

Non-traditional No More: Policy Solutions for Adult Learners

WICHE-facilitated Meeting
University of Nevada-Reno
June 2, 2009



Non-traditional No More: Policy Solutions for Adult Learners

- Lumina Foundation for Education
- Two-year project
- Funded through September 2009

Project Goals

- To increase access and success for the adult learner population in postsecondary education.
- To stimulate and guide policy and practice changes that will make it easier for “ready adults” – those who are just shy of having enough credits to obtain a degree but haven’t yet returned to college – to earn their diplomas.



Working Groups – Year 2

Year 1 Format

- Data
- Academic Affairs
- Communications
- Financing and Financial Aid
- Student Services

Year 2 Format

- Southern NTNM Group
- Northern NTNM Group
- Elko Group



Project Timeline

- WICHE-facilitated meeting (today)
- Third intrastate meeting by **July 31, 2009**
- Team leader meeting **September 16-17, 2009**

State Project Goals

- Engineer a common vision and collaborative strategy for serving Nevada's adult learners
- Identify areas of strength and take inventory of those areas still in need of development or improvement
- Address the state's urgent need to increase the number of degree holders
- Better understand the needs of existing and prospective adult learners to build a foundation of excellence in adult education in Nevada



Goals of the Day

Moving from Planning to Policy and Practice

- Review national and state environment for non-traditional students.
- Review and address state- and institution-level barriers identified during year one of the NTNMM project.
- Examine efforts to implement ready-adult programs and develop a plan to use lessons learned throughout the project to improve state environment for adult learners.
- Develop a plan to sustain efforts to serve non-traditional students.



Barriers and Challenges

Some ready adults are potentially underserved

- Non-NSHE students
- Military and veterans
- Rural residents
- Incarcerated residents
- Those who left due to mental health



Barriers and Challenges (cont'd)

FINANCING AND FINANCIAL AID

- Nevada's economic situation
- Need for more data about suitability of loans for target population
- Availability of payment plans
- Transparency of financial aid process
- Financial "holds"

Barriers and Challenges (cont'd)

DATA

- More data needed on financial aid needs of target population
- Assessment needed of existing institutional services for target population (ALFI Audits)
- Questions about “sharing” information about identified students
- Need to further refine data received by institutions

Barriers and Challenges (cont'd)

STUDENT SERVICES

- Need for remediation and/or refresher classes
- Adult-friendly student services infrastructure (hours, locations, accessibility)
- Special needs of returning military
- Immunization requirements
- Communication of policy to students who “self-advise”

Barriers and Challenges (cont'd)

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

- Institutional residency requirements for degrees
- Math requirements
- Prior learning assessments
- Transfer and reverse-transfer policies
- Internship requirements
- General education requirements may be too strict



Barriers and Challenges (cont'd)

COMMUNICATIONS

- Need for statewide marketing and communications effort
- Need to reach students not current data systems
- Need for targeted regional and local efforts
- Lack of budget
- Services must be in place first (e.g. lack of “one-stop shop”)



Web Resources

- Interactive Non-Traditional No More website:
 - Group discussions
 - Question forum
 - News and research relating to non-traditional students.
 - Sites for each state

www2.wiche.edu/group/ntnm



Project Contacts

- Terry Abramson (Communications):
tlabramson@gmail.com
- Alice Anne Bailey (Communications):
aliceannebailey@mindspring.com
- David Longanecker (Financing and Financial Aid):
dlonganecker@wiche.edu
- Demarée Michelau (Academic Affairs):
dmichelau@wiche.edu

www2.wiche.edu/ntnm



Project Contacts (Cont'd)

- Brian Prescott (Data):
bprescott@wiche.edu
- Russell Poulin (Academic Affairs):
rpoulin@wiche.edu
- James Purcell (Data):
jpurcell@adhe.edu
- LeRoy Walser (Student Services):
flwalser@cox.net

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