Non-traditional No More:
Policy Solutions for Adult Learners
Colorado’s WICHE-facilitated Meeting

They’re Here...Now What? Strategies to Improve the Persistence and Success Rates of Non-traditional Students

Dr. LeRoy Walser

1. When do student support services begin?

Questions for Reflection:
“Hello, am I speaking to the right person?”

The first contact means the NTNM student is back in, or does it?

Can we describe the flow, or sequence of contacts, or events, or the maze the NTNM student must follow for admittance so the sought after degree can be earned?

Support starts at the first contact, or does it start before?

What are the special needs NTNM students bring with them?

How does your IHE currently deal with these needs on an individual basis?

How SHOULD your IHE be organized to provide adequate services for NTNM students?

GAP EXERCISE #1 – Three critical considerations during intake
(please use your color-coded “stickies”)
2. **What critical support resources do we need at our IHE?**

**Questions for reflection:**
Personalize a plan for courses and sequence of courses prescribed for NTNM student – how do you intend to do this?

What are some special needs to be addressed?

How do these issues relate as we build a profile of strengths they bring?
(Work and life experiences; former schools they attended; family considerations; work requirements; full or part time student; new focus on why a degree is needed and what it should do for them; perceived barriers they have; transportation needs; parking; safety; child care; cost; resources available; time restrictions; transferability of credits (loss); others.)

What support resources are available?
(Online resources; adult specific space on campus; recognition at events; career advancement support; cooperative offerings with other schools, either online, extension, or class based; clear and timely communication; advisors and counselors; financial support; others.)

**GAP EXERCISE #2: What are three critical support services that we need at our IHE?**
*(Please use your color-coded “stickies”)*

3. **What critical student services does our IHE need to develop?**

**Questions for reflection:**
What people/policy roles and responsibilities need to be defined, enhanced, eliminated, combined, etc. at our IHE?

What do we have now that needs changing? (Think absence of, or too much of)

**GAP EXERCISE #3: What are three critical areas that student services needs to develop to accommodate NTNM students at our IHE?**
*(Please use your color coded “stickies”)*