In the News

Plus 50 In the News

- “Colleges are Failing America’s Mid-Life Population,” *Forbes*, February 20, 2015

Marketing 101: Where Do You Show the Plus 50 Initiative Logo?

Many community colleges use the Plus 50 Initiative logo to demonstrate their openness to plus 50 students and market their programs. Middlesex Community College features the Plus 50 logo on the navigation bar at the bottom of the college’s main homepage alongside some of the college’s important accreditations that demonstrate its commitment to serving students. Many colleges have also included the logo in course catalogs, on specialized Web pages for plus 50 students, and on brochures, fliers, PowerPoint presentations, and other materials.

Offer Prior Learning Assessment?

The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) is conducting a study on the financial costs of operating prior learning assessment (PLA) programs. Their intentions are to showcase as institutional case studies several different
approaches to pricing PLA. Postsecondary institutions that offer PLA are invited to participate in the study by providing basic information on PLA costs and fees, and how these fees are determined. You can complete the survey online.

**Resource: Performance-Based Funding for Higher Education**
Historically, many colleges have received state funding based on how many full-time equivalent students are enrolled at the beginning of the semester. This model provides incentives for colleges to enroll students and thus provide access to postsecondary education, but this model does not necessarily provide incentives for institutions to help students successfully complete degree programs. Many states are reconsidering the enrollment-based funding model and instead are aligning funding models with state goals and priorities. This National Conference of State Legislatures Web page summarizes progress in several states and the implementation of performance-based funding policies.

**Certificates: A Fast Track to Careers**
This publication by the Bureau of Labor Statistics offers students advice on earning a certificate. It provides an overview of common certificates leading to careers and their salaries. It also advises students about doing their research on the job opportunities available and offers tips on finding the right program.

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**Would you know me if I weren’t in uniform?**

*UC4 University Counseling Center Core Competency*

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**Free Workshop Available to Assist College Counselors Working with Veteran Students**
The Center for Deployment Psychology offers a free workshop college counselors who work with veteran students and want to understand their challenges and concerns in order to help them succeed. They will bring the training to your campus. Curriculum includes interactive, didactic, and workshop components that address culture and experience of service members and veterans on campus, the deployment cycle and its impact on students, reintegration on campus, an overview of treatments for PTSD on campus, and culturally competent clinical interventions with student veterans. For more details, visit, or contact Nicole Lindsay for more information.

**Credit Due: Increasing Veterans’ Postsecondary Degree Attainment**
Veterans are enrolling in postsecondary education institutions in large numbers, most of them with extensive occupational experience. Many colleges use Prior Learning Assessments to award academic credit when the knowledge and skills an individual has gained outside the classroom—including employment, military
training and service, civic activities, and volunteer service—can be matched to college-level coursework. Veterans who earn credit for general courses are able to complete their degrees in a shorter period of time, reducing the college bill. In this webinar, experts discuss current policy and successful examples to promote credit for prior learning. You can also download the slides in a pdf document.

**Aligning Innovations to Promote Learning and Quality Credentials**

New research sheds light on how two approaches to creating alternative pathways to college graduation for post-traditional students are working. The American Council on Education published two papers on alternate pathways to degree completion for post-traditional students with implications for the future of higher education. *Credit for Prior Learning: Charting Institutional Practice for Sustainability* identifies and addresses cultural barriers and successful strategies to viewing credit for prior learning as central to institutional mission and an essential component in the continuum of teaching, learning, and assessment. *The Currency of Higher Education: Credits and Competencies* explores the processes built around the credit hour and the challenges in adapting these processes for greater flexibility and outcomes-based approaches, though there is ample opportunity for innovation.

See a question and answer session with authors for the reports.

**Resources to Support Your Plus 50 Program**

**COMPLETION**

*Scaling Completion College Services as a Model for Increasing Adult Degree Completion*

In this paper by the Lumina Foundation, the authors discuss the unique capabilities "Completion Colleges" offer. These 4-year colleges offer services that help students finish their degrees by integrating credits earned at multiple institutions and through assessing their prior learning. The authors suggest that expanding their successful approaches nationally could increase working-age U.S. student completion.

**LEARNING**

*Making Skills Everyone’s Business: A Call to Transform Adult Learning in the United States*

This report by the U.S. Department of Education offers seven strategies that hold great promise for improving the conditions that create and perpetuate poor literacy, numeracy, and problem solving. The strategies are based on the principle of shared responsibility and acknowledge that America’s basic skills challenge is too large to address by any stakeholder group independently.
TRAINING & RE-TRAINING

Older Woman Workers and Economic Security
This issues brief from the Women’s Bureau within the U.S. Department of Labor discusses how and why the gender wage gap varies by age. It also examines how earnings for older women differ by race and ethnicity. The impact of the gender wage gap and caregiving responsibilities on women’s lifetime earnings and their retirement savings is also highlighted. The authors offer solutions to tackle the gender wage gap and improve women’s lifetime earnings.

PLUS 50 TRENDS

“How to Create a Digital Marketing Strategy That Appeals to Baby Boomers”
Developing a digital marketing strategy that appeals to baby boomers is the focus of this article. The author says the trick is to focus on the fact that four out of five baby boomers regularly use the Internet from a computer. Content should be created that shares information about your organization or program that appeals to baby boomers. The authors recommend using photos of baby boomers in your marketing materials and being personable. They suggest offering a thorough “About Us” page on your website that includes pictures of staff if possible. A hard sell is likely to push baby boomers away, so instead of pushing or patronizing customers, the author recommends you be honest, upfront, and factual.