Non-traditional No More:  
Policy Solutions for Adult Learners

Academic Affairs  
Hypothetical Situation

Linda is a 45-year old married woman with three children – one in college, one in high school, and one in elementary school. She entered Northern Illinois University in 1981 directly out of high school and completed three and a half years with a gpa of 3.2 and just 15 hours shy of her bachelor’s degree. She majored in French and was in the process of earning her teaching certificate. During her senior year, she married a man in the military who was immediately transferred to Fort Carson. She dropped out of college and followed her husband to a variety of locations around the world over the next 25 years. While in these locations, she learned to speak French, Spanish, and Dutch fluently and worked as an aide in classrooms all over the world. After her husband’s military retirement six months ago, they settled in Denver, Colorado, and Linda now would like to finish her degree and become a high school French teacher.

If Linda attended your institution:

1. Would she be admitted?
2. What type of entrance and placement examinations would she be required to take?
3. Are there classes at night or online that she could take that would count toward her degree?
4. Would she receive any academic advising that is geared toward adult learners? What would this advising look like?
5. Would she receive any prior learning credit?
6. Would her courses transfer? If so, how many? Would the courses count towards her general education requirements? Would her courses count toward her degree requirements?
7. Are there time limitations for how long her courses are valid?
8. Would you work with her former institution to waive the requirement for the last 30 hours to be completed on the home campus?
9. Are there any possible partnerships with the community colleges that could help Linda?
10. How would the answers change if the scenario was the same except that she was only six years removed from her college experience?
11. How would the answers change if the scenario was the same except that she had majored in another discipline and sought a degree in that same discipline?
12. Would it be better to steer Linda to the University of Phoenix?