2020

ADULT STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION CONFERENCE

MARCH 9-10 | MADISON, WI

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN OSHKOSH
Online and Continuing Education
On behalf of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, welcome to Madison!

We have assembled an information-packed agenda, filled with topics and ideas that will help you grow in the areas of recruitment, retention and the policy and instruction of adult students. We hope you enjoy the variety of speakers, who bring personal experiences and engaging perspectives from the ever-evolving environment in which we work. You will return to work invigorated, enthused and prepared to share innovative strategies for engaging nontraditional learners in your community!

Conference tracks include:
1. Recruitment
2. Retention
3. Policy and Instruction

Select the tracks that best meet your personal and professional interests. Attending with a group? Split up and compare notes. Take advantage of opportunities to network and share ideas throughout the conference.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Heather Doyle is the Director of Student Academic Success and a Senior Advisor for Retention at Dalhousie University, a large, research-intensive institution located in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. By collaborating with faculty and staff conducting research and creating retention programming, Doyle advances the institutional strategic priority of increasing retention and student success. In addition, she leads advising and academic support services, focusing on an appreciative, strengths-based perspective.

Doyle was the first certified Appreciative Advisor in Canada and is on the faculty for the Appreciative Advising Institute. She is also an instructor and course director of the online Appreciative Advising course through Florida Atlantic University.

Doyle has presented nationally and internationally and has been a panelist on several webinars in the areas of academic advising, career advising, Appreciative Advising and student success. She is part of the Global Community of Academic Advising (NACADA) Consultant & Speakers Series, a faculty member at the NACADA Administrative Institute, past Chair of the NACADA Emerging Leader Advisory Board and incoming Chair of the Sustainable Leadership Committee.

Doyle has a BA in Psychology from the University of Prince Edward Island and an M.Ed. in Counselling Psychology from Memorial University.

Tyree Vance holds a dual B.A. in Psychology and Human Development, and a M.A. in Higher Education. Vance served as an Academic Advisor for Student Support Services at Cal State, Dominguez Hills and the inaugural Senior Program Coordinator of the Male Success Initiative-Fullerton at CSU, Fullerton. He currently serves as an educational consultant, training various universities and colleges across the United States how to effectively engage their students using frameworks and high impact practices.

Vance became a certified member of the Appreciative Advising Faculty in 2012, where he facilitates group sessions at the annual Appreciative Advising Institute. Moreover, Vance has conducted research with two of his colleagues focusing on the collegiate success of African American males and exploring the counter-narrative for these men. Vance’s work is driven by the belief that the most important thing that any person will ever own in their life is their vision. His trainings are geared to create alignment with a person’s personal and professional vision.
8:00-9:30 a.m. Registration and Breakfast Buffet  
9:30-10:45 a.m. Welcome and Keynote Presentation  
Location: Madison Ballroom

Seeking Social Justice for Today’s Student Through an Appreciative Lens  
Presented by: Heather Doyle, Director of Student Academic Success and Senior Advisor for Retention, Dalhousie University

This workshop will provide you with hands-on tips and tools on how to incorporate aspects of Appreciative Education into your work with students. Steeped in the tenets of positive psychology, Appreciative Inquiry and motivational theory, Appreciative Education is positively impacting student retention and outcomes at various institutions globally.

This workshop is designed to teach participants the theoretical infrastructure of Appreciative Education and to provide skills training in implementing this framework. Participants will learn how to use the six phases of: Disarm, Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver and Don’t Settle to help students optimize their educational experiences. We will also discuss the concept of “critical appreciative advising”—how we consider our own biases, assumptions and worldviews and how these relate to power dynamics in our work with students.

10:45-11:00 a.m. Networking Break  
11:00 a.m.-Noon Sectional Presentations

1 | Who Doesn’t Love a Little R&R (Recruitment and Retention Strategies)? (Track 1) • Senate Room  
Presented by: Beth Feldkamp, Community Outreach Coordinator/Student Success Specialist, Washtenaw Community College Adult Transitions Pathway Program

Washtenaw Community College Adult Transitions Pathways provides an integrated and holistic college and career readiness model that offers co-enrollment in postsecondary education and training, employment readiness, career exploration and preparation, Digital Literacy/Microsoft Certification, Financial Literacy and ELA instruction.

From the power of partnerships to strategic communications, the programs’ outreach coordinator will share ideas and practices focused on student recruitment and retention with proven results. In this interactive session, plan to participate and grow your own ideas with practitioners from across the field of Adult Education.

2 | Career Counseling (Track 2) • University Room CD  
Presented by: Nikki Wilson-O’Neal, Academic Advisor, Wisconsin Lutheran College

As an academic advisor for adult learners, most return to school to either further their current careers through promotion or want to enter an entirely new or different field altogether. Then there are those who simply want to “finish” what they started years ago. Similar to traditional college-aged students, adult students often need career counseling. They need help with resume building, interviewing skills and even the application process. The difference in their needs is that it is more about reinvention and brushing up on skills that have been dormant. This session will help us as advisors provide resources and support to encourage our adult students to confidently use their experience and knowledge in their current and future career goals.

noon-1:00 p.m. Lunch and Networking • Madison Ballroom  
1:00-2:00 p.m. Sectional Presentations

4 | Recruiting Adult Students in The Year 2020 (Track 1) • Senate Room  
Presented by: Andrew Zimdars, Partnership Liaison & Enrollment Advisor, Wisconsin Lutheran College Graduate Program, and Trey Cochran, Senior Enrollment Advisor, Wisconsin Lutheran College Adult Program

Every year that goes by, our adult student population evolves generationally. The early 2000s saw Baby Boomers and Generation X enter the adult education landscape. Today, generational shifts mean Millennials and Generation Z are populating more of the recruiting pipeline than ever before. Those working to recruit in today’s adult market must understand these demographic changes, properly identify their target audience, build their recruiting pipeline, effectively communicate and motivate their target audience and leverage institutional differentiators and values in order to stay competitive in today’s adult education landscape.

5 | Student Resource Lounge: Facilitating Student Connectedness throughout the Student Life-cycle (Track 2) • University Room AB  
Presented by: Julie Pitel, Student Success Coach, and Robin Schwenn, Student Success Coach, UW Extended Campus

As the adult learner population continues to rise, higher education institutions are seeking new and innovative ways to support nontraditional learners. By proactively providing adult learners with convenient access to a wide variety of support resources, students can self-serve based on their individual needs. Come learn how the Student Services...
team at UW Extended Campus has implemented an online resource lounge that provides students with an efficient platform to connect to resources and to each other as they progress through the Student Lifecycle.

6 | The Neverending Onion: Peeling back the Layers of Academic Actions (Track 3) • University Room CD
Presented by: Danielle Stertz, Senior Academic Success Coach, and Cassandra Hamilton, Student Resource Specialist, UW Extended Campus

What do onions and academic actions have in common? Does being on academic probation stink? Yes. Would academic suspension make one cry? Very likely. Much like an onion can elevate the flavor of your dish, academic actions can elevate our students’ growth potential. We as advisors and administrators have a duty to prioritize the success of our academically at-risk students, as they present a unique and often underrated retention opportunity.

Much like how an onion might sprout little white hairs if left out in the sun too long, we (and our students) might go gray if we have to think too hard about what an “academic action” means. How can we improve our processes and our resources so we spend more time coaching students towards next term success and less time interpreting policy? Academic actions are governed at the institutional level, and there is much within our control to reinterpret the policies in ways that students and advisors can understand. Further, we can clarify what academic actions mean for our students and devise pathways for them to be successful in future terms, thus retaining them.

During this session, we will share how we have “peeled back the layers” of academic actions and current processes at our institution in an effort to develop a coaching model and more robust support resources for academically at-risk students. Participants will practice using plain language to reiterate policy, collaborate on strategies for reframing academic actions as retention opportunities and learn tangible steps for refining support measures for academically at-risk students.

7 | Serving Student Veterans: Expanding the Student Care Culture (Track 1) • University Room CD
Presented by: Michelle Munns, Education Benefit Coordinator, and Timber Smith, Veterans Resource Coordinator, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Veterans Resource Center

For a number of years, the UW Oshkosh Veterans Resource Center had a “help desk approach” for veteran benefits and focused mainly on problem solving when issues arose. While great at troubleshooting, the VRC transitioned to a student care culture by creating a welcoming environment and helping students from application to graduation and building the total student veteran experience. In this session, participants will learn about the expansion of veteran resource centers, technology-focused communications, community and professional outreach, increased virtual presence, veteran-specific programming and training VA work study students, which helped transition a veteran resource center to a full-service destination for student vets.

8 | Welcome Back (Track 2) • Senate Room
Presented by: Tyler Poldervaart, Director of Graduate Recruitment & Admissions, and Josh D’Amico, Associate Director of Transfer Recruitment & Admissions, Mount Mercy University

Millions of students have earned some college credit but not completed a degree. This unfortunate fact negatively affects both individual students and society as a whole. A significant portion of the “some college, no degree” phenomenon are adult learners and an important population to re-engage when considering degree completion programs. This session will discuss the “Welcome Back” program at Mount Mercy University. The program is designed to encourage former Mount Mercy adult students to return to campus and complete their degree. This session will discuss the reasons adult students often “stop-out” of college, and the challenges they encounter when thinking about coming back. We will also describe the strategies and challenges of instituting the “Welcome Back” program, including working with campus partners, marketing and recruitment efforts. This session is designed to be interactive with the audience with the goal of learning from one another.

9 | The Center for Adult and Returning Students (Track 3) • University Room AB
Presented by: Virginia Emery, Adult Student Program Manager and Stacy Tinholt, Adult Student Pre-Enrollment Counselor, University of Wisconsin-Parkside

In response to student, staff, and leadership needs, the University of Wisconsin-Parkside has launched an experimental Center for Adult and Returning Students (CARS) to support adult students from the prospective stage through graduation and to assist faculty and staff in implementing adult student best practices, providing a single point of contact for adult student inquiries across campus. Heretofore, adult student services have been inconsistent across departments and offices, providing irregular assistance for adult students and frequently leaving them to navigate the many decisions along their educational pathways alone. The Center for Adult and Returning Students is tasked with building a web of relationships across campus—with Admissions, Advising and Career Services, Financial Aid, Registrar’s Office, Veteran’s Support and all Colleges—in order to help connect prospective and enrolled adult students with the resources and contacts they need to enroll and persist to graduation.

The Center is staffed by an outward-facing Adult Student Pre-Enrollment Counselor who discusses education goals, explores program options and assists adult students through the admissions process and an inward-facing Adult Student Program Manager who administers Prior Learning Assessment activities and offers one-on-one and group trainings for faculty and staff members. With a lean staff and an emphasis on relationship building, the idea behind the Center is to create and test a model for structuring a highly adaptable, low investment means of improving support for adult students and to address the often-overlooked corollary of faculty and staff training and support.
of declining first year enrollments, we are happy to share the PLA experience. Guided by a facilitator, participants will contribute their expertise and will work collaboratively to identify successful practices. Groups will crowdsource strategies to increase PLA programming and participation and will deliver findings in a set of lightning presentations at the end of the session. Learning developed by the group will be documented, summarized and distributed to participants so that you may develop and continue your own communities of practice beyond the ASSR conference.

The session will be facilitated by team members of the University of Wisconsin System All Learning Counts project partnership. The Lumina Foundation All Learning Counts initiative supports organizations working to ensure that knowledge, skills and abilities gained outside formal higher education—through work, military and other experiences—can be recognized and applied toward programs that lead to credentials of value.

12 | Changing our game. Upping our play. Shifting our advising model. (Track 3) • University Room CB
Presented by: Bobby James, Manager of Student Success Advising, and Sarah Moore, Manager of Student Success Advising, Walden University

At Walden University, “Change the Game” has been a key component of all areas of our university. Within our Advising department, we as the leadership team have navigated changes not only to our departmental name, but we have reassessed our current model and are working to shift our direction to be more student focused. We began last year by incorporating a Personalized Advising for Student Success model. We have restructured our staffing and model to be more proactive in how we advise and are focusing on building student relationships. In this session, we will discuss the motivations behind this change, engage you in challenges facing our students and staff with change management and look at how we have fostered opportunities for our staff to have better relationships with students.

“There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination, and finish with education. The whole of life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning.”
– Jiddu Krishnamurti
Online students often find themselves with unique situations that don’t apply to first time traditional college students. Working on an enrollment team that focuses entirely through virtual communication modalities makes connecting and communication not only challenging but also makes it crucial that clear expectations and great customer service are at the forefront of every interaction, be it verbal or written communication. This presentation will give some insight into best practices, challenges and tools for success when dealing with online students, primarily the importance of an opening and closing statement when conducting an advising call.

Change is something that excites people who love opportunities for growth, learning about new things, or who like to shift the status quo. In today’s world of higher education, change is constant. Some changes, however, are harder to adjust to and lead to expressions of resistance and anger. We can take concrete steps to make change more palatable by understanding people’s hesitation, enlisting the help of others, setting up plans and managing stressors. These steps can also ensure that desired changes are implemented successfully. During this workshop, you will learn best practices on how to manage and cope with change and how to help those around you too, including the students with whom you interact. Start to see change as an opportunity for self-motivation and innovation rather than something to fear and resist!

According to Upwardly Global, a national, non-profit organization whose mission is to eliminate employment barriers for skilled immigrants and refugees, there are currently 2 million immigrants and refugees in the U.S. who have college degrees from their home countries but are either unemployed or underemployed. At College of DuPage, a community college 30 miles west of Chicago, we also identified a growing number of these immigrants coming to our college. We met with accountants, doctors, lawyers, engineers, educators—some of whom wanted to continue their same profession in the U.S. and others whom were unsure about how to navigate the U.S. higher education system and what to do next.

The College of DuPage Admissions Office continued to meet one-on-one with prospective immigrant students.

The College of DuPage Admissions Office teamed up with Education Credential Evaluators (ECE), an organization that prepares foreign education credential evaluation reports, and our Career Services Center to offer an Immigrant Student Workshop. In addition, we partnered with our Career Services Center team to present information on employment trends, job search strategies and inform attendees about the free services their office provided. Our academic English Language Studies representative provided a brief overview of language offerings through his area. We hosted our first workshop in May 2018.

LGBTQ+ student services often center on the needs of traditional-age students. What about the voices and experiences of LGBTQ+ adult learners? Join this caucus roundtable to discuss what you have encountered in your work, discuss interventions you have tried and get peer consultation on your emerging needs. Topics may include: name and gender markers in digital spaces, building curricula, modeling bystander behavior and more.

In a world of ever-growing student loan debt and economic hardship, it is increasingly valuable to have a greater understanding of the financial obstacles encountered by our students and the resources available to help. The intention is not for everyone to be an expert, but rather for those in positions of support to have the basic knowledge of financial aid/debt, the ability to refer and the passion to advocate for college resources. Having worked in the financial aid world for nine years prior to advising, I’d like to take a glimpse with you into how financial these barriers directly impact student success, as well as how investing in student financial wellness can help to empower our students to thrive.

Appreciative Advising is the intentional collaborative practice of asking positive, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals and potentials. We will discuss innovative ways to approach our work and, together with a new set of tools, provide an introspective, supportive and engaging environment for our students.
In this breakout session, participants will decide what activities they want to Start, Stop and Continue doing with their students. They will discover new activities and practices to address the unique needs of this population. Finally, they will learn new ways to infuse fun into their work lives.

- 10:30-10:45 a.m. Networking Break
- 10:45 a.m.-Noon Keynote Presentation and Closing • Madison Ballroom

**The Cup of Life: Strategies to Empower & Refuel Your Work**
Presented by: Tyree Vance, Educational Consultant and Speaker

This presentation is designed for higher education practitioners and student affairs professionals who interact directly with adult re-entry students. For the past few years, the conversation in higher education has been creating student-focused departments, activities, etc. The question to consider is: how do we make sure that the people who are serving the students are also being served and ensure that their “cups” are full?

In this keynote, participants will examine the ways that they lead and engage students. They will reconstruct the ways they approach work and self-care. Finally, they will identify at least one engaging activity that can be implemented in their respective departments.

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Thank you for joining us! Save the date for 2021: March 8-9.

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**NOTES:**

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