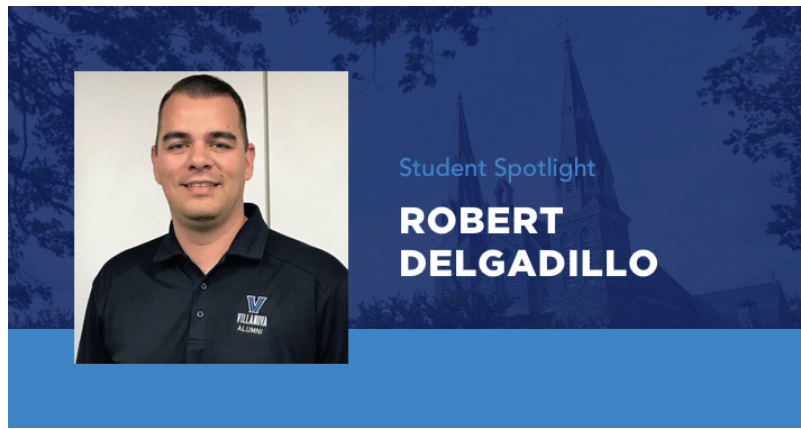
MPA Student Spotlight: Robert Delgadillo
Villanova MPA Motivates Engineer to Soar Even Higher

Robert Delgadillo already held a position in city government as a senior engineer when he decided to pursue a Master of Public Administration through Villanova University. Why did he pursue the MPA degree? Because he had higher aspirations.

While working on his online MPA with a Certificate in City Management, he changed jobs to take a position with more responsibility for a larger city. Now a Villanova MPA graduate, Delgadillo has been promoted to interim director of public works/city engineer for the City of Azusa, California.

"I grew up in Pico Rivera, which is located 20 minutes southeast of Los Angeles. I graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 2008 with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering," Delgadillo said. "I worked in the private sector for several years before transitioning into the public sector. While working as the senior engineer for the City of Pico Rivera, I started the Villanova University online MPA program."

The Pico Rivera city manager introduced employees to Villanova's program. "I decided that this would be a good opportunity to help me advance in my career," Delgadillo said. "It also worked really well with my schedule since it was all online, and class discussions were only required once a week."

Why Villanova?
The ideal candidates for Villanova's MPA degree are professionals with at least three years of experience in the public, nonprofit, military or private sectors who want to develop the knowledge, skills and abilities required to excel in a public service role. The program is designed for professionals who currently lead or aspire to manage public, private or nonprofit organizations. It also helps prepare students for careers in the management and leadership of local, state, federal government and non-governmental organizations.

Villanova University's online convenience and core values were deciding factors in Robert Delgadillo's decision to pursue Villanova's MPA degree with a Certificate in City Management.

In addition to the MPA program, students have the option to tailor their MPA with a Certificate in City Management or Nonprofit Management without taking any additional courses, or earn a Graduate Certificate in Public Administration, City Management or Nonprofit Management as a standalone credential.

In Delgadillo's case, it was the City Management certificate, which includes five tailored elective courses to help students gain the knowledge and skills to succeed in multiple local government career fields, including city planning, criminal justice, policy analysis and a variety of city and county management positions.

Delgadillo said there were two main factors in his decision to pursue Villanova's MPA.

"The first was the convenience of the online program. It made it easy to balance my time with work and children," he said. "The second reason was Villanova's Catholic identity. Having earned my BS from the University of Notre Dame, Villanova University had similar values, which were very important to me."

His favorite course was Effective City Management, the last course he took before graduating.

"[Effective City Management] was a great way to tie everything together. Going over case studies and being able to refer to something I had learned from all of the classes made the class much more beneficial," he said.

An Online Classroom Tailored to the Student
Each of Villanova's online courses are designed to maximize students' interaction and collaboration with their classmates and instructors. Each week, students meet with their professor and classmates for a live, virtual discussion-based class. These live classes are a staple of Villanova's programs and allow students to speak to their instructor directly, ask questions about their weekly assignments, build their professional network and learn from the different perspectives of students in the classroom.

"What surprised me the most about the online program was hearing from so many different people from different backgrounds and fields about similar experiences," Delgadillo said." It's amazing looking back on the program and seeing how much you learned from the classes as well as from your classmates."

Throughout his two years of the program, Delgadillo admitted to only missing one weekly discussion – "to attend Game Seven of the World Series between the Los Angeles Dodgers and Houston Astros in 2017," he said.

All live class sessions are recorded, which allowed Delgadillo the opportunity to review the discussion at a later time.

The Value and Flexibility of a Villanova MPA
Already, Delgadillo said, his Villanova MPA is making a big difference in his career.

"I have already advanced into the management level in my respective department. However, it has helped me the most with how I work with people," he said. "I have been working with my staff to help incorporate a team environment in what is traditionally a hierarchy. I have emphasized open and transparent communication with our team to build a level of trust that had not previously existed."

"The combination of the curriculum and discussions with your classmates will provide you with an experience like no other," he said. His most valuable takeaway from the program, he added, was learning how so many problems can be solved with good communication.

"Almost all your problems can be solved through open communication and active listening," Delgadillo said. "This not only applies to your work, but to your personal life as well."
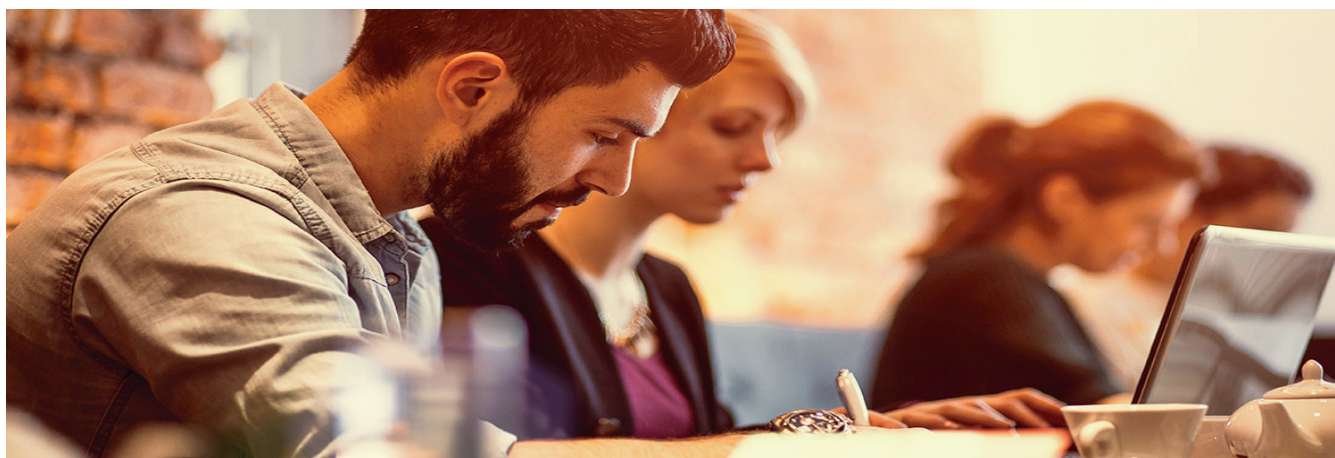
The Weekend College Experience

By Ellen C. Miller, Ed.D.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, traditional students (students between the ages of 17-21, who attend four-year colleges and live on campus) make up only about 15% of the undergraduate population. The remaining 85% of students are considered non-traditional and are a non-homogenous diverse group (NCES, 2018).

Additionally, the NCES reports that 33% of the 18 million undergraduate students in the US are over the age of 25, and 22% are over the age of 30. From 2010 to 2020, the NCES projects a rise of 20% in enrollments of students 25 and over. (NCES, 2018)   The rise of distance education and for profit colleges have served to eliminate some of the barriers to education that adults face such as time and location.

A significant factors leading to this surge in adult learners is the demand for more technologically sophisticated workers. Occupations that typically require some type of postsecondary education for entry made up nearly 37 percent of employment in May 2016. The most common postsecondary requirement was a bachelor's degree (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017) Gone are the days where people spend their entire lives in one career now individuals may switch careers several times in their lifetime.

With older students being the new majority on campus today, it is imperative to understand the experience of adult learners. Therefore, the focus of this study is on graduates of a specialized adult degree program and how this experience transferred them both personally and professionally. Through their stories, insight may be gained on strategies to enhance adult learner retention and persistence.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to better understand the adult student's undergraduate experience at the University and explore the subsequent impact it had on their lives. The literate review focused on the following questions: Who is the adult learner in today's higher education landscape? What gets in the way?   What are the elements of effective programmatic/retention strategies?
The majority of the literature on student retention and persistence in higher education has been on the traditional age student. Adult college students have different approaches to learning that need to be understood so that effective retention strategies can be used to increase student retention. In addition, adult undergraduates have specific needs in regards to home, family and job responsibilities.

DEFINITION OF THE ADULT LEARNER

-Have delayed or taken a leave of absence from postsecondary education.
-Attend school part-time
-Work full-time while enrolled in school
-Have dependents other than a spouse
-Are over 25 years of age

MOTIVATIONS FOR ADULT LEARNERS RETURNING TO SCHOOL

One of the ways in which adult students differ from their traditional age counterparts is in their motivations for returning to school. For traditional age students, postsecondary education is

generally seen as a natural progression from one stage of their life to another. For nontraditional students, their motivations are somewhat different.

Adults return to school to obtain an undergraduate degree for a variety of reasons:

•Develop a new career
•Simply to learn
•Have the personal satisfaction of having a degree
•Achieve independence and a sense of identity.
•Advance their careers (Sewall, 1984; Berker & Horn, 2003; Gordon, 2011).

Major triggers can be job dissatisfaction, encouragement from family and friends, children entering school, and marital problems.

WHAT GETS IN THE WAY OF ADULT LEARNING?

Challenges adults face when returning to school includes both external and internal stressors. Finances, family and job demands were huge stressors for adult students trying to balance multiple responsibilities. Internal stressors also may impede a student's ability to complete their education. Previous negative educational experiences, inadequate pre-college academic preparation, language difficulties as well as institutional barriers such as limited access to services and programs may also inhibit academic performance. For these reasons, nontraditional students are not easily assimilated into colleges and universities that have traditionally served white, middle class students between the ages of 18 and 23.

The barriers can be on a personal level such as the increased stress these students face having to balance a variety of different life roles. Women, usually the primary caregivers in a family, are particularly susceptible to guilt and burn out trying to fulfill all of their role responsibilities. Adult students may face considerable financial constraints when they return to college. Additionally, student services are often geared toward to traditional students with the nontraditional learner sometimes feeling like a square peg into a round hole.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE ADULT ORIENTED PROGRAMS

Access to higher education evolved over the years to from being accessible to only privileged white males to today's current palette of an ever-increasing array of delivery options. From traditional classroom based to distance learning options, there have never been so many options for today's adult learners.

Regardless of the delivery method, all effective adult programs share the following characteristics according to Husson and Kennedy (2003):

•Learner focused and market sensitive—needs of the learners should be primarily and programs should mimic the needs of the community.
•Designed for adult learners—use of learning models that incorporate more participatory and interactive methods and limits the use of straight lectures.
•Evidence of quality and rigor similar to that of any traditionally aimed undergraduate program.
•Program accessibility—institution should have adult friendly policies, for example accepting the transfer of credits from over five years ago.

•A variety of delivery options should be available at multiple sites—class schedules and student services should be available when adult learners can take advantage of them such as weeknights and weekends.

Delivery of services to adult learners should be more comprehensive rather than a band-aid approach. Counselors should take a proactive approach and alert their students in advance to difficulties they may experience further down the line. Comprehensive staff training for counselors can be developed using this model as a guide. A comprehensive, extended orientation program or support group for adult learners would also be of great help in encouraging persistence.

Though adult learners are more prevalent on college campuses today more than ever, the focus of the literature still appears to be on the traditional age student. According to Donaldson & Townsend (2007), adult undergraduates should be treated neither as invisible, different, problematic or merely acceptable. Moreover, the focus should be on the positive contributions they bring to the campus community.

The adult learner's motivations for returning to post-secondary education are different from the traditional age student, where college attendance is seen as a rite of passage into adulthood. Generally, these students are motivated to return to school to increase career opportunities or as a way to increase their personal growth and satisfaction.

Not only are their motivations different but their learning styles and challenges are unique. Adults in the classroom thrive when their

learning is based on more real-life problem-centered tasks. Challenges to adults in higher education are both internal and externally focused. After an extended absence from formal schooling, many adults may feel unable to keep pace with their younger classmates because of their rusty academic skills and perhaps inadequate previous preparation. Additionally, they are trying to juggle a number of tasks in addition to coursework that may include caregiving to family members and full-time employment. Institutions themselves can create difficult hurdles for these students to overcome including a lack of flexible scheduling, course offerings, and support services.

More is needed to be understood about this population so that higher education institutions can better understand how to meet these students' unique needs and how their undergraduate experience will ultimately influence their lives.

METHODS
Research Questions
The research questions that guided this study were:

•Which program factors facilitated program completion?
•How did external (non-programmatic) factors influence persistence?
•How did participation in the Weekend College program impact students' lives personally and professionally?

Theoretical/Concept Framework
The conceptual framework reflects the three areas that make up potential connections to the adult learner experience. The literature suggests (Aslanian & Brickell, 1980; Eddy, 2001; Sewall, 1984) that a personal or career-related catalyst is usually responsible for prompting these students to return to school. While in school, these students face a variety of obstacles along their path to degree completion. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that these students develop their own personal coping strategies as well as feel supported by the institution as a whole.

A conceptual framework diagram can be visualized as three overlapping circles. A circle marked "learner motivations" represents the various reasons why nontraditional learners decide to return to school and stay in school. These reasons may include: death of a spouse, divorce, children going to school, career advancement or change. (Sewall, 1984).

The second circle, which illustrates the "barriers to education" represents the many obstacles, these adults may face in an effort to complete their degree. Upon re-enrollment in courses, these students may experience both personal and institutional challenges. These may include: work, family, financial constraints, weak academic background and lack of availability of necessary student services. (Ryder, Bowman & Newman, 1984).

The third circle, "effective programs/retention strategies", represents how the institution can best guide these students to academic success. The principles of adult learning theory should be incorporated into these programmatic ideas. For example, adult learners flourish when given assignments they can apply to the work place. Such services employed might include: increasing availability of student service offices, an academic refresher course, onsite childcare, flexible course schedules and formats as well as financing options, etc. (Husson & Kennedy, 2003).

At the center of the diagram, where all three circles overlap, should lead to a positive experience for the nontraditional learner. It is the point where student are motivated to return and stay in school, have developed their confidence in their own abilities as a student and feel supported by their institution. In turn, this should lead to student retention; satisfaction; and ultimately, degree attainment.

Field Setting
This study took place at a private suburban school in the northeast utilizing participants who were graduates of their weekend college program for adults.

The Weekend College degree program was interdisciplinary in nature and provided concentrations that were focused on providing important workforce skills such as technology and organizational and leadership development. A transitional seminar was designed to help students deal with the challenges of returning to post-secondary education.

For Weekend College students, the academic calendar was divided into five, eight-week sessions. Each eight-week session consisted of 10 class meetings (8 Saturdays and 2 Sundays). Students completed a semester's worth of work in two courses per session. By the end of the 40-week year, students can take up to a total of ten courses (30 credits).

Weekend College Students in Brief
Weekend College students shared similar characteristics: lived within commutable distance of the university, worked outside the home and had children, average age of students was late thirties with age ranges from late 20s to early 70s, and had earned previous college credits. Though exact demographic data was not kept on this program by the office of Institutional Research, many of the students in this program were immigrants. They came from Central America and the Caribbean, South America (Peru and Columbia), Australia, Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, the Philippines, and Hong Kong), Europe (Ireland, Russia) and West Africa. A sizeable number of these students were black and Hispanic.

METHODOLOGY
The methodology utilized in this study included focus groups, individual interviews, artifact, archival data collection and a member check.

The focus group questions were broad based and covered a variety of experiences including faculty and administration interactions, shared experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, personal and professional outcomes and advice for other adult learners.

Individual interviews were used to follow up on some of the themes brought up in the focus groups and were loosely structured to allow participants to tell their own stories. Questions included: previous educational background, motivations for returning to school as well as challenges faced.

For the artifact and archival data, collection participants were asked to produce an artifact that is symbolic of their educational journey.

Additionally, retention, persistence and demographic data was used from the University's Office of Institutional Research.

Lastly, a member check was conducted to enable the graduates to discuss their feelings about their part in this research project and validate the data collected.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY
This qualitative study presents several limitations. The biggest limitation was the accessibility of the potential participants. The researcher had to rely on sometimes out-of-date student contact information as well as social media to contact these former students about possible participation in the study.

Though this study provided valuable insight into the experiences of a select group of graduates of an adult oriented bachelor's degree program, it was very limited in its scope. Women from this program were the sole participants in this study. Many of the participants graduated several years ago and so their reflections about the program may be tainted by subsequent unrelated events. The study of only one program at one university provided a limited perspective on the adult learner. Since the program is no longer in existence, the researcher had difficulty contacting potential participants nor was she able to observe peer or faculty-student interactions.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
Strength of the Collective Unit.
The bond these students developed while in the program was undeniable. Similar personal characteristics and educational

backgrounds as well as shared experiences helped to perpetuate this bond. Whether it was help with a homework assignment or lending an ear to a fellow student experiencing a personal crisis, these students provided unending support to each other. The participants credit the strength of the cohort bond as helping sustain them through to graduation. Ultimately, though the university developed and put the cohort structure in place it was, the students who made it work so effectively as a retention tool.

Elements of Program Effectiveness
While senior level officials at the university did not enthusiastically support this program, it was well developed and resulted in positive student outcomes. Earlier in the literature review, Husson and Kennedy's (2003) characteristics of effective adult programs were cited: learner focused and market sensitive designed for adult learners, evidence of quality and rigor, program accessibility, and offer a variety of delivery options. The Weekend College program incorporated those elements into their program model. Learner–focused and market sensitive. The administrators and faculty not only were sensitive to the needs of these adult students but they put the learners' needs first and the curriculum and specializations offered prepared students to be competitive and successful in the current marketplace.

Designed for adult learners. The faculty constructed their classroom sessions to be more participatory and interactive and less lecture-based. During the focus group and individual sessions, the students spoke about opportunities they had in the classroom to do more hands

on learning such as group projects.

Evidence of quality and rigor. The students in the program were responsible for adhering to and meeting the same policies and graduation requirements as any other undergraduate student. The curriculum was designed to include the same types of core liberal arts requirements. Many of the faculty who taught in the program also taught the more traditional age students on the weekdays.

Program accessibility. In general, while the university may not have been particularly adult oriented, the program guidelines were set up to facilitate an easy transition into the program. There were no time limits on transfer credits and no admissions tests were required. Furthermore, the biggest draw of the program was the ability to complete an undergraduate degree solely on the weekends.

A variety of delivery options available at multiple sites. While the specific campus services may not have been available in the weekends, staff was able to act as liaison for the students with key campus offices such as financial aid, bursar and registrar.

Therefore, the "adult-friendly" program structures and services were able to provide a framework for student persistence and success.

Graduation, Retention Rates, and Academic Performance. Upon review of the data regarding student performance, it became clear that Weekend College students, as a whole, were quite successful. Part-time undergraduates and Weekend College students share the same demographic characteristics and have a similar population count.

Therefore, the assumption could be made that students in the Weekend College were more likely to finish their degree because of the supportive nature of the program while part-time undergraduates were left to navigate the path to their degree on their own. Similarly, one-year retention rates were higher for first time freshmen in Weekend College than those who attended school part-time time in the day or evening. Not only were weekend college students retained and graduated at a higher rate but they had higher GPAs than their undergraduate counterparts, both full and part-time did.

In review of the average GPAs at the university, full and part-time undergraduates and Weekend College students, a distinct pattern occurs. For all of the 13 semesters reported, the Weekend College students had the highest mean GPAs ranging from 3.28 to 3.10. Full-time undergraduates came in second while part-time had the lowest average of the group.

With regard to student retention rates, full-time undergraduates had the highest overall retention rates from fall 2002 to fall 2008. With an "n" ranging from 1710-1864, it is very difficult to make an accurate comparison with the other two groups. However, if we compared the other, two groups of freshmen; we would see that the retention rate for Weekend College students is higher for all years accept two. It must be noted that there is only an n of 2 in fall 2003 and 1 in fall of '06. This can possibly account for the dip in retention rates.

Personal Growth and Transformation.
The graduates of this program speak of their experience as a Weekend

College student as a life changing-event, a metamorphosis of sorts. As they progressed through the program and overcame the obstacles presented to them as an adult with multiple responsibilities, they gained more confidence in their ability to be successful. This new found confidence, in conjunction with exposure to diverse people and ideas, lead to a paradigm shift for these participants.

KEY FINDINGS

Costs vs. benefits of the adult learner's return to school. The decision for these adults to return to school is multi-faceted, since they had many competing responsibilities for their time and resources. As Kasworm (2008, p. 27) states, "For adult learners, the pursuit of higher education is a choice and a life-changing engagement." This choice, to return to higher education, had significant ramifications for the student's family and professional lives

First, the return to formal education came several years after the last time these adults stepped foot into a classroom. This return often challenged their sense of personal competence and their ability to function and excel in such a setting. Many participants, though accomplished professionals, felt a significant amount of anxiety prior to, and during, the program. They worried, no only about their intellectual capacity to handle the rigor of the curriculum, but also their ability to balance multiple roles.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, despite an ever-present desire to turn to school, they waited, in some cases, many years to follow through with their goal. Past

negative educational experiences coupled with already busy schedules were common causes of these delays. Further, for those families, the time spent away from them, either in class or working on at home assignments caused a great deal of guilt.

Surprisingly, in light of these challenges, these adults, many of whom were already successful on a professional level, were still willing to put much of their lives on hold in order to pursue their personal goals. Their ability to do so came from several sources. Because of various life experiences, these individuals had all faced and overcome many obstacles in their personal and professional lives. They drew confidence from these experiences that enabled them to face and conquer the new challenges that they would encounter for the duration of the program. Additionally, the students were able to count on one another for emotional support, particularly because of their like-mindedness and similar challenges. As a result, a strong support system developed within the student body. This system was touted by many of the students as being an integral part of their personal success in the program. Finally, these students were able to accept that this short-term sacrifice was necessary for the long-term benefits a college degree would provide.

University support vs. university mission

Overall, though the students in the weekend college program were quite successful and had a very positive student experience it was despite the university's overall approach to these students. As many of the participants commented during the data collection phase they felt like second class citizens and not integrated into the campus community as a whole

Ironically, the data on student performance seem to indicate that these students, overall, performed better academically, had higher retention rates and graduation rates than even full-time undergraduates. Though the weekend college staff and faculty supported these students, they were not supported by the university at large. The inability of the overall campus community to foster relationships with this population has caused unhappy alumni.

Traditional vs. Adult Learners

For many traditional age students (18-22 years old) college is merely the next step in their educational journey. For adults it is not that simple. As Kasworm (2008) notes, "whether they are pushed into collegiate learning through losing a job or voluntarily seek out college to develop a different life opportunity, college for most adults is not a physical separation from their past worlds. Rather, most adults continue their complex lives—with the added challenging role of student (p.27)."

As evidenced by this study, there are many differences between these participants and their younger counterparts. They include motivations, college selection, enrollment and work, family commitments and the types of student services (Kasworm, 2003).

While most traditional age students are not bound by geography and program type, adult learners, particularly the ones in this study, were limited in their selection. These students selected the weekend college program because of its proximity to their home or office, the accelerated nature of the program and its convenient weekend schedule. The participants also selected this program because of its applicability to the workplace though the actual program concentrations were limited. Traditional age undergraduates have the freedom to choose from diverse types of programs.

Like all of the participants in this, program adult students are more likely to be employed full-time as compared with traditional aged students who either work part-time or do not work at all. The employer support either emotionally or financially was integral to many of the participants' decisions to return to college.

The addition of family commitments also played a key role in these students' decision and participation in higher learning. Typically, traditional age students are usually not hindered by dependent family members as they try to navigate the waters of higher education. At various times, these participants were both inspired deterred by family members to enroll in higher education.

The types of student services desired by these populations differ as well. Many retention theorists (i.e. Tinto and Pascarella & Terinzini) point to the necessity of a full palette of student activities and organizations to complement classroom learning for younger students to evolve and grow during their undergraduate years. However, the data in this study indicates the theory many not necessarily apply to adult students who is trying to balance multiple responsibilities. Resources such as on-site childcare, assistance with

rusty academic skills would be more beneficial for the older student.

When it comes to student persistence and retention the similarities and differences between the two populations seems to blur. Once again, as noted in Tinto (1998), the more positively students interact with each other and faculty, the more they become integrated into the institution and feel valued and therefore, are more likely to persist. Though the students in the weekend college students felt valued within the intimate setting of their program, they felt neither valued nor integrated into the university at large. Despite this lack of integration, they still persisted to graduation and overall had a positive experience. Therefore, more needs to be understood specifically about the role the institutional perception plays in the retention model of these adult learners.

Weekend college students as a professional learning community. Each cohort of the weekend college can be seen as meeting the definition of a professional learning community as defined by DuFour (2004, p.6), "an environment fostering mutual cooperation, emotional support, personal growth and synergy of efforts." Spending so much time together both inside and outside of class helped them to develop a community of collaboration and trust necessary to reap the benefits of a PLC.

Tinto (1998) who espoused the idea that sharing a common classroom experience helps the students to bond both academically and socially further supports this idea. Another benefit of a learning community is that students spend more time on learning academic concepts because they actually enjoy working

together. Because of spending more time together, they actually learn more. The study participants also commented on gaining first-hand knowledge and appreciating others' points of view from diverse backgrounds. Not only did it help them to learn the information necessary for the course but also it gave them a different point of view from a broader, cultural context.

Faculty in the weekend college program can also be viewed as being part of this shared learning community. As many participants noted, they engaged in dialogue with the students more, at times, more as peers and facilitators rather than instructors.

Therefore, the idea of a learning community for adult learners enriches the experience for all involved and can be seen as a valuable retention tool.
Recommendations/implications

As previously mentioned, across college campuses today the numbers of adult students are on the rise for a variety of reasons. Institutions must reevaluate the programs and services offered to their adult learners. Therefore, a number of initiatives that may be instituted. As the literature describes and the data suggest, usually a catalyst propels these students to re-entry. While the reasons could run the gamut from career advancement to change in martial or family status, university staff in additional to peer counselors could be trained to assist these students with these life transitions. Additionally, since many of the participants returned to school to enhance their credentials, employers could also be queried about their perceptions of their employees who return to school. From these interactions, adult program staff

may be able to create supports and/or programming to help these students better achieve a work/life balance.

Some of the participants in this study discussed their lack of confidence and inadequate academic preparation, which can be huge obstacles for these students to overcome. Academic limitations can also serve to frustrate and inhibit students as they try to complete their studies. While offering a transitional seminar for students to brush up on their research skills was a good starting point, more could be done to guide some of these students to academic success. Adults could be prescreened during the admissions process for any potential red flags in their academic preparation or grasp on the language. Therefore, their difficulties can be immediately addressed before they become an insurmountable problem.

The literature and the data suggest that in order for students to have a positive and successful collegiate experience, they should feel supported and respected by all of the members of the campus community (i.e. faculty, administrators, and support staff). While the staff and faculty connected to the program were supportive, this support was not pervasive through the university in general. The delivery of services to adult learners should be a campus wide approach. Perhaps specialized training programs for university officials could be offered to help educate these constituents about the unique challenges faced by adult students.

The higher education professionals who work with this student population need to be more sensitive

An Analysis of Selected Credit for Prior Learning Programs at Historically Black Colleges & Universities and a Predominantly White Institution

By Drs. Millard J. Bingham, Jie Ke, Carlos Wilson, Gloria Smith, and Chandar Lewis

America is faced with an urgent and ever increasing need for a more highly skilled workforce. To meet that need, many more people must earn college degrees, workforce certificates, industry certifications and other high-quality credentials (Lumina, 2019). "According to Lumina Foundation's 2015 A Stronger Nation report, the U.S. economy will need 106 million Americans to hold postsecondary credentials in 2025. Based on current attainment rates, the country's projected to fall 19.8 million credentials short of that goal. Increased enrollment in – and successful completion of – postsecondary learning programs is critical to achieving it" (CAEL, 2015, p. 2). CPL/Prior learning assessment can assist with helping more workers complete training and degree programs sooner by giving them college credit for knowledge and competencies they have gained outside of the classroom. CPL is therefore vital to supporting the U.S. economy and ensuring we have the highly skilled/credentialed workforce that is needed (CAEL, 2015).

Many institutions are beginning to realize that CPL/PLA programs are needed. The principles of adult learning /andragogy teach us that adults bring a vast reservoir of experiences and knowledge to the learning environment and that adult learners expect for their experiences and expertise to be recognized, valued and respected. CPL/PLA programs allow institutions the opportunity to demonstrate that they appreciate the skills and competencies that nontraditional students bring to the table. CPL programs also offer institutions a way to attract certain segments of nontraditional students to their programs (active duty military, veterans, state/federal employees, corporate employees, retirees and more). Colleges and universities must collectively compete for the same students. Proprietary/online institutions continue to pull students away from traditional brick and mortar institutions. Marketing must be a focus of all institutions that seek to thrive in a time of rapidly eroding state and federal funding dollars. Robust CPL programs can be a useful marketing tool for adult learner/nontraditional student populations.

CPL programs allow students the opportunity to reduce the cost of their educational program without compromising program quality (Lakin et al., 2015). Research has shown that PLA students seeking an associate's degree were 2.1 times more likely to complete than non CPL/PLA students (Travers, 2015). The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL, 2010) found that PLA students had higher graduation rates, persisted longer and took more credits at institutions than their non PLA counterparts. Some institutions are reluctant to get involved with CPL because they mistakenly view it as "giving away the store." "Prior learning assessment mostly occurs behind the scenes, partially because colleges avoid loudly advertising that they believe college-level learning can occur before a student ever interacts with faculty members" (Fain, 2012). Institutions also worry that students will not take as many classes, but the research has proven that PLA credit recipients end up taking more classes because they get involved with taking higher level courses (Klein-Collins, 2010). PLA credits free them up to focus on areas more aligned with their academic/career goals.

Klein-Collins (2010) found that PLA students have higher rates of degree completion than non PLA students regardless of the size, level, or type

of institution. For students pursuing a bachelor's degree, PLA students were 2.6 times more likely to complete their degree than non PLA students. Their research also found that even for PLA students that did not graduate, they persisted longer and took more credits than their non-PLA counterparts. Klein-Collins (2010) found that PLA recipients also had slightly higher GPAs than non-PLA students. Hayward and Williams (2015) also found that adult students who earn credit for prior learning have better academic results as compared with non-CPL/PLA peers. For these reasons alone, it is clear that those institutions should establish comprehensive CPL programs and where already established, expand the programs, so that more students may access prior learning assessment services. Travers (2015) found that CPL programs are hindered due to institutions program practices vary, lack of institutional support, faculty concerns about integrity/quality, lack of faculty awareness, lack of professional development for faculty and assessors, and almost no programs have a formal review process.

Many institutions are beginning to establish CPL programs and others are seeking to expand and improve upon existing CPL programs. Starting a CPL program is a challenging and arduous task. This research seeks to offer guidance to those programs institutions through presenting challenges and successes that other colleges and universities with CPL programs have experienced.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The researchers' goals are twofold: 1) to present an abbreviated review of the literature of best practices in credit for prior learning/prior learning assessment (2010-2019), and 2) to examine how several universities are operating their CPL programs. Three HBCUs were examined as well as one PWI. Literature review and secondary data were collected and analyzed to reach the purpose of the study. We utilized the American Council of Education's (ACE) definition of CPL. "ACE defines CPL as academic credit granted for demonstrated college-level equivalencies gained outside the classroom, using one of the well-established methods for assessing extra-institutional learning, including third-party validation of formal training or individualized assessment, such as portfolios" (Lakin, Nellum, Seymour & Crandall, 2015, p. 3). Many organizations use CPL and prior learning assessment (PLA) interchangeably. It does seem that PLA is becoming the more commonly embraced term in the practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Types of Credit for Prior Learning/Prior Learning Assessment
Ryu (2013) found that over ninety percent of 414 institutions that were examined had some form of CPL and eighty-two percent of students responded that they were successful in their efforts of earning CPL credits. Students expressed that saving money and decreasing total time to get a degree were their primary reasons for applying for CPL credits. A 2014 50 second survey from the Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (ACRAO) found College Level Examination Program (CLEP) to be the largest type of CPL credit awarded by all types of institutions. While CLEP is an important and common way of students receiving PLA credits, it is only one of many other methods of students receiving PLA credits. The American Council on Education maintains an extensive catalog of pre-assessed training programs. These pre-assessed trainings are a great way to jump start a CPL program. This is the first place faculty assessors should go before reviewing a training program. If the program is not listed within ACE's catalog of evaluated programs, the program can be submitted for review. These types of reviews are sometimes referred to as professional learning evaluations. Institutions should familiarize themselves with training programs that have been reviewed by ACE, CAEL, and/or the National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS). Challenge exams are another method of assessing prior learning. These types of exams are developed in house at the institution and are a great method to ensure that a student has already mastered the core competencies of a particular class. Another method of awarding PLA credits is via portfolio assessment. In lieu of an exam, students use a portfolio to document prior learning. This process is often very time consuming and some institutions offer a course in portfolio assessment. This course teaches students how to document their prior learning using a portfolio. During this process, students endeavor to match their prior knowledge with the objectives of particular courses. A team of faculty assessors then determine if the student has documented mastery of specific courses in which prior learning credits are being sought (Travers, 2015).

PRIOR LEARNING PROGRAM CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Setting up a successful CPL program can be a very complex undertaking. Organizational culture is a factor that must be considered and addressed. It is useful to offer professional development to faculty, administrators and staff, so they can learn more about prior learning assessment and its benefits to nontraditional students. This will allow all involved to learn that CPL does not give away credit hours, but instead recognizes and values that students may have already mastered the objectives and competencies of a particular course. Institutions must understand and respect the fact that learning can occur outside the classroom. Once this process happens, CPL/PLA learning champions can be identified. These individuals serve to sell the vision of the program throughout the campus. This can then be followed up by faculty assessor training. This process will work best when faculty members are rewarded for their time spent on CPL assessment activities.

This reward will be best served via financial compensation, but the course release time is also an option. Institutional practices and policies must be codified and clearly articulated. These policies should align with the institutional culture and mission. These policies should be clear and accessible to all.

Placement on the university's CPL web page is a good option. It is beneficial if a strong infrastructure is developed. Leadership should be in support of and willing to dedicate necessary staffing and resources to the program. Dedicated resources and staffing do much to ensure the success of a CPL program (Lakin et al., 2015).

Lakin (2015) outlined that institutions often face several other challenges when implementing CPL programs. These often include ill-defined institutional mission and policies/procedures. Inadequate data collection also plagues many CPL programs. Institutions must do a more consistent job of tracking and dissemination of outcomes for persistence by CPL method. A reliable method of tracking students' use of CPL is a paramount issue that must be addressed. Weak leadership is another issue. Institutions must have leaders in place that are change agents. Oftentimes, leaders that are working with CPL are pulled in too many directions and the CPL role is a secondary role in which they are unable to devote the majority of their time. Having leaders that are dedicated solely to CPL likely equates to an increased chance of program success. Leaders also need the vision and the ability to secure program resources to ensure the sustainability of the CPL program (Lakin, 2015).

Insufficient financial support is another challenge institutions face when trying to develop and operate a CPL program. In this scenario, presidential and provost support is critical. One institution the researchers examined was able to start their CPL program by way of a seed grant. Universities across the nation are struggling with the erosion of state and federal funding and university leaders are challenged with doing more with fewer budget dollars. Senior leadership support ensures that scarce resources can be allocated for staffing, digital resources, faculty costs.

PRIOR LEARNING BEST PRACTICES

Lakin (2015) found that successful CPL programs have established clear institutional policies and procedures, and they develop crosswalks. Crosswalks are charts that map out prior coursework or training and match this previous coursework or training with approved course equivalents. This method has several benefits, of which the most important is that faculty are not wasting time reviewing prior learning that has already been reviewed by curriculum committees at the institution. In addition, it helps with consistency and uniformity. Students that have had the same type of prior learning/training should receive the same results, regardless of the campus in which they might attend (Lakin et al., 2015).

Successful CPL programs invest in a high level of collaboration, which should be across academic colleges and departments, and should extend to admissions officers, the university registrar, and financial aid. Marketing and outreach should be in sync with the CPL program. Resources and services must be committed. "Organization structures must be in place that streamline and develop the CPL process and are inextricably tied to policies and procedures. Such structures include student service enrollment models, programs for tracking student data, dedicated personnel and financial support (Lakin et al., 2015, p. 14).

Institutions have had success with one-stop-shop models. It is beneficial to students when they can have access to all needed CPL services at one location. All too often, institutions ping pong students from one location to

another, which results in much wasted time and leads to unnecessary frustration for students. A successful one-stop shop will allow students to access university bursar, registrar, financial aid, testing, admissions, CPL counselors and more in one distinct location. Students should not be required to walk to or even telephone a multitude of offices to apply for and receive CPL credits (Lakin et al., 2015).

Programs can benefit from using interactive databases. Databases can be useful in organizing analysis of courses and transcripts and can be helpful when communicating with faculty, staff and students (Lakin et al., 2015). Many programs handicap themselves by relying on employees that already have a multitude of other duties. Dedicated staffing for the CPL program is essential. At a minimum, a program will need a CPL coordinator and as the program grows, it will be useful to have dedicated prior learning specialists that are devoted solely to the program. Securing external funding can be of great use to institutions that are seeking to establish CPL programs. Lakin (2015) found that several institutions had jumpstarted their CPL programs by securing grants through their state board of regents, U.S. Department of Education grant funds, and also the Lumina Foundation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this study, information about CPL programs housed in three HBCUs and one PWI was collected and analyzed: Jackson State University, Morgan State University, Martin University and University of Memphis.

Jackson State University
Jackson State University's (JSU) CPL program is housed within the College of Education and Human Development. It was founded when its former president received a call from McDonald's corporate office and an executive inquired as to whether the institution awarded CPL credits. This call sparked a call to action and a task force was created to start the process of setting up a CPL program. The task force received guidance from the American Council on Education and the Council on Adult and Experiential Learning. Task force team members also visited the University of Memphis' experiential learning credit program and spoke with the CPL program director at Morgan State University numerous times.

JSU's CPL program is coordinated by an associate dean of education. The director of the School of Lifelong Learning also assists with program administration. JSU is a member of the ACE Credit College and University Network and accepts ACE credit recommendations. JSU students scoring 28 or above on the ACT may be eligible for three credit hours of CPL credit in lieu of MATH 111 or ENG 104. JSU utilizes a portfolio system in which student portfolios are reviewed by faculty review teams that are composed of faculty from the discipline area in which the student is seeking CPL credits. Students that have been separated from the University for more than two academic semesters and have completed 90 or more semester hours are eligible to transfer in up to 12 semester hours of CPL credit from Straighter Line; however, these courses are included in the 62 hours transfer limit from two-year institutions. CPL credits at JSU are limited to 27 hours of credits

for undergraduate students and up to 6 hours of credits for graduate students. CPL credits are not assigned grades at JSU but rather have "P" for pass. JSU's CPL program works with its Veterans Affairs Office and military CPL credits may include and are not limited to the Physical Education credit with a valid DD 214, American Council on Education (ACE) transcripts, Joint Service valid DD 214, Joint Services Transcripts (JST), and/or Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES). Active duty military and veterans are exempt from all CPL related fees.

JSU's CPL policies also state that one (1) hour of academic credit may be awarded for every twenty-five (25) hours of documented professional development seat time via professional development providers that are approved by the Provost of Academic Affairs (i.e. Mississippi State Personnel Board (MSPB) Training Programs (Administrative Support Certificate program, Basic Supervisory program, Certificate in Supervisory Management, Certified Public Manager program), National Board Certified Teacher Certification Training, JSU Public Management and Leadership program, etc. JSU's program could greatly benefit from personnel that are solely dedicated to the CPL program. Additionally, a stronger leadership model would further enhance the program.

Morgan State University
Morgan State University's (MSU) CPL program began in the spring of 2015 when MSU received a $5,000 stimulus grant from the American Council on Education. MSU's CPL program is conducted by the Transfer and Articulation Team in the Registrar's Office. MSU accepts the following types of PLA: Advance

Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Exam Program (CLEP), DANTES DDST Exams, and Challenge Exams. Portfolio assessments and competency-based assessments are currently in development at MSU (www.morgan.edu/office_of_the_provost/academic_units/office_of_assessment/credit_for_prior_learning.html).

Martin University
Martin University utilizes a PLA 130 course for portfolio assessment. Students must take prerequisites of two English courses prior to taking PLA 130- (ENG 101 and ENG 110) as well as CTE 150 (microcomputer applications). Martin University allows students to receive up to 60 hours of credit by prior learning assessment. Martin is able to allow more hours of CPL credits, as it is a private institution. The other institutions examined are public, state supported universities (https://www.martin.edu/pla-portfolio-faqs).

University of Memphis
"The Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning at the University of Memphis is home to the experiential learning program (ELP), a university-wide initiative intended to consolidate and centralize CPL opportunities on campus. Designed to be a one-stop resource for students, faculty, and units, the ELP staff promote CPL options across campus and answer general questions about converting experiential learning into college credits. Since its founding in 2014, the ELP has improved the viability on campus and added a full-time portfolio coach in response to increased interest in portfolio preparation" (Lakin et al., 2015, p 15). The University of Memphis (UM) CPL program is a robust

program that uses a one-stop shop model. The program has a strong leadership model in that it is centralized under Academic Affairs. The program was founded by the former provost who now serves as president. Students have an online portfolio option in which they can apply for CPL credits. The CPL coordinator guides the CPL process and faculty members use standardized rubrics to evaluate students. UM accepts ACE credit recommendations and has a large catalog of pre-assessed training and certificate programs. CPL credits are limited to 30 hours for undergraduate students and graduate credit maximums vary by program. CPL credits are not issued grades, but instead awarded credit hours (www.memphis.edu/priorlearning).

CONCLUSION
The researchers found that creating an effective and robust CPL program is a very complex undertaking. Highly effective programs have strong leadership support. Support at the president's office level and academic affairs is paramount. Dedicated staffing was found to enhance program effectiveness. Of the programs examined, the one-stop shop model proved to be the most efficient. CPL programs need to offer a variety of pathways in which students can seek credit for their prior learning (e.g., challenge exams, CLEP, portfolio assessment, pre-assessed training/certificate programs and more). No particular model will work for every institution, but lessons were learned from existing CPL programs.

Professional development is critical for the campus community. It helps administrators, faculty and staff understand what CPL is all about and enables the program to build

strong institution-wide support. Most programs struggle with financial support of CPL, but many institutions get their start with external funding. External funding is needed to sustain already established programs. HBCUs and PWIs can learn from each other and share best practices to ensure all CPL programs offer students effective pathways for credit for their prior learning.

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Educational Opportunities Do Not Always Equal Educational Success

By Dr. R. Lee Viar IV

As a child, we are all taught about the dangers of assuming things or outcomes. Yet, as adults, at least in many cases in academia, that is exactly what is transpiring, gross and negligent assumptions regarding educational opportunities translates into educational success. Many colleges and universities simply direct their non-traditional learners' attention to the positive aspects of access (i.e., flexibility, convenience, less time to complete degree). However, focusing solely on the non-traditional learner and the online platform, providing access is simply not enough, instead, success for the non-traditional learner should be the goal. The consequences of these chains of events are staggering. For example, according to the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA), only 48.9 percent of adults are graduating with an undergraduate degree within six years of the start of their program. That means that institutions of higher education are essentially abandoning the 51.1 percent of the adult learners enrolled in courses.

The point of perspective needs to be recognized in order to fully understand and appreciate the situation. While higher education administrators and faculty fully comprehend what is required to complete a given degree program, access to an opportunity to earn a degree is not enough, the potential non-traditional learner needs to be made fully aware of the likelihood of the full-time commitment to successfully complete the degree. However, what mechanisms are in place to enable the non-traditional learner to transition from initial access to ultimate success? This is not meant to diminish the quality or relevancy of the degree, regardless of the educational institution, whether public university or a for-profit institution.

The non-traditional learner deserves, in good faith, the same information and guidance that their younger counterparts receive, online or on campus. Consider the information and guidance being provided and the modality in which it is presented. First, the issue surrounding technology and the non-traditional learner. A wealth of information and resources may be available to learners via the Internet or a web-based repository. However, after teaching online for nearly twenty years, I can attest, many online non-traditional learners are "challenged" by technology, even though it is portrayed as easily understandable or convenient. This is accurate, but, if the user does not possess the know how to navigate or fully utilize the resources, what is the benefit and how is that going to move the non-traditional learner from the access stage to the success stage along their academic journey?

Second, the non-traditional learner tends to be more reluctant to seek help and assistance, but when it is sought, their needs are likely not met. In my role as President of ANTSHE and a professor working with non-traditional learners, too many times I hear and have experienced that the assistance is only available during limited hours and is not conducive to most working students. In addition, when the assistance is provided, it is done so in more of a remedial atmosphere that is demotivational or non-productive. No attempt is made

to make a genuinely, meaningful connection with the student in order to identify their needs and provide relevant assistance.

Finally, and perhaps the most important, is to realize that the non-traditional learner is impatient. The non-traditional learner is either starting later than their younger counterparts or returning years after most others have already completed their degree programs. Thus, creating even more of a sense of urgency for the non-traditional learner to complete their degree. The time for learning theories and mulling over topics that have long since been exhausted is not on their agenda. They require knowledge and skills that will facilitate their learning and ultimately lead them back to their desired professional position. This can assume the models of problem-based learning, cognitive learning theory and a host of others.

It is imperative to realize that opportunities do not translate into automatic success or grant added or extra resources or time to the non-traditional learner, that is not the point or premise of this article. The non-traditional learner or what I call the new-traditional learner, is not seeking an easier path versus their younger counterparts, rather, just a level playing field with the same opportunities to succeed. An adult iteration of the flipped classroom model could be considered. The non-traditional learner brings a host of knowledge and lived experiences to the online classroom and traditional classroom settings, perhaps tapping into this

knowledge base could benefit all the learners and, on some level, the faculty as well. "Once you stop learning, you start dying" Albert Einstein. With this famous quote as a foundation, isn't it time for more than the non-traditional students to learn, but also the administration and faculty to learn and grow from the growing demographic on their campuses before it's too late? The younger student demographic is shrinking based upon birth rates and demographic shifts. Hence, with estimates ranging from between eighteen to twenty colleges projected to close annually for the coming years, shouldn't attention be given to this demographic who wants and needs this educational opportunity?

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Proposing an Andragogy Aligned Instructional Design to Improve Persistence and Completion of Non-traditional Adult Undergraduates

By Drs. Jie Ke and Deidre L. Wheaton

As a result of societal, political and economic shifts in the U.S., including job loss, promotion aspirations, dissatisfaction with status in life, an increasing number of adults, age 25 and above, have chosen to return to colleges and universities to obtain a bachelor's degree (Choy, 2002; Moffatt, 2011). National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2010) showed that adults aged 25 and older represent 59% of part-time, 27% of full-time, or 39% of total enrollment in undergraduate colleges and universities nationwide. Although the number of adults aged 25 and older declined some from year 2015 to 2017, the number of college student aged 25 to 34 still increased by 35 percent between 2001 and 2015, which is also projected to increase 11 percent between 2015 and 2026 (NCES, 2017). Since the prime years for adult students to return to college are from ages 25 to 35, a further increase of adult learners can be expected at least to 2030 (Pearson, 2018). Those adult students have brought to the classroom unique learning interests, educational goals and instructional needs (Miglietti & Strange, 1998;

Quaye & Harper, 2014).

Along with this trend, scholarly interest in studying what post-secondary institutions should do to meet the needs of this unique population for success has also greatly increased (Ross-Gordon, 2011). Compared to the higher enrollment rate, the picture of retention and completion of those non-traditional students is bleak. Only half of adult learners (48.9 percent) graduated within six years at four-year institutions 64.7 percent of students who attended fouryear public institutions graduated within six years (Fredman, 2018). Non-traditional adult students are challenged daily by many factors that are unique to them and make their journey to success harder than their traditional counterparts. Osam, Bergman and Cumberland (2017) updated the list of barriers/challenges facing returning adult learners, which were grouped into three categories: situational, institutional and dispositional. For each category, the researchers provided the institutions some recommendations to help adult learners overcome the barriers, such

as providing more financial assistance, low cost daycare service, and establishing the connection between the adult learners and the academic community. However, Osam, Bergman and Cumberland (2017) did not provide instructional solutions to overcome the dispositional barriers, which was an urgent need for the field of adult and continuing higher education (Lim, You, & Hwang, 2019). Dispositional barriers are person-specific characteristics including fear of failure and low self-efficacy (perceptions about the ability to learn and succeed). Shepherd and Nelson (2012) mentioned lack of confidence due to perceived faculty perception about adult learners' low academic skills as one of the learning barriers. It is believed that such a perception could be changed through communication and interactions between faculty and students during the course of teaching.

Following the soaring enrollment number of adult learners, the retention and graduation rates of nontraditional adult students are, of necessity, a major concern of adult

completion programs across the country. The purpose of the study, therefore, is to seek instructional solutions to overcome dispositional barriers of adult learners. This laudable purpose will be achieved by examining the current adult teaching strategies in the adult completion program and identifying the gaps between those strategies and the approaches recommended by the widely accepted adult learning model – Andragogical Process Model of Learning. The instructional solutions will be presented using the five-step ADDIE model. The five steps are Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation (Gagne, Wager, Golas, Keller & Russell, 2005). The ADDIE model is one of the most commonly used instructional design models in adult education. At the analysis stage, learning needs and knowledge gaps are identified. At the design stage, learning objectives and course outline, including delivery, teaching and evaluation strategies, are specified. At the development stage, teaching materials, lesson plans, facilitation plans and evaluation forms will be provided. At the implement stage, teaching is delivered as planned with ongoing evaluation and adjustment, and lastly at the evaluation stage, the teaching effectiveness is assessed through teacher's self-assessment and self-reflection as well as student's performance evaluation and feedback.

To reach the purpose of the study, the following guiding questions were used: 1) What are the currently used teaching strategies of the instructors in the adult completion program? 2) What are the gaps between those strategies and ones suggested by the Andragogical learning model? 3) What can be done at each stage of the ADDIE model to improve teaching and help adult learners to complete and succeed?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Andragogy remains as the pillar adult education theory and has been widely recognized and practiced despite many challenges against it since the 1970s (Henschke, 2015). Andragogy is the science of teaching adults, and its learning model is used as the theoretical framework of this study. Andragogy assumes that adult learners have: 1) an increased desire and ability to be selfdirected learners; 2) a growing reservoir of relevant experience relate to their college coursework; 3) an increased readiness to learn that aligns with the developmental tasks of their various social roles; 4) a mindset that embraces learning that is grounded in problem solving and application; and 5) a motivation to learn that is more internal than external.

The learning process of andragogy, which serves as the framework for this study, differs significantly from the learning process of pedagogy. Whereas pedagogy, the science of the study of how children learn, typically focuses on teachers as the primary leader/figure of authority in the learning context, in andragogy the learning context is more egalitarian, decisions are mutually negotiated between instructors and adult learners, and authority is shared. Table 1. Learning Process Differences between Andragogy and Pedagogy, illustrates some key contrasts between these two approaches to learning. As shown in Table 1, the learning process of andragogy is different from that of pedagogy in the following aspects: preparing learners, climate, planning, diagnosis of needs, setting of objectives, designing learning plans and learning activities.

This eight-step learning model provided the guidelines for effective teaching in the field of adult education (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2005, p.87):

1)The core principles of andragogy provide a sound foundation for planning adult learning experience. Without any other information, they reflect a sound approach to effective adult learning.

2)Analysis should be conducted to understand (a) the particular adult learners and their individual characteristics, (b) the characteristics of the subject matter, and (c) the characteristics of the particular situation in which adult learning is being used.

Adjustments necessary to the core principles should be anticipated.

3)The goals and purpose for which the adult learning is conducted provide a frame that shapes the learning experience. They should be clearly identified and possible effects on adult learning explicated.

What the literature confirms is that the analysis of learners' needs and situational factors are as important as providing a safe environment for learners in improving the effectiveness of teaching. It is also critical for teachers to incorporate adults' prior knowledge and work experience as "none but the humble become good teachers of adults. In an adult class the student's experience counts for as much as the teacher's knowledge" (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2005, p.21). Additionally, mutual planning and shared control of the course design and facilitation will help adult learners achieve personal autonomy in learning, which eventually create self-directed learners.

Table 1. *Learning Process Differences between Pedagogy and Andragogy*

Process Elements	Pedagogy	Andragogy
Preparing Learners	Minimal	Provide information
		Prepare for participation
		Help develop realistic expectations
		Begin thinking about content
Climate	Authority-oriented	Relaxed, trusting
	Formal	Mutually respectful
	Competitive	Informal, warm
		Collaborative, supportive
		Openness and authenticity
		Humanness
Planning	By teacher	Mechanism for mutual planning by learners and facilitator
Diagnosis of Needs	By teacher	By mutual assessment
Setting of Objectives	By teacher	By mutual negotiation
Designing Learning Plans	Logic of subject matter	Sequenced by readiness
	Content units	Problem units
Learning Activities	Transmittal techniques	Experiential techniques (inquiry)
Evaluation	By teacher	Mutual re-diagnosis of needs
		Mutual measurement of program

Source: Knowles, Holton & Swanson (2005), p.52.

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES TO DEGREE COMPLETION

The challenge of teaching effectively in an adult learning program is compounded by a myriad of other complexities. Although empirical studies showed non-traditional students may actually perform better academically than traditional students, these studies suggest that they do so despite numerous multi-level challenges facing them such as stress and lack of support from their institutions (Carney-Crompton & Tan, 2002; Osam, Bergman & Cumberland, 2017). Osam, Bergman and Cumberland (2017) have provided a list of barriers/challenges facing returning adult learners, which were grouped into three categories: *situational, institutional* and *dispositional.*

1)Situational barriers are finances, family life and responsibilities, health, work conflict and transportation. The interesting finding from the study is that the higher work and family demands women have, the stronger their will to return to school (Elman & O'Rand, 2007; Deutsch & Schmertz, B. (2011). Adult learners normally seek for emotional support from their family and friends.

2) Institutional barriers include institutional policies and procedures, such as the availability of faculty, lack of night, weekend, and online courses, admissions and advising (Kasworm, 2010; Hardin, 2008). In order to increase the persistence and retention rate of the students, scholars, such as Carney-Crompton and Tan (2002), Compton, Cox and Laanan (2006), and Osam, Bergman and Cumberland (2017), called for more support from college institutions regarding admission procedures, advising, faculty support, evening and weekend class scheduling and more.

3)Dispositional barriers are person-specific characteristics including fear of failure and low self-efficacy (perceptions about the ability to learn and succeed) (Osam, Bergman and Cumberland, 2017). Such barriers are often overcome only through determination and self-reliance (Goto & Martin, 2009; Kasworm, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used included a structured interview questionnaire with 18 open-ended questions from the andragogical process model of learning. The theoretical framework of this study, was developed to understand the existing teaching practices and strategies of instructors of adult learners. The questionnaire was administered online by a professor in another department to avoid conflicts of interest and protect interviewees' identity better. The survey link was sent to the targeted respondents through email. One invitation email and three reminders were sent during the period of three months. Participation in the study was completely voluntary and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) informed consent form was provided at the beginning of the survey. Respondents had a choice of agreeing or not agreeing to the terms before they could proceed to the survey or exit.

A qualitative methodology was selected because this research design is most effective when seeking to explain a certain phenomenon especially when existing theories and literature on the phenomenon are limited and generalization is difficult to reach. In comparison to a quantitative survey, a qualitative questionnaire gathers richer and more descriptive information about the instructors' teaching. Qualitative methodology can also assist in identifying solutions to issues that emerge in the phenomenon such as how to teach non-traditional adult undergraduates effectively.

The interview protocol was formulated based on the Andragogical Process Model and the questions were derived from pedagogical and andragogical assumptions in Gibbons and Wentworth (2001), Henschke and Cooper (2006), Holmes and Abington-Cooper (2000) and Knowles (1973, 1980, & 1984).

DATA COLLECTION SITE AND SAMPLE

The data for this study was collected from an adult degree completion program at a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in Central Mississippi. The institution reported a Fall 2017 enrollment of 8,500 undergraduate and graduate students--93% of whom are African American (JSU Factbook, 2018). Institutional enrollment data for Fall 2016 revealed a wide range of types of students enrolled as either part time or full time students: Returning Undergraduate Students (47.53%), Returning or Transfer Graduate Students (16.90%), First Time Freshmen (13.17%), First Time Graduate Students (6.73%), First Time Transfer Students (7.92%), Readmitted Students (6.71%), and Other (1.04%) (JSU Factbook, 2017, p. 30). The department was designed with working adults in mind. Two adult undergraduate degree programs are housed in the department: the Professional Interdisciplinary Studies academic degree program (PrIS) and the Complete to Compete Program, an initiative of the State of Mississippi aimed at increasing the number of adults who have an undergraduate degree by applying some credit for prior learning or credit for work experience to facilitate the degree completion process.

Both programs offer a flexible degree/curriculum plan which allows returning and transfer students to make maximum use of college credit hours earned transfer from other institution or gained during prior enrollment. To meet the learning needs of working adults 25years old and older, the department offers academic credit courses exclusively during the evenings (6:00-8:50 pm), on weekends (select Saturday morning and Sunday evening courses), and recently launched a fully online degree program. Since its inception in 2002, the program's appeal has expanded considerably. A variety of students, including traditional undergraduate students, transfer students, and student athletes, have found their academic home in the department. The enrollment of the department has been ranked consistently highest in the College of Education, and institutionally the department is a leader in in the conferral of undergraduate degrees.

DATA ANALYSIS

The researchers used descriptive and thematic content analysis to analyze collected data (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). During the process of collecting data on the teaching strategies used by the full-time and part-time faculty in one adult learning program, several insightful themes began to emerge that have given rise to some important recommendations for developing an effective adult learning and teaching program.

To protect the participants' identity and keep the responses anonymous, researchers coded the voluntary participants for data analysis using the last four digits of participants' University ID numbers or their social security number, whichever number the participants were willing to provide (Appendix A.).

Table 2. *Summary of Selected Instructors' Responses*

Stage in ADDIE	Question #	Teaching Strategies and Practices	Sample responses
Analysis	1	Conducting needs assessment	At the beginning of each writing intensive course I require that the students complete an in-class diagnostic essay or short paragraph. (I1)
Design	2	Make students understand the learning goals	I always make it very clear to students what the course goals and objectives are. This is done by reviewing the syllabus on the first night of class. I also inform students what objective(s) we are addressing at each class meeting." (I6)
Design	3	Mutual planning of the student learning experience	I always leave room to make amendments to the curriculum to the course schedule. I also ask students for comments, feedback, and/or suggestions as it relates to the course. (I2)
Development	4	Incorporate students' work experience	I know the working background during the first class session and understand what they can provide and what they need from the class through observation. For example, I invited a guest speaker for HRD seminar course when I felt students were ready for more in-depth view on HRD practices. I will also encourage the students who have hands-on experiences in HRD to lead the class discussion (I3)
Evaluation/ Development	10	Assess student learning	In most of the courses that I teach, I assess student learning using graded assignments, mid-term, and final examinations. In the research course, students are responsible for a final project. For the internship and specialized professional training courses, students are assessed using homework assignments as well as evaluations from their host organizations. (I10)
Evaluation	14	Self-assessment	Somewhat. One of the most practical ways that I reflect on my practice is by gaining insight and direction from talking to my students. I value the input that I receive from my students and use it to inform my practice. (I4)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

All of the full-time and adjunct faculty were invited to take the survey. Ten valid responses were received, of which three were adjunct faculty. Seven full-time faculty and staff/administrators with faculty status participated in the study, of which four were African American, two Asian and one Caucasian. Five of the full-time faculty were female, and the rest of them were male. The courses that were reported by the instructors were general education courses such as English composition, World Literature, Professional Writing and College
Algebra as well as specialized courses such as Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies, Customer Relations, Leadership Seminar, Human Resource Development Seminar and research courses.

The responses to the 18 survey questions were selected to analyze on the five stages of the ADDIE model. Table 2 is the summary of the selected responses.

From the data, the following themes of current teaching strategies emerged:

1)Analysis stage: Three out of ten respondents used at least two different strategies to assess learning needs. Fifty percent (50%) of the respondents used writing or diagnostic essays, and 40% reported using pre-tests to assess needs. Respondents used a range of strategies to assess needs: informal (conversations) and formal (writing assignments and/or pre-tests). They reported varying purposes for assessing needs including assessment that was instruction focused (to shape how content is presented) and assessment that was student engagement focused (to integrate students prior knowledge into course activities/discussions). Compared to what's suggested in the andragogical learning model, the results were mixed in terms of alignment. Some attention is given to assessing students learning needs and prior knowledge; however, needs assessments are clustered only at the beginning of courses typically as ice-breakers or pre-tests. There was no indication of follow-up assessments of students learning needs. There is also very limited indication of mutual planning.

2)Design stage: As to setting up learning objectives and designing the learning experience, 7 out of 10 respondents included learning objects in the syllabus, but only 3 out of 10 both reviewed the objectives on day one and continued to refer back to them throughout the semester. The respondents reported using a range of strategies to ensure student understanding of learning goals: a) written goals and objectives in course syllabi; b) oral explanation of course objectives and learning goals; and c.) repetitive linkage of weekly course content back to course objectives and learning goals. Compared to what is suggested in the andragogical learning model as best practices, the surveyed instructors failed to include the students in the mutual planning of learning objectives. Although they did not allow adult learners to engage in the process of determining course learning outcomes, 8 out of 10 respondents did have specific means of allowing for mutual negotiation of the learning experiences (in terms of activities and assignments), which indicated some alignment to the andragogical learning model.

3) Development stage: In developing lesson plans, 8 out of 10 respondents indicated that they did make efforts to connect course content to students' work experiences or to realworld issues. Instructors made efforts to link learning to real-world experiences related to the course content through: 1) the engagement of students with relevant prior knowledge in student-led discussions of course content, and 2) using instructional examples from the real-world discussed in class. Compared to what's suggested in the andragogical learning model, students' prior knowledge or work experiences are used to illustrate or emphasize course content; however, their prior knowledge or work experiences are not the basis or foundation of the course learning objectives.

4)Delivery stage: In delivering the course content, 7 out of 10 of the respondents reported using a variety of different instructional strategies. The respondents reported a wide array of approaches to ensuring both a welcoming learning environment that was also rigorous. Three responses appeared twice each: Peer learning/group work, Ground rules of respect, and encourage visits during office hours. In fostering dialogue and interactions in class, explicit efforts are made to promote student dialogue and interactions (both with instructors and among peers) at multiple levels and using multiple strategies. For example, 4 out of 10 respondents used discussions of current events of work related issues to foster dialogue; and some instructors developed dialogues and carry out small group discussions among students on their life, work and recent events (around students' interests). In general, participating instructors did what's suggested in

the learning model to ensure effective teaching at this stage.

5)Evaluation stage: To evaluate students' performance, ten respondents used graded assignments (home and in-class), and eight respondents used tests (mid-term & final) and quizzes. Other methods of evaluation are presentations, student feedback, discussions (online), projects, journals, observations and concert participant. Additionally, selfreflection was practiced by most instructors, unfortunately, much of the self-reflection assignments are clustered at the end of the semester. As to using students' reflection to collect feedback, some instructors just started to realize the importance of students' reflection activities. The responses showed limited use of formative evaluation as most of the assessments used by the instructors were summative evaluation.

To summarize, some gaps between the practices adopted by instructors in the study and the effective strategies indicated in the andragogical learning model were identified:

1) Not enough understanding of students' learning styles and learning needs.

2) Lack of mutual planning in course design.

3) In terms of evaluating courses, summative evaluations are employed in most cases. Selfevaluation and reflective activities were deployed on a limited scale.

4) Work experiences are not the basis or foundation of courses' learning objectives. This might be due to students' lack of knowledge and work experience in the subject.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The fast increase of non-traditional adult undergraduates demands special attention in serving the new student body from higher education institutions. The returning adult learners face different kinds of challenges in their relaunched academic journey that might prevent them from completing their degree program. Some barriers come from within: adult learners feel out of place and excluded when in the same classroom as young traditional adult learners; they doubt their ability to learn and succeed; they have low self-esteem and self-efficacy; and they are lack of confidence in the academic community due to their perceptions of their teachers about their academic skills (Flynn, Brown, Johnson & Rodger, 2011; Genco, 2007; Goto and Martin, 2009; Kasworm, 2010; Shepherd and Nelson, 2012). However, those dispositional barriers can be overcome through an effective instructional design.

The study identified some gaps between practice and theory of teaching. Compared with the suggested effective teaching strategies, practices used by the instructors in the study need to be reviewed and improved.

Some broad areas where improvements in teaching effectiveness are needed were also evident in the responses. Of highest priority were the instructors' inconsistent use of best practices for assessing student learning needs, instructors' insufficient use of mutual planning of the learning experience, and instructor's ineffective assessment of the status of the student's learning progress. Taken together these three weaknesses (areas for improvement)

strike at the heart of the teaching and learning exchange (facilitation of the learning process), how do instructors determine (identify) what learners already know? How do they engage (or involve) learners in the work of choosing the types of learning activities or experiences that will best help them achieve their learning goals? How do instructors assist adult learners in understanding (or charting) their learning progress?

From the data analysis, the researchers of the study provide the following instructional recommendations to answer the above questions using the ADDIE model. At the analysis stage, analyzing the students and their needs is extremely important and cannot be skipped. Multiple methods should be used to collect information for the needs assessment in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the result. Some methods to be considered are ice-breakers on the first day of class, a pre-test or survey on knowledge and skills before introducing the topic, and a case study that mimic their working experience. At the design stage, mutual planning of learning objectives is a must. The learning objectives could incorporate the result from the needs assessment from the analysis stage as well as the adult learners' prior knowledge and experience.

This process will make mutual planning of learners' learning experience possible. Last but not least, evaluation should be implemented throughout the learning process. Both formative and summative evaluations are needed to collect feedback from students and check performance against the learning goals set at the design stage.

Constant feedback and mutual planning based on ongoing evaluation could promote a conducive learning environment, where anxiety of adult learners can be reduced, their bound with instructors can be strengthened, and their sense of belonging and confidence can be elevated.

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Roadmap: Career Connection in the Classroom

By Dr. Melissa Goodson and Andrea Chartier

The College of St. Scholastica, a private college in Duluth, MN, serves 4,043 students; 1667 traditional, 1564 graduate, and additional 800+ extended and online (The College of St. Scholastica). It is necessary for us to partner as faculty members, students, student services, Career Services and members of the alumni efficiently to find data that can inform our institutional teaching objectives, methods and adjust the curriculum in our programs. This paper will share practical tips for developing a road map by program major, collecting data and implementing the road map tool in an academic department.

Dr. Melissa Goodson is conducting research to better understand the Twin Cities metropolitan market for jobs in Organization Development (OD jobs study). The study will include the analysis of job titles and skills required as well as an examination of the businesses that hire these roles. The goal of the study is to help identify student skills and to understand business needs. Andrea Chartier, Career Services Counselor, has supported this research and other work in the undergraduate management degree program by introducing Goodson to the RealTime Talent career tool and

the Saints Roadmap model. Goodson and Chartier co-authored the Marketing Degree Co-Curricular Schema included in this paper in Appendix B.

Andrea Chartier is a Career Counselor who worked with the team that developed a Saints Roadmap with the elements of Explore, Develop and Connect. Explore has tactics for the student to discover and assess their own relevant major/ career interests, skills and values. The Develop criteria includes a professional portfolio of materials that could be created in or out of the classroom - from resumes to cover letters to professional online presence. Support from staff and faculty can be from class time and assignments dedicated to work on these elements to encouraging and questioning about the readiness of these materials. The Connect section is what requires faculty expertise and needs to be faculty led as it addresses the continued growth and development of the student with a focus in their industry and area of focus. Emphasis is put on networking, mentorship, experiential learning and any other certifications or coursework one might need to pursue to be

competitive in the marketplace. In all elements of the Saints Roadmap from College to Career there are ways to both support and engage faculty but for the purpose of this work we have chosen to focus on the Connect section - a framework for co-curricular learning designed with faculty insight and experience and shared throughout advising and counseling staff.

LITERATURE REVIEW
In the article, "Embedding Employability: How Academics and Career Staff can Co-Create Student Success" assembled by The Career Leadership Collective (2017), Career Services is identified as the center of collaboration with both internal and external partners. It is noted that shifts in financial resources and changes in the labor market have created more of a demand for universities to collaborate and work with employers and external partners - and that students pose the "employability question" more and more. Alumni want to stay connected as business partners. As key stakeholders in the college environment - students, alumni, and employers, are all demanding career readiness and employability be a focus of the college experience, it is a good time to look at how career

service professionals and faculty can come together to best support one another in supporting students in gaining professional skills, connections and experience necessary to succeed in the pursuit of their future careers.

Podany (2017) writes on models for scaling Career Services - and encourages the work of "stimulating the campus ecosystem." In the 3rd of his series of articles on the topic, he focuses on scaling career learning into the classroom. He refers to this as an "integrated model of career learning." In his paper, "Scaling Career Services" 2017, university bureaucracy/silos is indicated as one of the most significant barriers to scaling. He encourages not tackling the fact that barriers exist, but instead addressing what the barriers are preventing. For example silos cause a lack of clarity for students and employers and effect the user experience. Podany (2017) encourages exploration of the question, "What does the user experience look like when students know exactly how to find what they need from career services on our campus?" Realizing that silos exist between faculty/staff worlds, breaking down those barriers and working collectively on this roadmap initiative has allowed us to create a concept that can support faculty in advising and guiding students, ensuring they encourage students to stay on track with career exploration and career readiness elements such as involvement in co-curricular experiential learning.

CHANGING IMPORTANCE OF CAREER SERVICES
Faculty are not expected to be professionals in all aspects of career education, but instead encouraged to be partners with Career Services in finding ways to integrate career

exploration and career skill building into coursework and major specific expectations. Podany (2017) encourages "scaling career learning into the classroom." An integrated model looks at the central part of the college experience - the classroom - and asks how we can encourage more field experiences and more career reflective assignments. Successful models have been demonstrated at stellar schools across the country:

In the George Mason University Career Services Strategic Plan 2018-2020, they have identified "Embed Career Readiness into the Curriculum" as one of their core principles. Under this goal they outline these strategic actions: 1) financially incentivise faculty to redesign courses with career readiness components 2) leverage technology to bring career services into the classroom 3) expand school-embedded career services model and 4) facilitate integration of employers into classrooms and academic activities. They additionally have a goal of increasing access to and engagement in experiential learning - which the Roadmap sets out to do (Podany, 2017).

The University of Miami Toppel career center entitled their strategic plan, "Career Services is Everybody's Business." In it they outline the goal of integrating career advising within schools and colleges - and the plan to "create and implement career education plans for students specific to their school and college using the "explore, prepare, connect" model (Podany, 2017)."

University of Groningen, The Netherlands also did an internal audit of all academic programs related to the topic of employability -

career information of graduates, integrating professional field, opportunities for students and employers to connect, student participation in extracurriculars, and knowledge of/desire to collaborate with career services (Wijnand, 2017).

University of Groningen also developed career-related modules including a student consultancy group in partnership with the local chamber of commerce and regional government. Additionally they developed living learning communities to develop and practice real world skills with the support of faculty (Wijnand, 2017).

Multiple programs emphasizing career/classroom and career staff/faculty cross collaborations are featured in the report "More than just a job search: Relevant, Intentional, and Accessible Career Services for Today's Student (and Returning Adults)" put together by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning or CAEL (2018), includes particularly strong examples from SUNY-Empire State College, Brandman University, and California Baptist University.

SUNY-Empire State College is primarily focused on the adult learner. Even so there is an educational planning course that is required of all students. This course includes career exploration, for which students must re-search the field around which they will be de-signing their degrees, including an examination of labor market data and interviews with professionals in the field (CAEL, 2018).

Brandman University was noted for having integrated career-related discussions into the academic advising process. Students start mapping out a career plan with set

milestones from their first meeting with an academic advisor - giving them a single point of contact rather than two. Their career services staff worked with their curriculum committees to redesign graduation requirements to include career-related activities and milestones. In addition, several of Brandman's degree programs now require students to build a professional career portfolio using their online CareerLink platform. The portfolio ensures students are able to articulate what they are learning in the classroom, linked to their career goals (CAEL, 2018).

Also highlighted in the report from CAEL, California Baptist University's career services center works closely with faculty curriculum committees to incorporate career center services and career-based learning activities into course learning objectives specifically for the institution's online students. These included "meet with a career advisor" as a course requirement, career and skills assessments, development of a career portfolio to provide employers details about skills and experiences, and other career-focused assignments. In this way, career services are integrated into the entire academic experience for online students.

In "A Roadmap for Transforming College to Career Experience" a crowdsourced paper edited by Andy Chan and Tommy Derry Faculty they site Hampden-Sydney College where faculty led dinner groups focused on exploring interests through vocational questions. They also host "C-Day" - with emphasis on Convocation, Calling, Career, Community, Ceremony and Celebration. They recently rolled out a program called Tiger Tracks, to assist students in navigating connections between college and career. They enlisted the support of faculty in developing the roadmaps

to also get their buy-in. Similarly this is the process we are beginning with the Roadmap Connect section conversations.

WHY THE ROADMAP?
We designed (and continue to re-design) the roadmap as a tool any student can use at any point in their college career to ensure they are on the path to professional readiness. These are meant to be steps that can be completed as students are ready - understanding that we cannot tie career readiness to any specific year of school - as this varies so much from student to student. Podany (2017) encourages "Scaling the Entire Career Education Curriculum" - and looking at how students have 24/7, simple, clear access to everything they need to know about career development, prior to graduation in a personalized manner. Our roadmap framework is designed to be broad enough to be used by any major but specific enough to create a common language that can be shared by faculty, staff and students in understanding the path from campus to career.

FACULTY ROLES IN CAREER CONNECTIONS
The role of faculty members in securing access for students to internships and opportunities for skill-building experiences inside and outside of the classroom is expanding because of pressure from employers, students, families and government. It's no surprise that 85% of freshman in an annual survey said they went to college to get a job (Marcus, 2018). As part of the role in teaching, faculty are informally expected to have connections in the business community and open doors for soon-to-be-graduates. At The College of St. Scholastica, the faculty team advises students in academic planning, advises on the internship process throughout the academic year, mentors students informally

and develops relationships with community businesses for guest speakers, field trips and experiential learning projects. This is in addition to the teaching load and is not compensated as additional load.

FACULTY ROLE IN ADVISING
During the advising discussions at The College of St. Scholastica it is typical that the student is focused on which classes they need for the semester and that they get registered for those classes. The conversation is expected to be more transactional in nature rather than relational. If the operations, therefore the culture of the school, could change to having the central advising team support and direct on classes necessary for graduation then the faculty could use the time typically dedicated to advising to have a conversation about academics and career planning.

FACULTY ROLE IN MENTORING
When students trust faculty members they are more able to connect with them according to interests and experience. Some faculty members naturally take on this mentor role, without a formal program. Mentorships can be informal and formal as faculty and staff provide experiential opportunities and support in achieving educational and career goals (DeAngelo, Mason & Winters, 2016).

DeAngelo, Mason and Winters (2016) posit that faculty mentoring is different than advising; adding a layer of complexity to the faculty role in the student-teacher relationship. The authors note that culture and institutional norms have an impact on mentor/mentee results. Undergraduate and graduate students alike expect that faculty members will have ample time and space to conduct mentoring sessions. Often these conversations lead to career readiness and connections to members of the industry the student

wishes to become employed. There is not a formal mentorship program at the College of St. Scholastica. Many schools inside the College have formed somewhat informal mentoring programs, especially in health sciences where requirements dictate hands-on experience prior to graduating with the degree. The intent of the Saints Roadmap is to lead the advising conversation into one of a mentoring conversation with emphasis on how to connect with community members, how to gain work experience and how to find a job.

FACULTY ROLE IN CAREER PLANNING
Our approach to faculty and staff providing service in career planning is not new. In 1994, Joseph A. Johnston, Director of the Career Center at the University of Missouri-Columbia, wrote an article that outlines the important pieces in the partnership formula both inside and outside the institution that make career planning available. Johnston (1994) writes that shared responsibility stems from a true partnership with students, employers and faculty in order to improve the learning environment. Our approach in the process at The College of St. Scholastica is collaborative and inclusive. Below is a discussion on what faculty members and Career Services staff can do to help guide students through the Saints Roadmap.

METHODS
Saints Roadmap in Practice
The Saints Roadmap will be used to document, communicate and promote key skills intended to be obtained by the students in the degree programs. The roadmap will also guide faculty members and departments in the journey of degree creation and curriculum changes. In Appendix A, we are outlining the roadmap for students to be successful in gaining experience and considering career options during

their academic career. Appendix B is used for faculty and staff to critically examine the curriculum and supporting elements in the experience. It is an opportunity to consider the emphasis on clubs, organizations and networking outside of the degree that compliment and support the students. Additionally, it is a way for academic departments to prioritize conference participation, partnerships and experiential learning approaches both inside and outside of the classroom.

OUR FACULTY/STAFF PARTNERSHIP
The authors are working to create a best practices model for the School of Business and Technology to support student success across all areas of degree programming including extended and online studies. By combining efforts on career ready offerings in the classroom as well as academic program research such as the Organization Development Jobs study and the Saints Roadmap we hope to have a clear path to a model that inspires success.
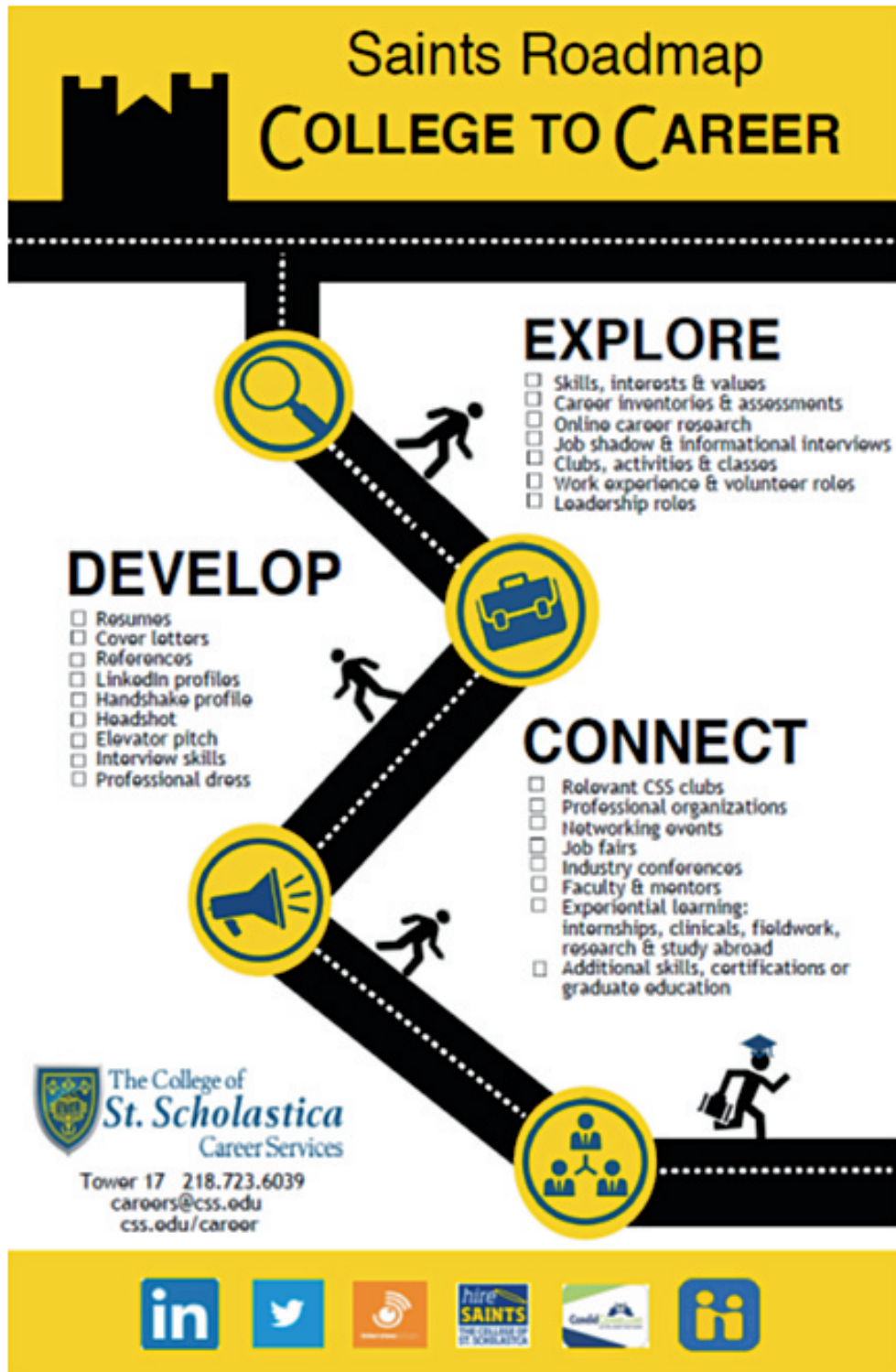
DEVELOPING A SAINTS ROAD MAP BY PROGRAM MAJOR
The Career Services team has developed a template and is meeting with faculty members across all majors. Starting with several engaged faculty from diverse majors across campus allowed us to test the tool, to get feedback, and to ensure the Connect section was broad enough to work for all majors. In doing so we have made some minor changes of our categories and are now ready to go to the Marketing Department to solidify final graphics. Once we have a representative version we would like to co-present this concept - Career Services and faculty - and engage larger groups of faculty in creating their own through on site experiential workshops.
The goal is to have three versions in

the final product: 1) a static marketing piece to explain to prospective students and those looking to change majors what their peers have engaged in for experiential learning and co-curricular engagement opportunities 2) A live piece (ie Google Doc) for extended collaborative editing among department faculty to be used for advising and guiding students and as an extensive database for students both exploring and building career experience and 3) a blank form/ template to be used in advising students and ensuring students are on track in each of the core areas.

FUTURE RESEARCH
The approach we are taking in making change within our institution is a grass roots approach. In August, a new President will be inaugurated at The College of St. Scholastica. Her vision and leadership will help set strategy for the degree programs and services offered at the college. Rapid changeis necessary to provide a quality liberal arts education.

In order to be successful, there are key changes that will need to occur. First, the emphasis on career services and career planning should be embedded within the college's strategic plan. Second, faculty and department buy-in will have to occur throughout the college. Third, the authors suggest that the questions in Appendix C be used in discussions about institutional assessment related to career services. Finally, by using the good work by institutions outlined in the literature review we can continue to be inspired about the future possibilities to best serve our students. We recommend documenting the process and goals as part of institutional assessment and the strategic plan as well as surveying students and faculty about ongoing career services related needs.

Saints Roadmap
COLLEGE TO CAREER

EXPLORE
- ☐ Skills, interests & values
- ☐ Career inventories & assessments
- ☐ Online career research
- ☐ Job shadow & informational interviews
- ☐ Clubs, activities & classes
- ☐ Work experience & volunteer roles
- ☐ Leadership roles

DEVELOP
- ☐ Resumes
- ☐ Cover letters
- ☐ References
- ☐ LinkedIn profiles
- ☐ Handshake profile
- ☐ Headshot
- ☐ Elevator pitch
- ☐ Interview skills
- ☐ Professional dress

CONNECT
- ☐ Relevant CSS clubs
- ☐ Professional organizations
- ☐ Networking events
- ☐ Job fairs
- ☐ Industry conferences
- ☐ Faculty & mentors
- ☐ Experiential learning: internships, clinicals, fieldwork, research & study abroad
- ☐ Additional skills, certifications or graduate education

The College of
St. Scholastica
Career Services

Tower 17   218.723.6039
careers@css.edu
css.edu/career

Degree/ School/Dept	MARKETING School of Business and Technology
Faculty/Staff Contacts	Kathy Modin, Chair Melissa Goodson, Coordinator
Brief Overview	Focuses on digital marketing, creativity and strategic management coursework that emphasizes the liberal arts.
Relevant CSS Clubs	• Take on a "Marketing Chair" or "Social Media Chair" position for any active club involvement • School of Business and Technology (SBT) Club
Professional Organizations	• Social Media Breakfast Twin Ports • Social Media Breakfast Twin Cities
Networking Events	• Social Media Breakfast • American Marketing Association (Twin Cities) • MN Interactive Marketing Association • Duluth Chamber of Commerce
Industry Conferences	• Zenith Social Media Conference • MN Interactive Marketing Association conference
Faculty connected to/ Mentoring Opportunities	National Institute for Social Media, media companies, ad agencies, non-profit organizations and local small businesses
Experiential Learning: Internships, Research, Study Abroad...	• In-class projects with Lincoln Park Business Group • Field trips to local small businesses and agencies
Additional Skills/ Certifications/ Graduate Education	Google Ad Words Hootsuite Certification NISM SMS Certification

Questions for an Institutional Self Assessment
The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning 2018

1. Who currently uses career services at our institution? Who does not?

2. How do we need to redesign our programs to intentionally engage more of our students?

3. Are our programs and services accessible to students who are working full time or who have other off-campus obligations?

4. When do students typically engage with career services? Are there ways that we can engage them earlier?

5. Does career exploration at our institution include a close look at labor market data and economic trends so that students are making informed decisions about their career goals?

6. Does our curriculum incorporate training for broad employability (soft) skills that employ-ers say are needed in the workplace? How do we know that our graduates are prepared for today's workplace?

7. Are we providing enough opportunities for experiential learning? Do our students have opportunities for experiential learning, even if their current employment situations prevent them from taking advantage of things like internships?

8. Are there ways that we could be using technology more effectively? Could technology make more programs and events accessible to working students? Could technology tools help us target specific messages and services to students based on where they are in their exploration or search?

9. Does every faculty member and every student support services staff member understand the importance of career planning? Do they have roles to play in supporting students plans for careers, and are they trained to do those roles well?

10. What are our current relationships with employers? Can we leverage those to inform the design of our career services and programs, provide mentoring or networking opportunities, and develop workplace-based projects for the curriculum?

11. How involved is senior leadership in our career services? What additional support will be needed to elevate the role of career services at the institution?

12. What data is being tracked to measure engagement with career services? What opportunities can be explored to track post-completion employment?

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All you need
is the plan,
the road map,
and the courage
to press on
to your destination.
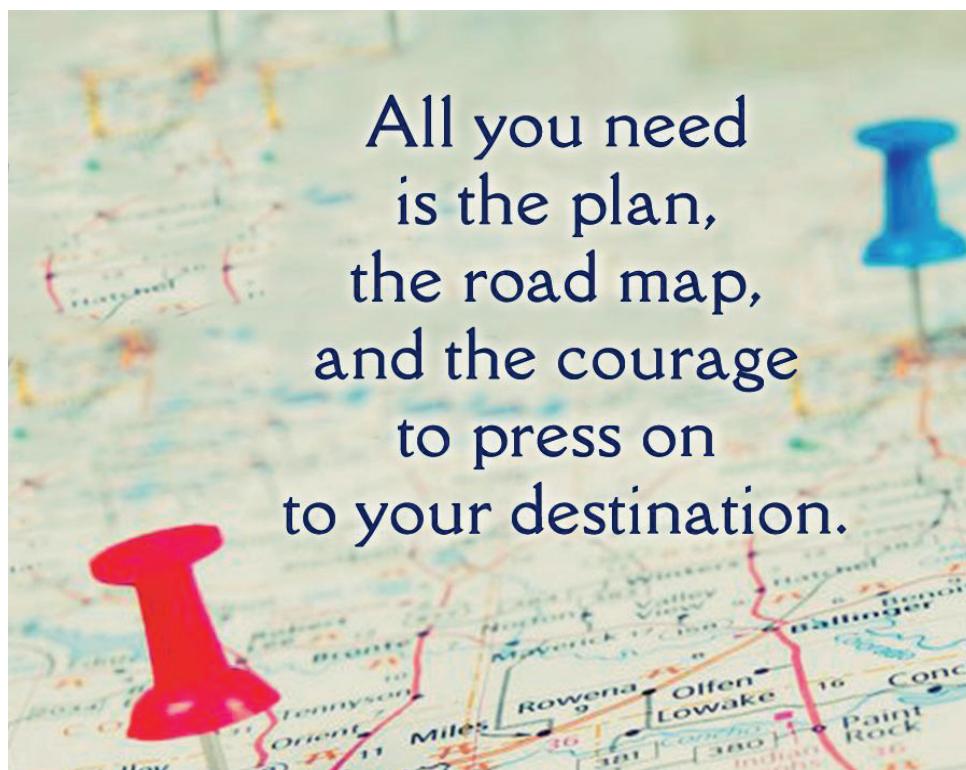
2019 ANTSHE Conference Recap

"Restructuring Higher Education for the Future, Transforming the Traditional College into the Non-Traditional College"

2019 ANTSHE CONFERENCE RECAP

In April we wrapped up ANTSHE 2019, our annual conference, which brought together some of the brightest professionals in higher education, including Administrators, Advisors, Faculty, other Leaders in Higher Education, and Nontraditional Students.

Attendees at the 22nd Annual ANTSHE Conference, held in sunny Orlando at the Embassy Suites & Convention by Hilton Orlando, spent three jam-packed days learning, sharing best practices, and networking. The tone of the conference focused heavily on transforming the traditional college into the nontraditional college with out theme "Restructuring Higher Education for the Future, Transforming the Traditional College into the Non-Traditional College." More than 160 administrators, advisors, faculty, and nontraditional students from across the nation attended the event. We brought together more than 60 speakers to educate attendees on a variety of topics. We are happy that our conferences continue to have a broad reach as attendees were welcomed from the United Arab Emirates and Canada!

Here is a recap of some of our keynote presenters and what you missed at the event:

David A. Vise, Pulitzer Prize-Winning Journalist and Executive Director, Modern States Education Alliance, delivered an informative and enlightening message focusing on his work to make college more accessible and affordable for all through Modern States' "Freshman Year for Free."

Steve Pruitt, Director of Graduate and Online Admission, Lynn University gave a perspective on the adult learner program at Lynn University, including a discussion focused on student success and even incorporating a casual conversation with an adult student from Lynn University.

Dr. Robert Hill, Professor Emeritus – Nova Southeastern University (NSU) & Education Consultant and Dr. Maria Gambuzza, Assistant Vice-Provost, Academics at Strayer University, delivered a very high energy and powerful message on how it is notwhat you teach (i.e., curriculum, the level, the mode, which technology is utilized or the LMS that is selected, etc.) but HOWyou teach as the saying goes: "Students don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

Dr. Aaron Thompson, President, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education delivered perspectives on some of the innovative approaches being taken in Kentucky to get adult students back into the classroom including ways to help students overcome obstacles to gain success, creating a school environment for academic success, and building relationships. He talked about strategies for academic success and personal development. Dr. Thompson was a very engaging and knowledgeable speaker.

Dr. Elmore Lowery closed our event with a motivating and inspiring message about the importance of creating and cultivating an atmosphere of respect, trust, integrity, and relevancy for your students. Dr. Lowery provided many examples of how he as the Dean of College and Career Readiness Programs at Fayetteville Technical Community College works to provide the greatest opportunity for his students to succeed by creating strategic partnerships with Fayetteville Cumberland County Human Relations Commission and other local agencies to assist financially disenfranchised students in obtaining food, clothing, academic tutoring, and employment resources.

The ANTSHE Conference 2019 was well received. But, don't take our word for it, check out some of our attendee feedback.

"…My first time at the conference but not the last."

"being a first time attendee to the ANTSHE Conference was definitely life-changing. I was able to build new relationships, meet new people, and learn so much in higher education that I can take with me back to my institution, and try to implement all of these things that I've learned. I'm so happy and can't wait until next year!"

"…superb, excellently organized, Thank You!"

"It was a great conference and I learned so much! The keynote speakers and general session speakers were excellent and very applicable to my work in higher education."

We couldn't have done it without the support of our sponsors and volunteers who have worked very hard to help us make the conference a huge success.

Attendees also participated in rountable discussions, an academic leadership panel discussion, and nontraditional student panel discussion. Attendees also had the opportunity to network outside of the conference day at other ANTSHE conference events at the President's reception, a painting party, and trip to Disney Springs. It was a lot of fun and we all had a great time getting to know one another. ANTSHE thanks the many supporters who donated items for the silent auction, an ANTSHE fundraising event, our sponsors, and most of all, we Thank all of you who presented and attended the conference, because without you, our organization would not be the success that it is, and without your support, we would not be able to help nontraditional students across this country succeed in reaching their educational goals. Thank You!

For more information about ANTSHE Conference 2019, to see highlights, photos, and videos from the conferece, visit www.myantshe.org/2019 Recap.

ANTSHE CONFERENCE 2020

Call for Proposals Now Open!

"Disrupt the System...Move from Access to Success for the Non-Traditional Student"

The ANTSHE annual conference, is the only national conference that brings together college/university administrators, advisors, and faculty, but also adult learners and other innovative leaders who provide guidance, support, and advocate for adult learners. The ANTSHE conference provides attendees with the opportunity to experience engaging content, networking, and valuable, high quality education.

ANTSHE promises in 2020 to deliver the same kind of high quality conference experience that our attendees have come to expect, with more than 60 presentations by colleagues representing all sectors of higher education, roundtable discussions, an academic leadership panel featuring some of the top leaders in higher education today, and an Exhibit Hall featuring the latest tools and resources for colleges/universities who support adult learners. Did I mention that the ANTSHE conference also holds a student leadership panel discussion as well? Our adult learners not only attend, but they also participate, and they provide us with even more insight into their lives and what was/is required in order for them to reach their educational degree goals.

www.myantshe.org/2020Conference

#antshe2020

ANTSHE *in Indy 2020!*