

Standardize the Process –
Personalize the Experience:

Make Room!

**Adult Learners,
Pell,
and
First-Generation
(F1GS) College
Students**



Adult Learners

Adult learners –

- are students **aged 25** and older.
- make up nearly half of **all** students currently (2022) enrolled in colleges and universities.
 - Approximately, **38%** of undergraduate students alone are **older than 25** (Lumina Foundation).
- are raising children or are caregivers.
- tend to **work** while attending college.



Source: [Lumina Foundation](#)

Open Source Picture: <https://cpe.kennesaw.edu/blog/2017/08/08/10-things-every-adult-learner-knows-to-be-true/>

F1GS College Students



A first-generation (or first-gen, 1stGen, F1GS) college student is defined as an **individual whose parents did not complete/earn a four-year college degree.**

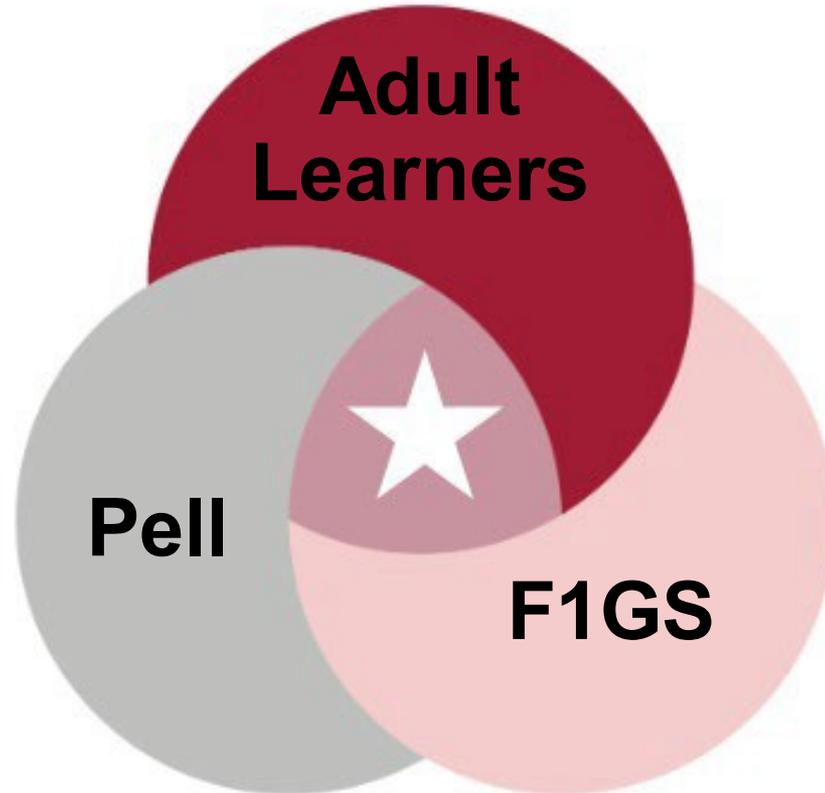
Pell Grant: Eligibility

- US citizen or qualified noncitizen
- Have a valid Social Security number
- Have earned HS diploma or GED
- Be an undergraduate student
- Enrolled in a qualifying program
- Demonstrate financial need
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP)



Source: US Department of Education, [Federal Student Aid](#), [National Center for Education Statistics](#)
Open Source Picture: Pexels, Tara Winsstead, pexels-tara-winstead-8850706.jpg

THE INTERSECTION: Why it Matters?



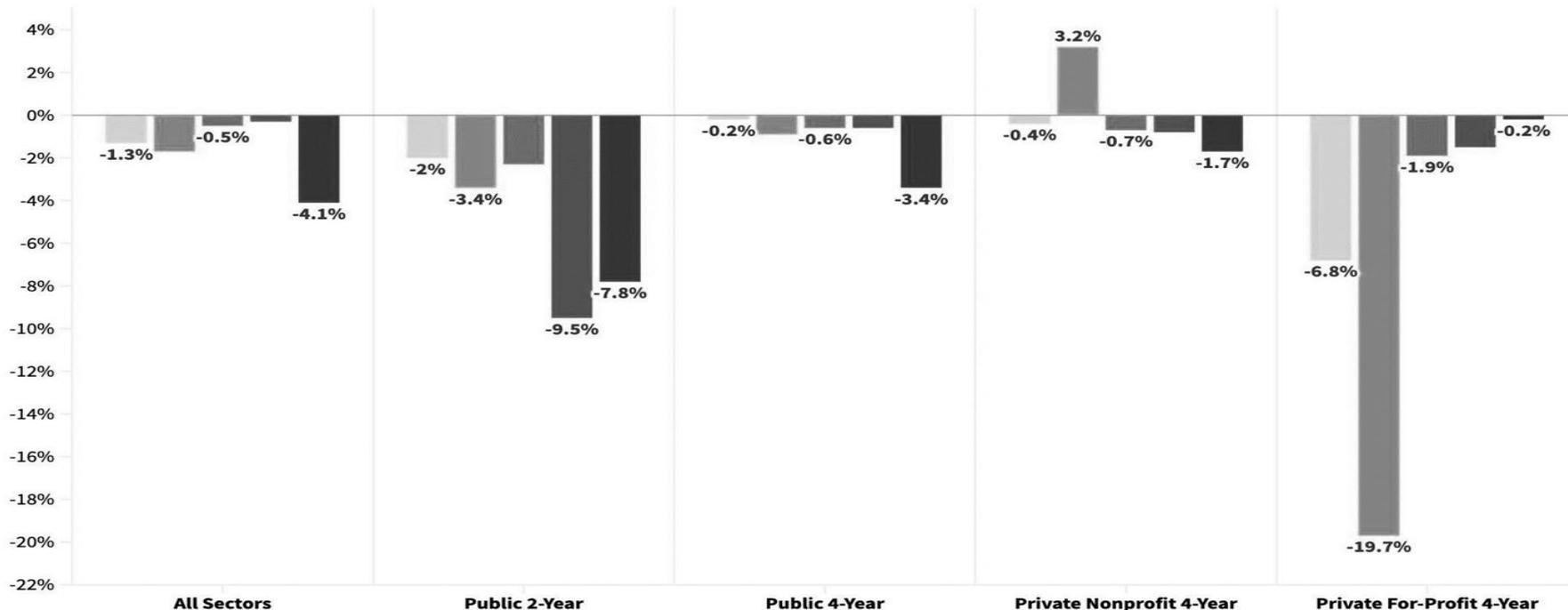
ENROLLMENT TRENDS

What the data tell us?

% Change in Enrollment from Previous Year by Institutional Sector: 2018–2022

Total college enrollment fell to 16.2 million this spring—a one-year decline of 4.1% or 685,000 students.

● Spring 2018 ● Spring 2019 ● Spring 2020 ● Spring 2021 ● Spring 2022



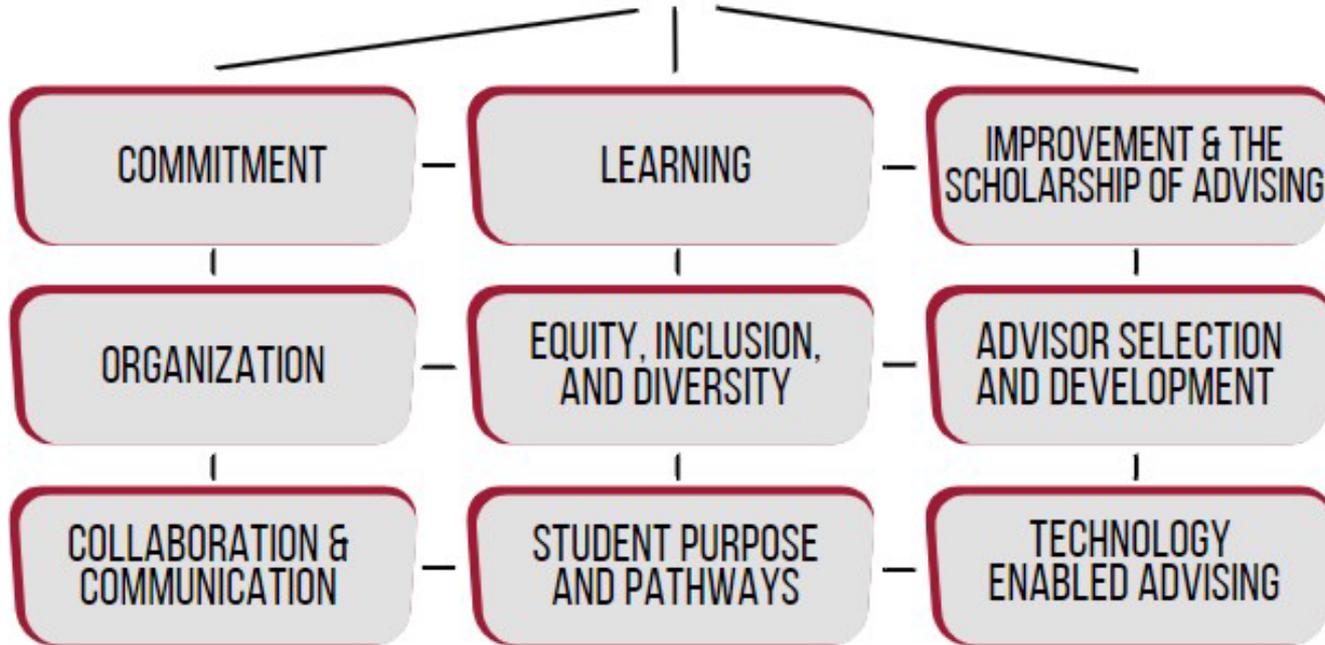
Source: <https://nscresearchcenter.org/current-term-enrollment-estimates/>

Six Characteristics of Adult Learners

- **Self-directed**
- **Problem-centered approach**
- **Direct application**
- **Results-oriented**
- **Educational ownership**
- **Skeptical about new information**

ACADEMIC ADVISING: THEORY & PRACTICE

EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMIC ADVISING



Visual adapted from:

Source: <https://nacada.ksu.edu/Programs/Excellence-in-Academic-Advising.aspx>

Excellence in Academic Advising

Excellence in Academic Advising is demonstrated by evidence of student and program success through:

- Academic advising mission and goal statements that align advising with the institution's mission and strategic goals;
- **A comprehensive, collaboratively developed academic advising delivery system that is responsive to student needs and designed for their benefit;**
- Personal and professional ethics manifested throughout the academic advising process, and;
- **Evidence-based decision making and assessment that guide improvement of initiatives, including the use of technology in academic advising.**

“ Academic advising is the only structured activity on the campus in which all students have the opportunity for an ongoing, one-to-one interaction with a concerned representative of the institution. ”

- Habley, W.

Cognitive Flexibility Theory

- Cognitive Flexibility Theory (CFT) was introduced in **1987**.
- CFT focuses on --
 - the **nature of learning in complex domains** emphasizing knowledge acquisition.
 - a person adapting cognitive processing strategies to deal with **new, unexpected and changing conditions** [such as college].
 - learners engaging with **multiple representations** of the same information in **different context**.
- Simply stated, CFT is the **ability to adjust thinking and behaviors** to adapt to different situations or contexts.

STRUCTURED FLEXIBILITY

Components of Structured Flexibility

- **Access**
- **Guardrails**
- **Choices**
- **Tools**

Designing the Plan



Goal(s)

Academic, personal
and professional



Strategies

Courses sequence;
Course combination/Term;



Tactics

Just in Time Wrap
Around Support Services



Resource Allocation

Time, Money,
Technology, etc.



Timeline

Time to credential completion
including “intentional pauses”

STRUCTURED FLEXIBILITY USING THE A-C-I-P FRAMEWORK

Source: Community College Research Center, Teachers' College, Columbia University (2021)
<https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/easyblog/acip-reimagining-onboarding.htm>



Ask



Connect



Inspire



Plan

ASK for Relationship Development, Advice, & Advocacy



LEARNING

- In what subjects do you feel the most prepared? Least prepared?
- As an adult learner, what changes do you foresee occurring in the near future that we should include in your plan? Or what changes have already occurred?

ASK: QUESTIONS & OUTCOMES

- **What are some additional questions you might ask students for relationship development, advice, and advocacy?**
- **What could be related outcomes of the ASK phases of an advising session or intentionally, structured interaction?**



CONNECT with Resources and Support Services

- What are some of your current priorities outside of school?
- On a scale of 1-4, how likely are you to ask for help when you need it? Or, in what situations do you usually ask for help?



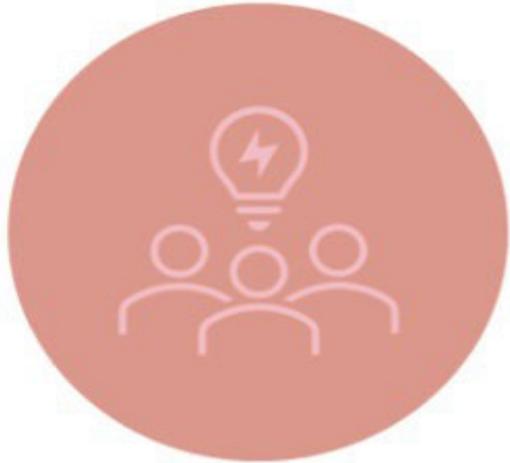
EQUITY, INCLUSION,
AND DIVERSITY

CONNECT: QUESTIONS & OUTCOMES

- **What are some additional questions you might ask students to better understand the resources and support services they may need?**
- **What could be related outcomes of the CONNECT phases of an advising session or intentionally, structured interaction?**



INSPIRE Learning for Purpose – Learning on Purpose



STUDENT PURPOSE
AND PATHWAYS

- When you hear the words “intellectual excitement,” what topics or types of experiences first come to mind?
- What drew you to your current job, if applicable? And what excites you about your selected major?
- If a college student is going to be successful, what characteristics do you think they must possess?

INSPIRE: QUESTIONS & OUTCOMES

- **What are some additional questions you might ask students to INSPIRE them to enroll in a class of interest to them?**
- **What are some related outcomes of the INSPIRE phases for an advising session or intentionally, structured interaction?**



PLAN for Academic Progression and Goal Setting

- Has anything changed in your life that impacts your academic goals or academic plan?
- Tell me about a recent success or challenge you have faced. What strategies did you use to achieve success?
- What are the top two challenges in your life that you feel may impede progress to your goals?



COMMITMENT

PLAN: QUESTIONS & OUTCOMES



- **What are some additional questions you might ask students to assist them with setting their goals and monitoring their academic progress?**
- **What are some related outcomes of the PLAN phases for an advising session or intentionally, structured interaction?**

So What? Now What?

Advising relationships teach students to:

- Craft their [and] own [their] education
- Understand the path they haven chosen
- Use the experience, skills, and knowledge in work
- Create a culture of learning around their educational experience
- Engage in their education, transforming the educational experience to reach passions - not just jobs.

(Nutt, C)

Opportunities for Expansion: Make Room!

1. **Belonging Matters for all Students**
2. **Leveraging Institutional Networks = Social Capital**
3. **The Culture of Higher Education**
4. **Normalize Help Seeking Behaviors**
5. **Ask Questions**