Overcoming Social Barriers to Postsecondary Education

CSG Policy Webinar Series
Who are the Students Most in Need of Postsecondary Education?

A Profile of Non-Traditional and First-Generation Students and Why States Should Help Them Succeed

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About CLASP

• The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) develops and advocates for policies that improve the lives of low-income people.

• CLASP’s Center for Postsecondary and Economic Success seeks to improve policy, increase investment, and strengthen political will to increase the number of low-income adults and youth who earn the postsecondary credentials essential to open doors to good jobs, career advancement, and economic mobility.
Postsecondary Credentials are Key to Individual Economic Mobility

Earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment

Unemployment rate in 2012 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional degree</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's degree</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate's degree</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college, no degree</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than a high school diploma</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Median weekly earnings in 2012 ($)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Median Weekly Earnings ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree</td>
<td>1,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional degree</td>
<td>1,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's degree</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>1,066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate's degree</td>
<td>785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college, no degree</td>
<td>727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than a high school diploma</td>
<td>471</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All workers: 6.8%  
All workers: $815

Postsecondary Credentials are Key to State Prosperity

• States with a well-educated workforce:
  – Have higher median wages
  – Have higher productivity gains

• States can increase tax revenue by investing in education that yields higher incomes for its residents.

“Providing expanded access to high quality education will not only expand economic opportunity for residents, but also likely do more to strengthen the overall state economy than anything else a state government can do.”

- Noah Berger and Peter Fisher, Economic Policy Institute

Source: Berger, Noah and Peter Fisher, A Well-Educated Workforce is Key to State Prosperity, Economic Policy Institute, August 2013.
Well-Educated States Have Higher Productivity Growth

Source: Berger, Noah and Peter Fisher, A Well-Educated Workforce is Key to State Prosperity, Economic Policy Institute, August 2013.
Well-Educated States Have Higher Median Wages

Source: Berger, Noah and Peter Fisher, A Well-Educated Workforce is Key to State Prosperity, Economic Policy Institute, August 2013.
Employers Will Need Higher-Skilled Workers

**Demand for college-educated workers**
- Will grow 2-3x faster than demand for lower-skilled in half of states
- Will grow 5-6x faster than demand for lower-skilled in four states

**Demand for workers with a high school diploma or less**

*Source: Not Just Kid Stuff Anymore: The Economic Imperative for More Adults to Complete College, CLASP/NCHEMS, June 2011.*
Who Needs Better Skills and Wages?

• **37 percent** of U.S. workers (48 million) need better skills and wages
  
  – Adults 25-64 without college degrees or with limited English skills
  
  – Working, but earning poverty-level wages or below the state median wage or haven’t worked in the last year

• **States with highest need for better-skilled workers:**
  Louisiana (42.8%), Nevada (42.3%), Alabama (41.8%), Arkansas (41.7%), Tennessee (40.7%)

Source: *Building the Middle Class with Better Skills and Wages: Who Would be Helped by Stronger Pathways?, CLASP/COWS, August 2013.*
It’s Not Just Kid Stuff Anymore

• Over the next decade there will be no national growth in the number of high school graduates.
  – Thirty-one states and the District of Columbia will experience a decline in the number of high school graduates between 2010 and 2020.

• Adult postsecondary enrollments are increasing at a faster rate than high school graduates.
  – Between 2000 and 2010, the enrollment of students under age 25 increased by 34 percent, compared to 42 percent by students 25 and over.
  – Growth among adults 25 and over in the following decade is projected to be double that of younger students (20 percent v. 11 percent).

Who are Non-Traditional Students?

So-called “non-traditional” students have at least one of these characteristics:

• Do not immediately continue their education after high school graduation
• Attend college only part-time
• Work full-time (35 hours or more per week)
• Financially independent from their parents
• Have children or dependents
• Are a single parent
• Have a GED or high school equivalency

75% of students are non-traditional!

Yesterday’s Non-Traditional Student is Today’s Traditional Student

### Among undergraduates...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51%</td>
<td>Independent Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44%</td>
<td>24 and older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>Attend a mix of full- and part-time. (Only 7.2% attend exclusively part-time.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>Are parents or have dependents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43%</td>
<td>Employed part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32%</td>
<td>Employed full-time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What’s Unique About First-Generation Students?

• First-Generation students are more likely to:
  – Be older; more likely to delay college entry (Engle, 2007)
  – Attend public 2-year or for-profit college (Bui, 2002)
  – Attend part-time (Higher Education Research Institute, 2007)
  – Work full-time (Saenz et al., 2007)
  – Be low-income, may support extended families (Engle, 2007 and Saenz et al., 2007)
  – Less likely to live on-campus (Saenz et al., 2007)
  – Tend to apply to less selective colleges and those closer to home (Engle, 2007)
What about Completion?

The completion picture is more complex than the stereotype of the nontraditional, first-generation “drop out.”

• At some institutions, older students complete at higher rates than their younger peers. Students over 24 complete at the same or higher rates than their younger peers at community colleges and four-year for-profits.

• At community colleges, enrollment patterns matter more than age. Older students who attend exclusively part-time perform better than younger, exclusively part-time students.

Want more? Keep in touch.

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Pioneers in Education:
Generations Achieving Scholarship &
Unprecedented Success

Ashley Marie Gonzales, Associate Director
Original Purpose:

- August 2002, University Advising Center developed a new program intended for first-time-in-college, First Generation College (FGC) students
- PEGASUS (Pioneers in Education: Generations Achieving Scholarship and Unprecedented Success)
- Program was inspired in part by the state of Texas‘ Closing the Gaps initiative
- Funded through an initial two-year commitment from TTU
Because the program was initially reserved for a group of twenty students, advisors planned to create a community atmosphere similar to other academic organizations. Advisors hoped to offer elective social gatherings with group outings in addition to the required workshop attendance.
Changes to Original Purpose:

- October 2003, the size and scope of PEGASUS’ purpose changed.
- PEGASUS expanded limited services to the entire entering freshman FGC class.
- No longer concentrate on its selected 20 students, but rather expand its services into a much larger and more academically diverse community.
- Though in contradiction to proven models for working with FGC students, PEGASUS endeavored to find strategies to make this approach a success.
Mission:

The TTU PEGASUS Program seeks to make exploration, innovation, and academic success attainable realities for First Generation College (FGC) Students by improving recruitment, retention, and success rates of FGC students at Texas Tech University.
PEGASUS Professional Staff:

Ashley Marie Gonzales, Associate Director
Amy Huff, Unit Coordinator
Justin Rivas, Unit Coordinator
Aisha Nealy, Senior Business Assistant
PEGASUS FGC Student Staff Positions:

- FGC students who serve as role models and sources of support for new FGC students enrolled at TTU, as well as all PEGASUS Mentors
- Help to ease the transition of new FGC students, as well as offer encouragement and guidance to Mentors by sharing their experiences as successful students
PEGASUS FGC Program Assistants:

- Must be a currently enrolled undergraduate or graduate student at TTU
- Completed at least 30 credit hours as of May 2013
- Maintain a 3.0 minimum cumulative GPA
- Be in good disciplinary standing with TTU
PA Major/Essential Functions:

- Responsible for program office tasks, such as communication, planning events, encouraging participation and documentation
- Serve as FGC Peer Mentors and help to ease the transition of new FGC students by sharing their experiences as successful students
- Serve as team leaders responsible for encouraging their FGC student team to participate in events and utilize program services
The success of the PEGASUS program is dependent on five major areas of staff concentration. They are: (1) advising, (2) curriculum, (3) community building events, (4) outreach/community service, and (5) research.

Each of these areas serves a unique purpose toward furthering the ultimate goals of the program.
Challenges of FGC Students:

FGC students face a variety of challenges. Such challenges include:

- Straddling two cultures (home and college)
- Experiencing changes in family and personal relationships
- Adapting to a competitive academic environment
- Managing time and events
- Living on and managing a tight budget
- Feeling excluded or not belonging
- Feeling overwhelmed and confused
- Learning how to negotiate the large, university system
- Explaining the demands and rigors of college life to family and friends
How PEGASUS Helps:

- **Peer Mentoring**

- **Programs & Services designed for FGCs**
  - Community Building
  - POWER Sessions
  - Study Sessions
  - Community Service
  - Learning Community
  - Scholarships
Programs & Services:

• Community Building events - vital to fostering a sense of belonging at Texas Tech

• Provide social enhancement opportunities
Programs & Services:

• **P.O.W.E.R.** Sessions - specific workshops developed to assist FGC students with their transition to TTU

Faculty and staff members work collaboratively with the PEGASUS staff to bring their areas of expertise and knowledge to FGC students.
Programs & Services:

• *Study Sessions* - contribute to the development of study habits of first-year students.

• *Used to promote a sense of camaraderie.*

*PEGASUS* offers *Study Sessions* exclusively to our students once a week

• *Tutors available*
Programs & Services:

- **Community** Service - community building.

- FGC students given the opportunity to give back to others
Mentors Fall and Spring: $236 + 297 = 533$ hours
Mentees Fall and Spring: $580 + 1090 = 1,670$ hours

**Community Service Hours 2012 - 2013**
Programs & Services:

- **Learning Community** - an opportunity for members to increase their connection to TTU and the PEGASUS program by sharing a Residence Hall floor exclusively for members
Programs & Services:

• **Freshmen Interest Group** - academic program aimed towards first-time freshmen students who live together within the **PEGASUS Learning Community**

• Geared towards supporting and helping first-year college students with transition to a higher education institute
Mentee Fall to Spring Retention 2012-2013

- Retained: 97%
- Non-Retained: 3%
Overall Participant Ethnicity
Fall 2013

- Hispanic: 9.41%
- White: 28.05%
- Black: 10.73%
- Other: 51.82%

Overall Participant Gender Fall 2013

- Female: 47.19%
- Male: 52.80%
PEGASUS 2012-2013 Accolades:

- TTU voted one of the six best schools in the nation for Outreach to FGC students
- Voted best Learning Community at TTU out of 16 LCs
- Voted Volunteer of the Year Group by all three branches of the Boys & Girls Club of Lubbock
Thank You
Welcome to the University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Overcoming Social Barriers to Postsecondary Education
Who are Non-Traditional Students?
Who, exactly, is a non-traditional student? If a student has only **ONE** of these characteristics, then by our definition they are a non-traditional student:

- Delayed enrollment after high school
- Attend school part time
- Works full time (25+ hours)
- Financially independent
- Dependents other than a spouse
- Single parent
- Military
- First generation student

How we define a non-traditional student.
### UALR Spring Enrollment by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;18</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>1,351</td>
<td>1,441</td>
<td>1,349</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-21</td>
<td>1,482</td>
<td>1,550</td>
<td>1,569</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-24</td>
<td>1,636</td>
<td>1,685</td>
<td>1,745</td>
<td>599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>1,590</td>
<td>1,573</td>
<td>1,489</td>
<td>967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>1,007</td>
<td>1,021</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9,595</td>
<td>9,871</td>
<td>9,606</td>
<td>2,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Barriers to Persistence

Situational
Institutional
Dispositional
Challenges that I face in completing this program are:

- Caring for a family while in school: 18%
- Lack of support from family and peers: 27%
- Children (sickness, daycare): 36%
- Financial Problems: 14%
- None of the above: 5%
- No response: 5%
Non-Traditional Student Survey
15 Members of the NTSO

Challenges I face in completing this program are:

- The need to work while in school: 32%
- Time constraint: 11%
- Transportation to and from school: 18%
- The difficulty of the coursework: 7%
- None of the above: 0%
- No response: 0%
Non-Traditional Student Survey
15 Members of the NTSO

Challenges that I face in completing this program are:

- The need for more study skills: 53%
- Inadequate reading, English, and math skills: 18%
- Difficulty relating to my classmates: 6%
- None of the above: 23%
- No response: 0%
Non-Traditional Student Programs

- Help with the admission and registration process
- Provide information about UALR resources, services & opportunities
- Offer an ongoing system of support and encouragement
- Refer to the appropriate staff or faculty
Peer Tutoring
Peer Mentoring
Get Involved = Social Acceptance

- **Why get involved?** It is a way to become involved in your academic or professional field and to connect with students while you have a good time.

- **Who can get involved?** Everyone, from traditional to non-traditional, commuter to residence hall students, full-time to part-time students and everyone in between!

Whether you are interested in politics, a certain culture or religious affiliations, there is a group for you. There is a Registered Student Organization for everyone!
Mission Statement: The overall mission of the Non-Traditional Student Organization (NTSO) is to enhance the education and interpersonal experiences of non-traditional students, to promote lifelong learning through collaboration with the university community, to provide services that address the unique needs and life experiences of non-traditional students while supporting and promoting their degree attainment. The specific mission of the NTSO is to oversee implementation of a Non-Traditional Student Scholarship.
Non-Traditional Student Programs Events

Scholarship Workshops
Alpha Sigma Lambda Honor Society
Professional Networking
Campus Liaisons
Student Spotlight Videos

My name is Ashley Greene. I'm from Mammoth Spring, Arkansas.

Amy Frets / Management Information Systems

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