Revisiting the definition of the non-traditional adult learner: Assessment Practices Redefined

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The “nontraditional” learner

Age 25+

Nontraditional approaches

Returning to school

Competing responsibilities

Career-focused
The “traditional” learner

- Age 17–24
- First-time Full-time
- Residential / Face-to-Face
- Varied foci
Instruction and Assessment methods

- Nontraditional
  - Competency-based
  - Self-directed
  - Prior learning assessment
  - Testing
  - Online / hybrid courses
  - Flexible paths to degree completion
  - The institution goes to the learner
  - “hacking”

- Traditional
  - In-person classroom experiences
  - Reliance on classroom assessment
    - Testing
    - Research papers
  - The learner goes to the institution
  - Out of classroom experiences
Trends

- NT enrollment increasing
- T enrolling in NT programs
- The ‘cafeteria’ approach
- Increased competition within T schools
Factors

- Cost
- Time
- Place
- Accessibility
- Value
Cautions

- Remediation
- In-person context
- Academic advising
- Types of issues faced
Questions?