Feb 6th, 1:30 PM - 2:45 PM

Credits Earned, Credits Due: Forging New Degree Completion Pathways for Post-Traditional Students with the Aid of Prior Learning Assessment Portfolios

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Guilbaud, Patrick and Oakes, Greg, "Credits Earned, Credits Due: Forging New Degree Completion Pathways for Post-Traditional Students with the Aid of Prior Learning Assessment Portfolios" (2016). Winthrop Conference on Teaching and Learning. 21.

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Title: Credits Earned, Credits Due: Forging New Degree Completion Pathways for Post-Traditional Students with the Aid of Prior Learning Assessment Portfolios

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Winthrop University
Agenda

- Quick Overview of Learning Theory
- Knowles’ Andragogical Model
- Adult Learning Concepts
- Portfolio Learning Concepts
- Adult Learning Issues and barriers
- Hands-on Activity
- The Need to Leverage Prior Learning
- Post-Traditional Students and Winthrop
- PLA Standards and Approaches
- Exploration of PLA as a Pathway Deg. Comp
- Implementation Consideration and Next Steps
Learning Theory (1): Pedagogy

Roots of Pedagogy

• Literal meaning = teaching of children
• Derived from the Greek words for “child” and “leading”,
• Arose from 12th century teaching approaches
• Mandatory schooling in Europe and later the US.
• Currently the dominant teaching approach
Learning Theory (2) - Constructivism

Rise of Constructivism/Humanism

- Behaviorism to Constructivism - Retention Best When It is:
  - Learner-Focused
  - Cooperative and Participative
  - Co-created or negotiated
  - Anchored
- And Involves:
  - Higher-order thinking
  - Immersion in a specific / distinct context
  - Engagement
  - Use of multiple senses
Andragogy

- Term was first used by a German educator named Dr. Alexander Kapp in 1833.
- Literal Meaning = Teaching of Adults
- (Re) Appearance of Andragogy (Knowles)
- Controversies
- No Perfect Agreement
- Compromise
Learning Theory (4) – Pedagogy Vs. Andragogy

Pedagogy
- Teacher-focused
- Outcomes-based
- Content-oriented
- Lecturing
- Grading
- Instructing (Students)

Andragogy
- Learner-oriented
- Experiential
- Problem-centered
- Facilitation
- Self-evaluation
- Guiding (Learners)
# Knowles’ Andragogical Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions</th>
<th>Design Element</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-concept</strong></td>
<td>Increasingly self-directedness</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Experience</strong></td>
<td>Source for learning</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Readiness</strong></td>
<td>Tasks of Social Roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time-View</strong></td>
<td>Immediate application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Problem-Centered</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation</strong></td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
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Adult Learning Concepts

**Adults**

- Want to know why they should learn.
- Motivated to put time and energy into learning if they know the benefits.
- Need to take responsibility and be in charge of their own lives.
- Bring experience to learning.
- Are ready to learn when the need arises.
- Learn when they choose to learn and commit to learn.
- Are task-oriented (while education is subject-centered).
## Portfolio Learning Concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portfolio / e-Portfolio:</th>
<th>Is a collection of material designed and compiled with a specific, such as video or audio recordings, artefacts or photographs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offers a clear view of accomplishments, skills and specific knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presents and tracks accomplishments in and outside the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides direct evidence of the quality of a student's work and a basis for evaluation of work-in-progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Portfolio:</td>
<td>Provides appropriate evidence of learning and achievement, Evidence often has been presented to another person for review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contain written reflective statements, for example about teaching-as-research, diversity, and learning community;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Allows assessment to be a process, rather than necessarily as &quot;final“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permits re-evaluation by alternative evaluators, at different times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Adult Learner: Issues & Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Situation:</th>
<th>Responsibilities, work schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education level:</td>
<td>Length of Absence in formal education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial:</td>
<td>Self-funding vs. employer supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical skills:</td>
<td>Computing: LMS, Social networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for Studying:</td>
<td>Intrinsic or Extrinsic Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Knowledge:</td>
<td>Veterans, Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Situation:</td>
<td>Technical environment, Competency etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hands-on Activity

Group of 2 or 3

1. Most exotic/interesting place in the US you have ever visited

2. Most exotic/interesting place outside the US you have ever visited

3. Most exotic/interesting place outside the US you have ever wish to visit
THE NEED TO LEVERAGE PRIOR LEARNING TO ENSURE TIMELY GRADUATION OF POST-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS
Educational Demand

• 1973: 28% of workforce have post-secondary education*
• 2010: 59%
• 2020: 65%, estimated
• Note that STEM, Healthcare, and Community Services among the fast-growing sectors, require more post-secondary education.

* including associates degrees and training programs

(Carnevale et al, 2013)
2011: Obama Administration calls on CHEA to identify steps to increase college completions: “by every important measurement we have, college graduates fare better individually than those who lack a degree.”  
(Gee et al, 2013/US Census)
A Degree Attainment Shortfall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Attainment Gap</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projected 2025 U.S. population, ages 25 to 64</td>
<td>171,837,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total credentials needed to reach 60%</td>
<td>103,102,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current degrees (two- and four-year) still in workforce in 2025</td>
<td>37,122,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees by 2025 from immigration of college graduates</td>
<td>4,417,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New credentials needed by 2025</strong></td>
<td><strong>61,564,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees produced by 2025 at current rates</td>
<td><strong>38,288,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional credentials needed</strong></td>
<td><strong>23,276,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: "Lumina Foundation Strategic Plan 2013-16",
Prior Learning Assessment: speeding the process

In a study of 48 institutions, adult students with credit earned through PLA were two-and-a-half times more likely to complete a degree compared to adult students without such credit.

(Klein-Collins & Wertheim 2013)
Saving Time and Money

1-6 PLA credits: average 2.5 months savings; 3 Credits @$590 per hour: $1770
7-12 PLA credits: average 3.5 months savings; 9 Credits @$590 per hour: $5310

(Klein-Collins, 2010)
Who are our students?

Resource Center for Adult Students
Winthrop University

Who are our students?

Post-Traditionals

336
Undergraduate Post-Traditional
enrolled
(Age 25 - 59)

50
of those students are
denied as
Student Veterans

41
students began
at Winthrop as
freshmen

275
transferred to
Winthrop

146
Students with a
permanent
address in
Rock Hill

17
Students living
on-campus

32
Average Age
Median Age: 29

Popular Majors

Business Administration
Psychology
Education
Biology
Human Nutrition

95
Average Number of
Credit Hours Earned

2,946
Average GPA

12
Date of earliest
enrollment at Winthrop
by a current Post-
Traditional Student

Unofficial data from Spring 2015
PLA STANDARDS AND APPROACHES
CAEL PLA Standards

- Council on Adult Experiential Learning – since 1974
- Among their 10 standards:

- Credit or its equivalent should be awarded only for learning, and not for experience.
- Assessment should be treated as an integral part of learning, not separate from it, and should be based on an understanding of learning processes.
- The determination of credit awards and competence levels must be made by appropriate subject matter and academic or credentialing experts.
- If awards are for credit, transcript entries should clearly describe what learning is being recognized and should be monitored to avoid giving credit twice for the same learning.
- Fees charged for assessment should be based on the services performed in the process and not determined by the amount of credit awarded.

http://www.cael.org/pla.htm
Standard Procedures

- Advisement, preliminary determination of eligibility
- General review of experience, skills, their fit with PLA offerings
  - E.g., Thomas Edison U, PLA100:
  - All full or part-time jobs you have had
  - All independent reading and study you have done
  - All training programs or in-service courses you have completed
  - All volunteer work you have done
  - Your cultural and artistic pursuits
  - Your hobbies and recreational pastimes
  - All community or religious activities you are involved in
  - All military service you have completed
  - Any travel study you have completed
  - Your organizational memberships
- Enrollment in PLA portfolio construction course
Several PLA variables

- Types of PLA portfolio preparation process
  - Course/no course
  - Self-guided/instructor guided
  - Cohort/individual

- Types of PLA credit
  - Competency (billing practices, web design) + credit level (lower division; upper; grad)
  - Subject area (accounting, writing, cell biology, etc.)
  - Specific course SLO (WRIT101, PHIL340)
Some portfolio commonalities

- **What counts**
  - Work experience: *industry, commerce, professions, skills*
  - Training processes: *certifications, examinations*
  - Life experiences: *volunteer work, community activity*

- Narratives + support documentation
  - Some include: *education review, autobiography, testimonials*

- Citing Authorities – Bloom, Kolb, e.g.

- Learning demonstration: Principles + their application

- Controls and limits:
  - Maximum credit-earned/subject area – e.g., 12 hrs
  - Faculty review of portfolio
  - Notarized honesty pledges
EXPLORATION OF PLA AS A PATHWAY TO STRENGTHEN ADULT DEGREE COMPLETION AT WINTHROP
Winthrop Strengths

- Student-focused educational environment
- Close student-faculty interaction
- Peer learning environments
- Well-defined Student Learning Outcomes at course and program level
- Self-conscious peda andragogy
- Student research a central focus
- Critical Thinking - reading, argumentative writing central to general education
- Human Experience central to general education
Winthrop PLA – some thoughts

- Student-focused educational environment
- Close student-faculty interaction
- Peer learning environments
- Well-defined Student Learning Outcomes at course and program level
- Self-conscious peda andragogy
- Student research a central focus
- Critical Thinking - reading, argumentative writing central to general education
- Human Experience central to general education
- Guided PLA portfolio development
- PLA portfolio cohorts
- PLA aligned with specific course offerings
- PLA portfolio as research document:
  - What is learning
  - Principle + application specifics
  - An argumentative case study
- Who/What am I as a result of my life experience?
References (Slides 1-11)


References (slides 12-26)


