Discussion Guide for *Blending Adult Education and Developmental Education: A Hybrid Model*

Earning a postsecondary degree or credential has become a prerequisite for the growing jobs of today's economy. At the same time, data on educational attainment and skills show that there are at least 36 million Americans without basic literacy skills in need of educational credentials for work[1]. In addition, once enrolled at a postsecondary institution, too many of the nation's adult learners are not prepared for the academic rigor required for success with about one-third enrolling in remedial courses during their first or second year of college[2]. The social and economic consequences for these adult learners are severe for them, their families, and their communities, where large numbers of lower-skilled adults can hamper economic development.

Supporting the learner in gaining the foundational literacy and numeracy skills to facilitate postsecondary transitions, whether it is at an adult education classroom or at a developmental education program, is crucial and starts with a commitment from community college leadership. And, adult education student success at college campuses can only be achieved at the classroom level if adult educators have access to professional development opportunities which lends support to their work with learners in the classroom.

Featured Schools

Amarillo College - Amarillo, TX
Gateway Community College - New Haven, CT
LaGuardia Community College - Queens, NY
St. Louis Community College - St. Louis, Missouri

As part of the *Supporting Student Success (SSS): Adult Education and Remedial Education Reform in Community Colleges* project, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education contracted with the Manhattan Strategy Group to:

- Document and capture examples of coordination, alignment and partnership between adult education and developmental education at four community colleges. This was accomplished using a framework designed from *Unlocking the Gate's[3]* literature review of promising developmental education reform strategies.
- Develop, design and disseminate peer-led virtual learning opportunities such as webinars and Communities of Practices (CoPs) led by the four community colleges. The project will produce three videos, each to be accompanied by a Discussion Guide.
  Note: archived webinars and CoPs can be found in the "Resources" section of this discussion guide.

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[1] U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Services, National Center for Education Statistics, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2012 Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).

[2] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Postsecondary Student Aid Study – NPSAS: 12.

[3] Elizabeth Zachry Rutschow and Emily Schneider, "Unlocking the Gate: What We Know About Improving Developmental Education," MDRC, June 2011, http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/full_595.pdf

How to Use this Discussion Guide

The goal for this Guide is to prompt discussion about developmental education implementation approaches (such as: acceleration, contextualization, and student supports as referenced and defined in *Unlocking the Gate[4]*) that are applicable to your institution, department and/or adult education program. This Guide should be used before, during, and after the accompanying video with institutional leadership, departmental chairs, and program level administrators and instructors. Prior to viewing the video and to optimize self-reflection, we recommend a quick review of the reflective questions below.

Reflective Questions

Before viewing the video, write down your responses to key questions below:

- What is my program's overall approach to adult education program design?
- Does our approach include any or all of the following program components:
    - Acceleration- compression of unit into smaller courses
    - Contextualization- integration of academic content in reading, writing or math with industry specific skills content
    - Student Supports- supplemental strategies intended to support student success. This may include but is not limited to: in-person or lab based tutoring and, preparatory "boot camp" coursework.
- Are the aforementioned elements of interest?
- If so, which ones? Why?
- What is the connection of these elements to the implementation of WIOA, including but not limited to: the focus on career pathway systems?

While viewing the video, write down your responses to key questions below:

- How does the video's mention of the "developmental education churn" and the need to help individuals become "career and college ready" also have connections to your adult education program?
- At my Institution, how does developmental education and adult education coordination, align or partner with one another?
- What is currently missing between the coordination, alignment, and partnership between the two that could be improved upon?
- Describe how the coordination, alignment and partnership of the two entities would be beneficial?

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[4] Ibid
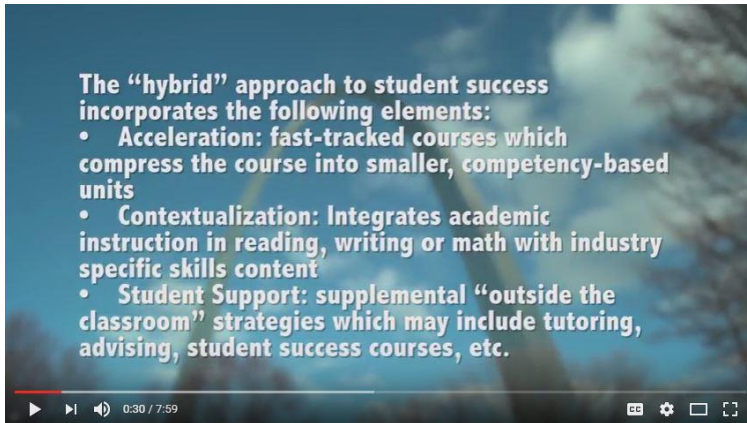
Video: Integrating Adult and Developmental Education
https://youtu.be/MRtKEeNhaUU

Next Steps

After you view the video, review your notes and organize your overall thought process to develop a plan for implementing ideas:

Identify the purpose of the targeted effort:

What/How	What needs to be done/ By When?	Individual(s) Responsible?
1. Which of St. Louis Community College's hybrid examples from the video prompts a closer look? Why?		
2. Specifically, what are some quick, promising techniques from the video could be adapted for my program?		
3. Specifically, what are some longer turnaround, promising techniques that could be adapted for my program?		
4. Which of the recommendations shared by St. Louis Community College's Adult Learning Academy staff have applicability to my adult education program?		

Articulate

What/How	What needs to be done/ By When?	Individual(s) Responsible?
5. Who are the adult learners we serve and what are their needs?		

What/How	What needs to be done/ By When?	Individual(s) Responsible?
6. How are the needs of adult education learners and developmental education learners similar or different?		
7. What are joint efforts with developmental education that could result in both developmental education and adult education better addressing our learners' needs?		
8. What other benefits of adult education and developmental education coordination do you see?		

Adult Education and Developmental Education coordination, alignment and partnerships

What/How	What needs to be done/ By When?	Individual(s) Responsible?
9. How should we be working with developmental education?		
10. What are the examples of how we can align, coordinated and partner between developmental education and adult education?		
11. What are ways we can increase postsecondary student success in developmental education and adult education?		
12. Are there "lessons learned" from adult education (or vice versa) on professional development for faculty, administrators in supporting adult learner success?		

Other considerations

What/How	What needs to be done/ By When?	Individual(s) Responsible?
13. Who are the stakeholders that need to be engaged and "at the table?"		
14. What are other important action steps that ought to be included?		

Resources

SSS's webinars are recorded and available for viewing on the [Postsecondary Completion](#) LINCS group. For more on this project and related topics, please visit the following discussions/webinars in the LINCS Community:

- [Re-Visioning Instruction and Support at Community Colleges to Support the Whole Student](#) (discussion)
- [Building Bridges Between Adult Basic Education and Developmental Education](#) (discussion)
- [Intensive Skill and College Readiness Programs at Community Colleges](#) (discussion)
- [Supporting Student Success via Contextualized Learning](#) (webinar)
- [Supporting Student Success: Accelerated Curriculum for Impact](#) (webinar)
- [Supporting Student Success: The Hybrid Approach](#) (webinar)
- [Supporting Student Success: Supporting the Whole Student](#) (webinar)