

Best Practices in Communicating with Adult Learners

- Amanda Moore, Assistant Director of Admissions, Penn State Harrisburg
- William Fritz, Director of Admissions and Financial Aid, Penn State World Campus
- Margaret Bacheler, Director of Continuing Education, Penn State Brandywine



Best Practices from World Campus

Prospects and Applicants



World Campus Student Profile

	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
Adult Learners	88%	99%
Female	51%	44%
PA Residents	43%	26%
Military	17%	17%



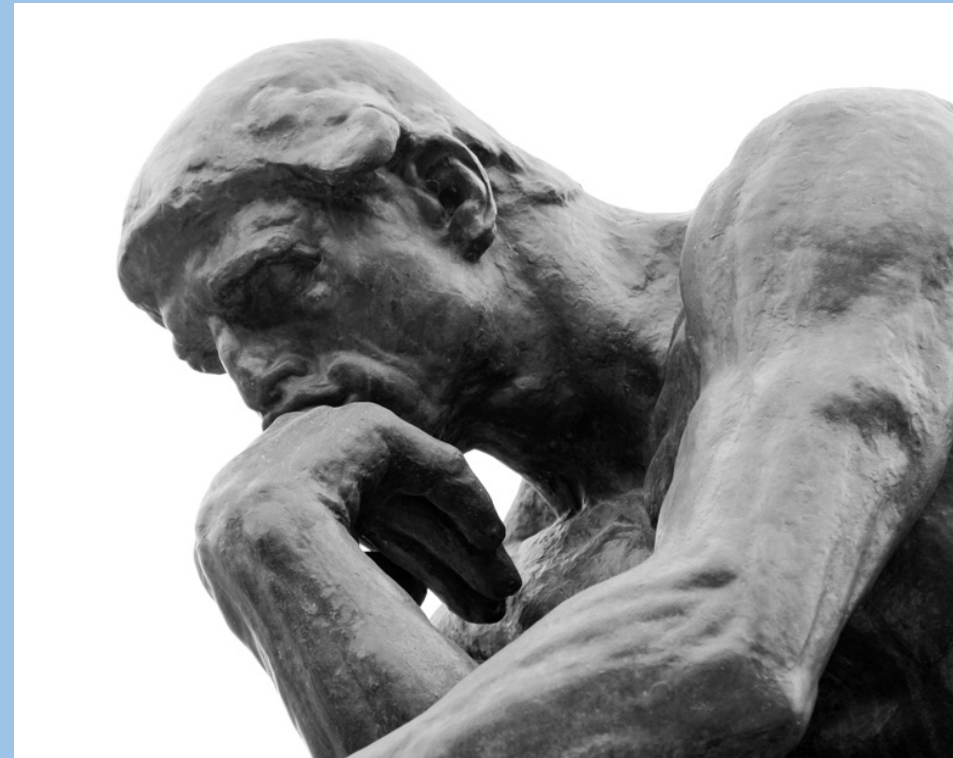
World Campus Largest Enrolling Programs

Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
BS in Business (825)	Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Homeland Security (672)
AS in Business Administration (581)	MPS in Human Resources and Employment Relations (660)
BS in Nursing (535)	MPS in Supply Chain Management (423)
AS in Information Sciences and Technology (448)	Master of Public Administration (319)
BS in Criminal Justice (434)	Master of Business Administration (291)

Communication Through the Funnel



Prospect to Applicant



Applicant to Offer



Offer to Enroll



Best Practices from Brandywine

Orientation Through Graduation Phase



PennState

Hendrick Best Practices for
Adult Learners Conference

May 9, 2017

Adult Learner Overview

- Adult learners enrolled in Degree Completion Program in Business (BSBUC)- Collaboration with Berks, York, Abington Campuses
 - Seven week accelerated BSBC courses offered in a hybrid format
- Ideal Student
 - Has completed 45-60 college credits
 - Is highly motivated to complete their undergraduate degree
 - Professional experience relevant to the application of the learning objectives
 - Program attractive to veteran students, mothers of teenagers, and PSU reenrollments

Picture of Accelerated BSB Students



Goals of the Communication Process

- Building Self-Confidence
- Addressing Imposter Syndrome
- Overcoming Math Anxiety
- Admissions outreach
 - Designated transfer counselor
 - Multiple touchpoints throughout the admissions funnel
 - Attention to detail for transfer credit equivalencies and course substitutions
- Developing the Identity as a Student- getting excited about joining the PSU family



Becoming a Penn State Student

- Transfer orientation
 - -in -person and virtual opportunities
 - Covers academic concerns and logistical one: PSU ID cards, parking pass, access accounts, etc.
- Program concierge model- a case management approach to follow the student through the inquiry phase to the graduation phase
- Campus-based single point of contact
- Readiness to Learn video- to explain the accelerated course format and reinforce the competency of professionalism



Communication Best Practices

Year 1 Communications

- Building their student identity
- Multiple touchpoints for advising- beginning to get them to focus on ownership of their degree audit
- Myth busting- Adult students are “needy” what they call about, isn’t what it is really about...
- Adult related activities- veterans luncheon

Year 2 Communications

- Building their professional identity
- Advising through upper-level classes
- Internship prep
- Career Services Workshop
- Graduation prep
 - Academic
 - Social
 - Emotional



Future Programming Ideas

My Wish List for the Future:

- Building their identity as a researcher
- Expanding Career Services workshop to include alumni networking
- Embed a career coaching model into the program
- Adult Student Ambassadors
- Student Testimonials_video



Harrisburg communications – prospective phase

- Receive email via listserv and respond with canned response to encourage more questions and eventual application
- What does your campus do?

Wish List

- More thorough follow up (prospective to pdacc)
- More adult services on campus (i.e. adult lounge, adult support and adult student events/activities)
- Mentoring program



Questions, Comments, Suggestions???

- Contact information
 - Amanda Moore: acb11@psu.edu
 - William Fritz: wjf12@psu.edu
 - Margaret Bacheler: mbw10@psu.edu

