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 NTNM 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

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