

Adult Students



Why Do They Come and Why Do They
Leave?

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Growth in Adult Education

- **Nationally, 43% of undergraduate students are over age 24**
- **At Indiana Wesleyan, 3/4 of students are in the College of Adult Studies**
 - **10,000 Adult students**
 - **70% increase in 5 years**



Indiana Wesleyan University: Quality in Adult Programming

- Adult First-Year Retention: 94.4%
 - **National average for adults: 68%***

- Adult Graduation Rate: 80%
 - **National average for adults: 38%***

* National Center for Education Statistics, August 2003.



How are Adult Students Different?

Student Attributes

- Race/ethnic diversity
- Prior negative college experiences
- Real world experience

Student Goals

- Self development (esp.women)
- Career advancement
- Finish what was started years ago



What Do Adults Want?

- **Convenience**

- Ease in registration, acquiring books

- **Convenience**

- Fast degree completion

- **Convenience**

- Clear degree requirements



How Do Adults Learn?*

- Need to know why they need to learn something.
- Come with a great reservoir of experiences upon which to build.
- Need immediate application of their knowledge.
- Performance-centered, not subject-centered.

* Knowles, M.S. (1980). The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy, 2nd edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Cambridge Adult Education.



Why Do Adults Drop Out?

- 31% Conflict with job
- 28% Family responsibilities
- 27% Personal conflicts with class schedule
- 16% Decided to change majors
- 14% Cost
- 14% Personal problems
- 13% Study group problems



Who Are the Survivors?

The Connected

Social Integration

- Close relationships with peers
- Good relationships with faculty

Academic Integration

- Writing skills
- Study/computer skills



Retention Strategies for Adults

- Good orientation (know what to expect)
 - Attention to study skills/computer skills
- Close student/faculty relationships
- Establish cohesive support groups
- Careful design of the first three courses so they are sensitive to the needs of the returning adult student
- Online support for students with low skills



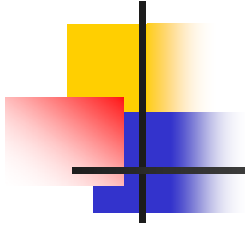
CCCU Task Force on Retention in Adult Programs

- Ozzie Ingram, Dallas Baptist
 - Kevin Jones, Indiana Wesleyan
 - Scott Ray, LeTourneau
 - Lori Scrementi, Trinity Christian
 - Sonia Strevy, Indiana Wesleyan
 - Frank Zeng, Indiana Wesleyan
- Others are welcome to join



CCCU Task Force Project

- Develop a tool to screen students for success in adult programming
- Factor analysis of withdrawing students to isolate variables
- Test effectiveness of intervention strategies



We don't have to make human beings smart. They're born smart. All we have to do do is stop doing things that make them stupid.

- John Holt