



DISCOVER THE
NON-TRADITIONAL U
AT AUSTIN PEAY

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What Is a Non-traditional Student?

A non-traditional student is any student with responsibilities outside of academic life, has had a lapse in their college career, and/or is over the age of 24.

By this measure nearly all of APSU's students are non-traditional students. Our non-traditional students are now our traditional students.

Our future as an institution of higher education depends upon our ability to engage, educate, and graduate this growing demographic.

Non-traditional Student Engagement Possibilities

- Attendance in class and other curricular activities
- Participation in research
- Active relationships with other students, staff, and/or faculty
- Identification of peers
- Involvement in extracurricular activities
- Attendance at APSU events
- Personal identification with APSU culture
- Empowerment to succeed
- Confidence in refining path to professional success

Major Barriers to Engagement Faced by Non-traditional Students

- Poor academic preparation for studies due to lapse in academic career
- Lack of patience for academic progress (vs. faster rate of feedback in professional life)
- Overly rigid career expectations
- Faculty perceptions of non-traditional students
- Competition for time from jobs and/or family responsibilities
- Lack of identification with the University community
- Stranded in no man's land—challenged to find peer relationships

Issue: Academic Preparation & Progress

PROBLEM

- Inadequate and poorly-targeted orientation for transfer and non-traditional students

SOLUTION

- Separate orientation aimed at transfer and non-traditional concerns
- APSU 1000 tailored to transfer and non-traditional students
- Include topics appropriate for transfer and non-traditional students in the current student handbook and distribute all students including Ft. Campbell Center students

Issues: Academic Preparation & Progress

PROBLEM

- Too many offices to deal with

SOLUTION

- One-stop shopping/Cross-training
 - Bursar
 - Financial Aid
 - Registrar
 - Admissions
 - Advising

Issues: Academic Preparation & Progress

PROBLEM

- No central location for academic support services
- Lack of peer tutors for non-traditional students

SOLUTION

- Have all academic support services in facility that is open largest number of hours on campus
- Recruit non-traditional students as tutors for non-traditional students

Issues: Academic Preparation & Progress

PROBLEM

- Inadequate advisor training for faculty
- No dedicated expertise at the departmental level for non-traditional student issues
- Overly rigid career expectations

SOLUTION

- Develop advisor & chair training regimens
- Designate non-traditional liaison in each department
- Integrate professional advising into the academic advisement process

Issues: Family Responsibilities

PROBLEM

- Non-traditional students may not be able to attend classes when their child is sick, on school break, transportation issues, etc.

SOLUTION

- Promote alternative methods for class “attendance” in special circumstances

Issue: Family Responsibilities

PROBLEM

- Childcare Availability

SOLUTION

- Offer casual care when University is in session (during classes, events, study time, advising appointments, orientation, etc.)
- Expand current facility
 - Accept children as early as 6 weeks
 - After school care
 - More physical space
 - More slots available

Issue: Campus Connectivity

PROBLEM

- No SGA representation

SOLUTION

- Add seats specifically for non-traditional students in SGA

Issue: Campus Connectivity

PROBLEM

- Lack of participation in campus events

SOLUTION

- Publicize events further in advance
- Clearly identify events that are family friendly (color coding in Gov Says)
- Host some events on Saturdays

Proposal: Build On Our Strengths

- Implement solutions listed previously as a starting point
- Use the need for a new marketing plan as an OPPORTUNITY to develop a university-wide campaign of engagement. Working with students, faculty, and staff the University will build upon our strengths to embrace and promote Austin Peay as a home for non-traditional students.

Assessment Plan

- Track non-traditional student enrollment
- Attendance at events (card swipe)
- Tutoring (card swipe)
- Track retention and graduation rates for non-traditional students

*Need to benchmark the past 3-5 years of enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.