Adult Learner Programs & Services Focus Groups  
Spring 2012

In order to explore the unique challenges adult learners face, including their academic experiences, participation in cocurricular activities, and interactions with traditional-aged students, Penn State’s office of Adult Learner Programs and Services (ALPS), in collaboration with Student Affairs Research and Assessment (SARA), conducted six student focus groups. The focus groups took place on February 13th, 2012 and were facilitated by key University administrators. The focus groups lasted approximately 90 minutes and included a diverse population of 40 adult learners, including parents, veterans, and working professionals.

Methods

The six focus groups occurred concurrently in groups of 8 and were led by a facilitator who was aided by a note-taker. Facilitators were high-level University administrators chosen for their interest in adult learners. Before the discussion began, participants were asked to complete a brief survey to provide information on their participation in a variety of student services, their needs and their perceptions of advising (see Appendix A). The focus group protocol provided a semi-structured framework for the discussion while allowing room to explore divergent topics. SARA analysts conducted a thematic analysis using the focus group notes by first developing an a priori descriptive coding scheme based on the questions in the interview protocol (see Appendix B). Analysts then coded transcripts using the coding scheme, supplementing the scheme as needed, and then summarized the emergent themes. Only one of the groups was recorded and the recording transcribed. The quotes in this report all come from that single group, but are used to give voice to themes that emerged across groups. Data from the survey is integrated into the focus group findings.

Summary of Findings

Motivation for Seeking a Degree

While a few participants mentioned a desire to pursue their academic passion or learn for the sake of learning, most adult learners were looking to expand their job prospects by earning a college diploma. Many focus group participants worked in blue-collar jobs before they enrolled at Penn State. They were seeking “hire-ability,” job security, and a better income to support their families.

Challenges of Being an Adult Learner

Adult learners must find a balance between their role as a student and their other obligations (e.g. parenting, working full- or part-time). Time management was a major challenge, especially for those who are employed or those with a long commute to campus. Arranging child care was another concern mentioned in the discussions and 75% indicated on the survey that they were unaware of how to locate information regarding the childcare subsidy at Penn State. Many participants mentioned that they would like more free time to spend with family. Also, some adult learners were dissatisfied with class schedules and limited course offerings. Working professionals preferred to take classes over the lunch hour, in the evening, or on weekends. In addition, focus group participants found it difficult to take more than a few courses at a time. Many recommended taking a light course load, especially when returning to the academy after a number of years away.
**Interactions with Traditional-Aged Students**

Focus group participants generally held negative attitudes about their traditional-aged classmates. Most preferred to work individually and found group work especially difficult because younger students did not seem to follow through with assignments or to take class projects seriously. In describing her group work experience, one participant said “I pull my weight and everybody else’s weight” when working on projects with traditional-aged students. Adult learners preferred to be evaluated individually instead of earning a group grade. Adult learners also struggled to schedule convenient meeting times for group projects. Many felt traditional-aged students tended to put their social lives ahead of academics and also failed to understand the priorities of adult learners. Focus group participants discussed a “clash of understanding” between the two age groups. Only a few participants said they had good experiences with group projects or learned a great deal from their teammates.

Since adult learners pay tuition themselves and make a significant financial investment in their education, they tended to perceive that they value their education and time in class more than traditional-aged students who are often relying on parental support. They were fully aware of the cost of their education and wanted value for their tuition dollars. They took academics seriously and regularly came to class excited to learn. One participant said that in each class, “I learn something completely new that blows my mind and I walk away a better person every day,” but that younger students generally did not have the same approach to their coursework.

Adult learners were frustrated by the relaxed attitudes of younger students. For example, adult learners may have needed more time on an assignment for what they considered to be legitimate reasons, while traditional-age students asked for extensions “out of pure laziness.” Numerous focus group participants expressed frustration with younger students who used social networking websites, sent text messages, or held whispered side conversations during class. Adult learners found these behaviors rude and distracting to others in the learning environment. Most “would prefer to be in a more professional atmosphere in the classroom.”

A few adult learners shared positive experiences of interacting with traditional-aged college students. One described wonderful encounters with conscientious undergraduates and was impressed by their work ethic. Some participants said they enjoyed taking classes with students of a wide age-range and that younger students often wanted to hear about the life experiences and perspectives of older students. One person became frustrated with the tendency to call younger students “kids” because it conveyed a sense of lack of responsibility and felt it was important to remember that young adults had good ideas as well. He reminded himself to “stop being such a rigid older guy and start listening to them. They get on my nerves, sometimes they’re arrogant, they’re ignorant, and they’re convinced of what they’re saying, but sometimes they’re right.”

**Classroom Experiences and Interactions with Faculty and Advisers**

Adult learners often described a learning curve when they enrolled in college courses. They sometimes found it difficult to recall basic concepts and keep up with coursework after taking time away from school. A number of focus group participants said tutoring was necessary for them to review basic skills and keep up with new material simultaneously.

While adult learners gave graduate teaching assistants mixed reviews, interactions with professors were generally good. Focus group participants offered a number of comments about building mentoring relationships with faculty members. Many recommended meeting faculty members during office hours and found these conversations rewarding and helpful. Fifty-two percent of participants indicated that
faculty and staff did not recognize the special needs and circumstances of adult students. In the focus groups, some indicated the same and wanted professors to provide additional guidance. Generally, however, discussants indicated that professors are willing to support adult learners.

While comments about teaching were positive, some students were unhappy with their academic advisers at Penn State. On the survey, only half (56%) indicated satisfaction with their adviser. One focus group participant said faculty advisers act as though advising interferes with research efforts and is a major inconvenience.

**Campus Involvement and Sense of Community among Adult Learners**

While some focus group participants were involved in clubs and cocurricular activities, most said they were not interested in becoming a part of the campus community because they are busy with other obligations. Those who wanted to be part of traditional student culture had not encountered any significant barriers. The only complaint in this area was entry to movie events in the HUB because door staff sometimes has not allowed students to bring their family members. Participants recognized that creating a sense of community among adult learners is challenging as well because everyone has many time commitments. Those who had attended programs sponsored by ALPS were satisfied and some hoped to see more events for adult learners offered in the future. Some students felt it is important to connect with others in the campus community, but most were uninterested in either fostering a sense of community for adult learners or being engaged in the larger campus community.

Many participants mentioned that Leslie Laing is a very helpful resource for adult learners. A few said Penn State needed more support services for veterans, and one participant said he felt out of place at ALPS programs because he was unmarried and had no children.

**University Services**

When asked about their usage of student services, the two mentioned most frequently were tutoring and University Health Services. Tutoring services were discussed in almost every focus group and many participants were familiar with academic support services available to students. This was somewhat surprising because the pre-focus group survey data indicated that almost half of the participants (42%) were not aware of the supplemental instruction and tutorial services offered by Penn State Learning and 68% indicated that they had not used these services. But in conversation, many indicated that they use these services on a regular basis because they find coursework challenging after taking time away from academics. Only one participant said they did not know what tutoring services were offered on campus. A few students said Penn State Learning does not hold enough hours over summer terms or other breaks.

Despite the fact that 63% of the participants indicated that they had been informed about Adult Learner Programs as new students, and the fact that all of them were recruited to participate through the ALPS office, 62% indicated that they were unaware of the *Adult Learner Handbook* that is posted on the ALPS website and was distributed last summer via flash drive. Thirty-five percent had attended an adult learner event (open house, game night, or workshop) and 9% had attended the annual Outstanding Adult Student Aware Reception.

Although 36% of participants indicated that they had attended the First-Year Testing, Consulting, & Advising Program (FTCAP), the majority did not and some focus group participants said they were completely unaware of any orientation programs to attend. This finding was confirmed by the 53% who indicated that they had not attended an orientation program on the preliminary survey. Adult learners
agreed they would have liked to have attended a FTCAP/Orientation program that focused on their needs.

**Technology**

On the survey, most respondents (51%) indicated that they had a medium or high level of expertise with technology. When asked about their experiences with technology, a few students found tools like eLion and ANGEL difficult to learn but eventually became familiar with them and offered no major complaints. Only 12% indicated that they had attended one of the free, monthly technology workshops, but 64% indicated that they had used IT services for students and 27% had taken advantage of the free online video tutorial as at Lynda.com. Most said that they wanted professors to take advantage of the technology available to them. Specifically, students found ANGEL helpful and often became frustrated with instructors who did not use ANGEL to post the course syllabus, lecture notes/slides, and readings. They felt some faculty members did not understand its features and full functionality.

**Other Findings**

Adult learners found it difficult to commute and park on campus. They also would appreciate a space on campus where they could use a refrigerator or microwave because adult learners do not typically purchase a meal plan and pack lunch instead. Fifty-six percent were not aware that there is a Stay and Study lounge space in 203 Boucke (which does not provide a kitchen space). Some wanted a mentorship program set up for adult learners to help them navigate the university. Finally, one focus group conversation concluded with the following remark: “We said a lot of negative things, but this [studying at Penn State] has been one of the best experiences of my life.”

**Implications**

Participants offered a number of suggestions to improve their academic and cocurricular experiences at Penn State. A surprising number of students did not participate in FTCAP and subsequently felt uninformed about university policies and resources. Many suggested that Penn State should offer a FTCAP session or similar orientation specifically for new adult learners. This session could highlight the services available to all students and other resources tailored specifically to adult learners and veterans. Although almost all focus group participants hoped to expand their job prospects upon graduation, none mentioned utilizing Career Services. ALPS may consider collaborating with Career Services to advertise their offerings and provide professional development activities focused on the adult learner population.

To improve advising for adult learners, advisers must understand the unique challenges adult learners face. Many prefer to take lighter course loads to find a sense of balance between their studies and family life. It may be necessary to balance promoting lighter loads with providing adult learners with realistic expectations of the prolonged time to graduation that this may create. Given the large number of adult learners who rely on tutors, Penn State should continue to promote Penn State Learning, the writing center, and other academic support services for students.

Adult learners agreed they would appreciate a physical space to prepare lunches and snacks in between classes. Rather than creating more events for adult learners to fit into their busy schedules, attending informal gatherings over mealtime may be an effective way to build a sense of community. If possible, it would be desirable to create such spaces or to add amenities to existing Stay and Study spaces and to designate some of these spaces specifically for adult learners.
Appendix A – Preliminary Survey Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As a new student:*</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Did you attend FTCAP, the First-Year Testing, Counseling, and Advising Program?</td>
<td>11 36</td>
<td>20 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did you attend an orientation program?</td>
<td>15 47</td>
<td>17 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did you attend an open house?</td>
<td>9 28</td>
<td>23 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Were you informed about Adult Learner Programs?</td>
<td>19 63</td>
<td>11 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Were you informed about the Office of Veterans Programs?</td>
<td>15 58</td>
<td>11 42</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Some participants indicated “not applicable” on these questions (Q1 n=3, Q2 n=2, Q3 n=2, Q4 n=2, and Q5 n=6). Not applicable responses are not included in the percentages reported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are you aware of:</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. The Adult Learner Handbook that was created and distributed last summer via flash drive and is posted on the adult learner website?</td>
<td>13 38</td>
<td>21 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How to locate financial scholarships designated for adult learners and student veterans?</td>
<td>14 41</td>
<td>20 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How to locate information regarding the child care subsidy?*</td>
<td>4 25</td>
<td>12 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Stay and Study Space located in Boucke 203?</td>
<td>15 44</td>
<td>19 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Supplemental instruction and tutorial services offered by Penn State Learning located in Boucke, Sparks, and Wagner buildings?</td>
<td>19 58</td>
<td>14 42</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Some participants indicated “not applicable” on Q8 (n=18). Not applicable responses are not included in the percentages reported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have you ever:</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Used supplemental instruction and tutorial services offered by Penn State Learning located in Boucke, Sparks, and Wagner buildings?</td>
<td>11 32</td>
<td>23 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Attended an adult learner event (open house, game night or workshop)?</td>
<td>12 35</td>
<td>22 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Attended the annual Outstanding Adult Student Award Reception?</td>
<td>3 9</td>
<td>31 91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would you like:*</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. To have a designated adult learner or student veteran day?</td>
<td>20 77</td>
<td>6 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. To see campus publications emphasize a commitment to serving adult learners?</td>
<td>29 94</td>
<td>2 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some participants indicated “not applicable” on these questions (Q14 n=3, Q15 n=3). Not applicable responses are not included in the percentages reported.
### 16. Are you aware of the campus commissions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commission</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th></th>
<th>NO</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Commission for Women</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Commission on LGBT Equity</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Commission on Racial/Ethnic Diversity (CORED)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Commission for Adult Learners</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some participants indicated “not applicable” on Q17 (n=2). Not applicable responses are not included in the percentages reported.

### 17. Do you feel that faculty and staff recognize the special needs and circumstances that adult students face?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LOW</th>
<th></th>
<th>MED</th>
<th></th>
<th>HIGH</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. What is your level of expertise when it comes to technology?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>44</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 19. Do you use facebook?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th></th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 20. Have you attended one of the free, monthly, technology workshops?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FACE-TO-FACE</th>
<th>EMAIL/ONLINE</th>
<th>BOTH</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 (45%)</td>
<td>5 (16%)</td>
<td>12 (39%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 21. Have you used the ITS services for students?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th></th>
<th>NO</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Some participants indicated “not applicable” on these questions (Q21 n=1, Q23 n=1). Not applicable responses are not included in the percentages reported.

### 22. Have you used free online video tutorials at Lynda.com?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FACE-TO-FACE</th>
<th>EMAIL/ONLINE</th>
<th>BOTH</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>8</td>
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</table>

### 23. Would you like to participate in an education abroad or internship opportunity before graduating?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FACE-TO-FACE</th>
<th>EMAIL/ONLINE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some participants indicated “not applicable” on these questions (Q21 n=1, Q23 n=1). Not applicable responses are not included in the percentages reported.

### 24. Do you utilize an adviser via face-to-face, email or online for selecting classes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FACE-TO-FACE</th>
<th>EMAIL/ONLINE</th>
<th>BOTH</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 (45%)</td>
<td>5 (16%)</td>
<td>12 (39%)</td>
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</table>

### 25. How satisfied are you with your adviser?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (9%)</td>
<td>11 (34%)</td>
<td>18 (56%)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Open-Ended Items

If you had funding to participate in Education Abroad, what other challenges would you face in doing so?

- Time off from work
- No income during study abroad
- None, funding is the only challenge
- Being able to take children/family along, cost
- Was abroad during deployments
- If the funding were to be covered the only challenge would be selecting a course load that would be unique yet manageable.
- Finding someone to watch my dogs.
- The decision to uproot my family and move overseas for x-months and worry about my spouse and employment for her.
- Finding someone to care for my home/house (single & living alone).
- Taking off work to participate in it.
- Hosing/rent, animal care, work
- Missing my girls
- None, other than perhaps not understanding or speaking enough of particular foreign language
- Paying rent and other bills at home
- Support from family, time away
- I have studied abroad. Main challenge was funding. I was able to receive funding through the strategic and global security program.
- Mostly funding and housing. I would want to take my wife but that’s not practical
- Mostly just paying my rent and/or storing my household goods while away.
- Being away from my children, possibly time away from work.
- Language barriers only
- Time away from job & others commitments
- Family, husband, travels
- None. Financial difficulty is my primary hindrance. I would be very interested in any study abroad/international study program otherwise.
- Getting a passport, still making sure the bills are paid at home
- I’m a mom so living my children will be very difficult and because I am from Medellin Colombia learning about other culture will be very difficult.

What types of cultural programs or experiences have you had as a Penn State student?

- Classes-SOC119
- Worked with multicultural students
- Attended several/many cultural programs around campus
- I am slowly getting involved in extracurricular activities.
- Conversation partners program
- A student driven, informational sharing about binge drinking.
- I’ve been able to interact with cultures all around the world, and I’ve been blessed with creating friendships that will last a lifetime.
International Business class via Penn State Harrisburg which included travel to China during Spring break; international coffee hour in Bouke.

Going to Palmer activities, rock of ages and Eisenhower

Public relations student society regional/national activities/conference

I’ve attended the football games.

The closest I can think of is my experience as an intern last summer (2011) when I interviewed of filmed a number of individuals associated with the African Research Center in order to produce a video on the ARC’s founding +10 year existence.

Cultural curiosity at white course, diversity events via Diversity Council

Study abroad

Language exchange

Team leader, MLK day of service

Mine have been work related for the most part. Some of my experiences have been with/through students in current classes.

Featured on UPOD Liberal Arts, participated in World on travel, interviewed by fellow students as a vet, sports games, distinguished speakers, concerts

Getting to know students from varying backgrounds such as cultures, countries, status in life--mostly WC courses.

Study abroad trip

This is my first semester here at Penn State. I am a transfer student from Harrisburg Area community college.

ACE/Teaching international film series.

What types of assistance would you like to receive regarding transitioning to a new career?

- Mentoring
- Focus peer groups for those of us about to graduate within next year
- An adult learner career fair. I feel my lack of multiple internships puts me at disadvantage.
- Financial assistance/advice
- Some sort of Nittany Note or Lion Tutor equivalent.
- Assistance graduate school applications, personal statement essay
- Help putting together an effective resume.
- I would like the people I’ve associated with to at least be a reference if needed.
- One-on-one resume building
- Resume assistance, job fairs, interviewing practices, job placement
- Veteran associated career fair
- Job placement and advising
- Assistance with finding jobs/internships directly associated with the film industry.
- Job posting resume building workshop
- Career counseling
- Opportunities are out there for advancement within the university. I don’t plan to leave PSU so looking at advancement that way.
- Any available
- Career counseling and assistance with job opportunities available
- I wouldn’t even know how to begin to answer this question. Maybe some advising on what to expect, how to begin, how to develop good references.
• Not sure, possible job listings. Resume building
• Hands on experience, resume training/help, interview workshop
• I have a very good advisor and she is always open to help me when I have questions.
• Employment during school.

What types of advising challenges do you face?

• Knowledge of adult ed, PSU staff combined benefits scholarships, programs, etc.
• My adviser had little knowledge on transferring military credit and have them count towards classes.
• No adviser for veterans
• Never met my last advisor, now I have a new one assigned.
• Mentoring with an advisor who understands the complications of responsibilities outside the school environment and how much time it consumes the realities of financial and travel obligations.
• Making sure I enroll in the classes most suitable for completing my major that will also help me to meet my career goals.
• Knowing about classes to take for next semester
• Special program-post baccalaureate
• I don’t feel that I have many challenges with my adviser. They seem to be in contact when I need them, email seems to be the most successful way of being in contact.
• Having an advisor who is pulled b/t myself and hundreds of other students; a dedicated team of advisors for adult learners would be nice.
• Scheduling appointments-Time constraints of lunch hour.
• Changing academic/career interests, maybe?
• None, I have had 2 good advisors and set me up well to graduate
• None, just trying to schedule classes
• First living so far make this very difficult and having a family make challenges an everyday thing.
• An understandable unfamiliarity with majors they weren’t educated in. Unaware of the “specifics” unable to give in depth insight.

What criteria do you think should be used in selecting the Outstanding Adult Student Award recipient?

#1
• Life/work balance
• Community service experience
• Academic excellence
• Grades
• Community involvement (PSU or State College)
• Home life
• GPA
• Work load
• Participation in student groups
• Students with 3.0 GPA or higher
• Be outstanding
What are the current criteria?
Academic achievement
2 awards for those who are students and one for staff/employed
I’m not too concerned about an outstanding adult student award, maybe academics, I guess
Academic Performance
Academic quality
Credits taken
Contributions to student body
Be an adult student
GPA
Commitment to learning

#2
Good grade
Exemplary service in the community
Community service
Overcoming difficult challenges (ex. Family, academic)
Class schedule, work load
Multitasking responsibilities
Extracurricular activities
Publishing or winning a contest for a paper
Students most committed to the adult learner programs (attendance of meetings regularly)
Be an adult
Community/campus involvement/leadership
Include family involvement
Integration with traditional age students
Community involvement; work load both in and out of school
Faculty nomination
GPA
Contributions on local community
Be outstanding
Affect on other students (experience, value added to classroom)
Willingness to give back

#3
Internships completed
Academic merit
GPA
Personal/professional obstacles/good GPA (>3.00)
Student volunteers for mentoring programs at PSU
Be awesome
Personal background
Looking at work involvement, committees involved with, etc.
Obstacles
Other obstacles the individuals faces and overcoming
- Active in community/volunteering
- Attendance
- Grade average
- Participate with adult learner program
- Difficulty of major
- Involvement in community activities & work activities
Appendix B – Focus Group Protocol

1. What are your priorities as a student and how do they shape your experience?

2. What challenges do you face as a student at Penn State? (How do you juggle your multiple responsibilities while seeking a degree?)

3. Describe your classroom experiences: What has been easy? What are the challenges?

4. How would you describe a successful student experience at Penn State? How can the University’s services and programs be improved to provide you with that experience?

5. Describe your typical interactions with Penn State faculty or staff members?

6. Is there a sense of community among adult learners and veterans? If so, what is it like? If not, why do you think that is? Have you been able to meet other adult learners in class or on campus?

7. While you are on campus, how do you spend time outside of class? Have you found a comfortable place to relax or study? Are you involved in club or volunteer activities?

8. What University programs and services have you used? Tell us about that experience.

9. What keeps you from participating more fully in campus activities?

10. New students at Penn State are required to quickly learn how to use eLion, ANGEL, Webmail and other learning and information technologies. How well prepared were you for these challenges? How can Penn State do a better job at supporting student technology use?

11. What other things would you like to share with us about your experiences?

12. Do you have questions for us?