A Successful Approach for Increasing Adult Student Enrollment

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Recommendations:
The Committee to Attract and Retain Adult Students at Penn State

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Major Recommendation: Implement “one stop shops” to serve adults.
No systematic changes to the admissions or enrollment processes.
Create a “virtual” one stop shop at Penn State Berks. Assisted by the Penn State Office of Planning and Institutional Assessment
Decisions:

1. Not to expand hours or to add staff
2. No changes in roles
3. Put more information on web site. Self-directed prospects
4. More focused advertising effort to drive students to the campus web site
Results

Berks Adult Undergraduate Official Enrollment for Fall Semesters

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Adults represent an important
cconstituency for the Berks campus
Majority of Adults are Degree seeking students

BERKS ADULT UNDERGRADUATES
DEGREE & NONDEGREE

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Campus Undergraduate Enrollment 5 year % Increase
BAY 05/06-09/10

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Berks had the 3rd Largest Rate of Increase for the Commonwealth Campuses

Adult Undergraduate Enrollment 5 year % Increase

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Berks Adults in 2-year Degree Programs

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Adult Inquiries at Penn State Berks

Some are:

* Similar to traditional age students
* Comparison shopping
* Re-enrollments
* Displaced workers with specialized funding and time constraints
* Transfers from other Universities or Community Colleges

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Adult Inquiries at Penn State Berks

* Some are not ready and need advising prior to applying
  * What options are available?
  * What careers might be useful?
  * How would they fit in?
  * What about transfer credits?
  * What about Financial Aid?
* Typically start looking 12-18 months prior to commitment to apply
SRA Major- Transferring Credits from 3 Colleges had two questions

- Which of the over 200 credits accepted into Penn State count towards the SRA degree?
- Is he an upper division student or not? Impact on tuition.

EMET Major- Transferring Credits and Work Experience with Displaced Worker Funding

- Time Limited for funding
- Needed to start immediately
Case Study of Three Students-Cont’d

* OT Major-Prior degree in the arts from an international school, wanted to use some of the credits to meet Gen Ed requirements
  * Needed portfolio review
  * No one at Berks able to provide review
  * Provided contact name at University Park
Penn State Berks is Centrally Located in Berks County
# How do we compare?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Albright College</th>
<th>UMUC</th>
<th>Penn State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree Completion Program (DCP)</td>
<td>Online, traditional or hybrid classes</td>
<td>Online, traditional or hybrid classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 24 months accelerated</td>
<td>- Evening &amp; Weekend classes at 20 locations</td>
<td>- VLN classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cohort based</td>
<td>- Credit for prior learning</td>
<td>- Evening classes guaranteed for some majors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Classes one night/wk</td>
<td>- Credit for new learning on the job</td>
<td>- Credit for prior learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree Start Program (DSP)</td>
<td>Undergraduate classes begin several times/year-staggered</td>
<td>VLN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- General Credits accelerated in 24 months</td>
<td>- Specific programs for US Service members &amp; their families</td>
<td>- Technology fee required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Classes one night/wk</td>
<td>- Transfer to DCP or traditional daytime program</td>
<td>Adults integrated with traditional age students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 7 week courses</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Our Response

* Created a “one stop shop” within CE by hiring a Part-time Recruitment Coordinator to:
  * Help potential candidates navigate through the Penn State system
  * Provide transfer information & unofficial evaluation of transfer credits prior to the commitment to apply
  * Refer to appropriate administrative and academic departments
  * Provide all the educational options within Penn State, including the World Campus
* Minimal additional resources were added
Our Response

* Modified CE website pages to include:
  * An adult candidate inquiry form, with follow-up from Admissions & CE
  * Information about the support from Recruitment Coordinator
  * Information about credit and degree programs, including certificates
  * Video specially targeted to Adult Students
  * Access to brochure that highlights credit and non-credit offerings
Request for Information

http://www.bk.psu.edu/Admissions/adultlearnerinfo.htm
Prospect Management

* Created database of inquiries
  * Allows us to understand the lead-lag time in decision making
  * Indicates majors of special interest to adults
  * Determines where transfers are coming from
  * Allows follow up by CE personnel
  * Collects demographic information
Prospect Management

* Created List-Serve
  * Provides information on deadlines, new courses, etc.
  * Maintains communication with potential candidates
* Information Session during the summer
* Individual meetings throughout the year--day or evening
An Efficient Approach to Increasing Adult Enrollments

- Added enrollment to existing capacity
- No increase or instructional expense or overhead
- Some additional part-time staff wages; 10-15 hours per week
- Some increased marketing expense
Future Direction
Expanding Enrollments

* Degrees offered via Video Learning Network
* Degrees offered in partnership with World Campus
* Greater CE involvement with promoting campus degree programs
Questions?

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