Charge

• Assess where Penn State stands regarding adult learners among peer institutions
  • Academic programs
  • Support programs
Method

• Need to define “peer institution” (criteria are different across institutions)
• Mostly compared to Big 10 Schools, but not exact comparison (ex. World Campus much more robust than other online programs)
• Data from Council on Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)
• Met with peer administrator; indicated possible creation of Big 10 network
Scope

• Flexible curricular pathways
  • Develop required competencies
  • Maintain integrity of degree programs

• Broad student support that meet the needs of adult learners to assess educational versus career goals and ensure that barriers are minimized along the way

• Ease of transferring credits and receiving meaningful credit for prior learning

• Transparency about cost and time to degree

• Programming that supports the transition from residential- to online-based learning opportunities as students move along the continuum of life-long learning

• Better integration adult learners in all aspects of the Penn State experience
Recommendations for Future of the Commission

- Need for concrete internal and external benchmarking.
- The need for a central web site where adult learners can locate quickly the services relevant to a majority of the demographic (e.g. PLA, transfer tool, veterans’ services).
  - Locating existing services and then aggregating.
- Connecting adult learners virtually and in real time for peer mentoring and advocacy.
- Approaching a plan for lifelong learning (ex. CE, GO 60).
- Advocating for a consistent set of definitions and terms that will be used across the University.
- The need for flexibility at the local level.
  - Ex. Funding that can be sought by units for specific needs.
Other Recommendations

• Pursue the Big 10 network idea initiated by Ms. Ayala at Purdue.
• Work back through the Office of the Provost via Kathy Bieschke’s office to identify additional Big 10 members who may be interested in joining a consortium for the purposes of supporting adult learners.
• Meeting with Big 10 colleagues at the 2020 Hendrick Conference.
• Invite Ms. Ayala or another Big 10 colleague to provide the keynote address at Hendrick 2020.
Conversation

• What thoughts or ideas do you have?
Thank-you

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