



Council for Christian
Colleges & Universities

Center for Research in Adult Learning



Mission: *The CCCU Center for Research in Adult Learning will serve Christian institutions by facilitating and encouraging research, which will enhance the quality of Christ-centered adult programs.*

What's in the Future for Higher Education?

By Cynthia Tweedell, Ph.D. Executive Director, Center for Research in Adult Learning

Economic upheavals, demographic shifts, technological changes— How does your college respond? I recently read a most insightful little book called *Higher Education and the New Society*, by George Keller (Johns Hopkins, 2008). He points out that current structures built for traditional students will not meet the needs of an increasing number of adults who will be seeking higher

Education in the future. Eduventures predicts that the number of students aged 22-29 will increase by 20% in the next five years. We need new structures of higher education for a new generation of adult learners.

What does this new structure look like? Traditional semesters with summers off will be replaced by non-term, "start anytime" structures. Instead of traveling to a residential college, the college

must travel to the student through multiple sites or online. Daytime, weekday classes will be replaced by anytime, any day classes (online). Courses focused on theory and concepts giving credit toward a degree will be replaced by practical application certifying competence to employers.

How will your college change?

Volume 1, Issue 2
Summer, 2009

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Research Agenda

- Learning outcomes assessment for adults
- Benchmarking
- Retention of adult students
- Spiritual transformation of adults
- Best practices in online learning
- Teaching diverse learners
- Alumni surveys

Center Activities

- Annual Conference: May 10-12, 2010 Cincinnati, Ohio
- Regular Teleconferences on Topics in Adult Education
 - October 28– Training Adjunct Faculty with Dr. Cheryl Fleming
- Book: Coming May, 2010
 - *Best Practices in Integrating Faith and Learning for Adults*
- Student Learning Outcomes Benchmarking Project
- Spiritual Formation Project
- Retention Project
- Gathering useful Information about CCCU Adult Programs
- Bibliography on Adult Education

Consult our website for more information: www.indwes.edu/cral

Strategic Goals

- Sponsor at least one conference per year.
- Publish at least one monograph per year.
- Provide benchmarking data on adult education.
- Assist in student learning outcomes assessment
- Serve as a resource for research in adult programs.
- Coordinate projects at the request of institutions

What are We Learning?

We have recently completed the second year of our Adult Student Learning Outcomes Benchmarking Project. Five adult programs participated by having their beginning and graduating students write an essay on a common prompt. Three faculty from each college scored essays from another college utilizing a common rubric on Christian world view, critical thinking and written communication. Scores were compiled for each college and for the sample as a whole. T-tests indicated some significant differences. Each college has been emailed their scores. Here is what we are learning:

- Graduating students scored significantly higher than beginning students on critical thinking and written communication. The greatest gains were in written communication. This indicates that our adult programs produce significant outcomes in these areas.
- For the second year, Christian world view scores were much lower than for the other factors. This indicates that we need to do more to impact students' spiritual lives.

5 CCCU Adult Programs				
		Number	Mean	StDev
critical thinking	beginning	107	*3.10	0.61
	graduating	84	*3.34	0.73
Christian worldview	beginning	107	1.77	0.80
	graduating	84	1.97	0.82
written communication	beginning	107	*2.82	0.77
	graduating	84	*3.49	0.75

Scale: 1-5

*T-test indicates significant difference between beginning and graduating students ($p < .05$)



Steering Committee

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 Cynthia Tweedell– Center for Research



Save this date: May 10-12, 2010– Adult Ed Conference in Cincinnati

Our Inaugural Adult Education Conference was a success! We had close to 100 attendees from 38 institutions. Proceedings, including notes and Power-Point

Presentations, are published on our website.

Our next Adult Education Conference will be in Cincinnati on May 10-12.

For conference details please visit the following website:

www.indwes.edu/cral/conferences.htm