

CHARLOTTE W. NEWCOMBE ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FOR MATURE STUDENTS

Highlight of New Initiatives and
Programming at Towson University

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PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT STEPS

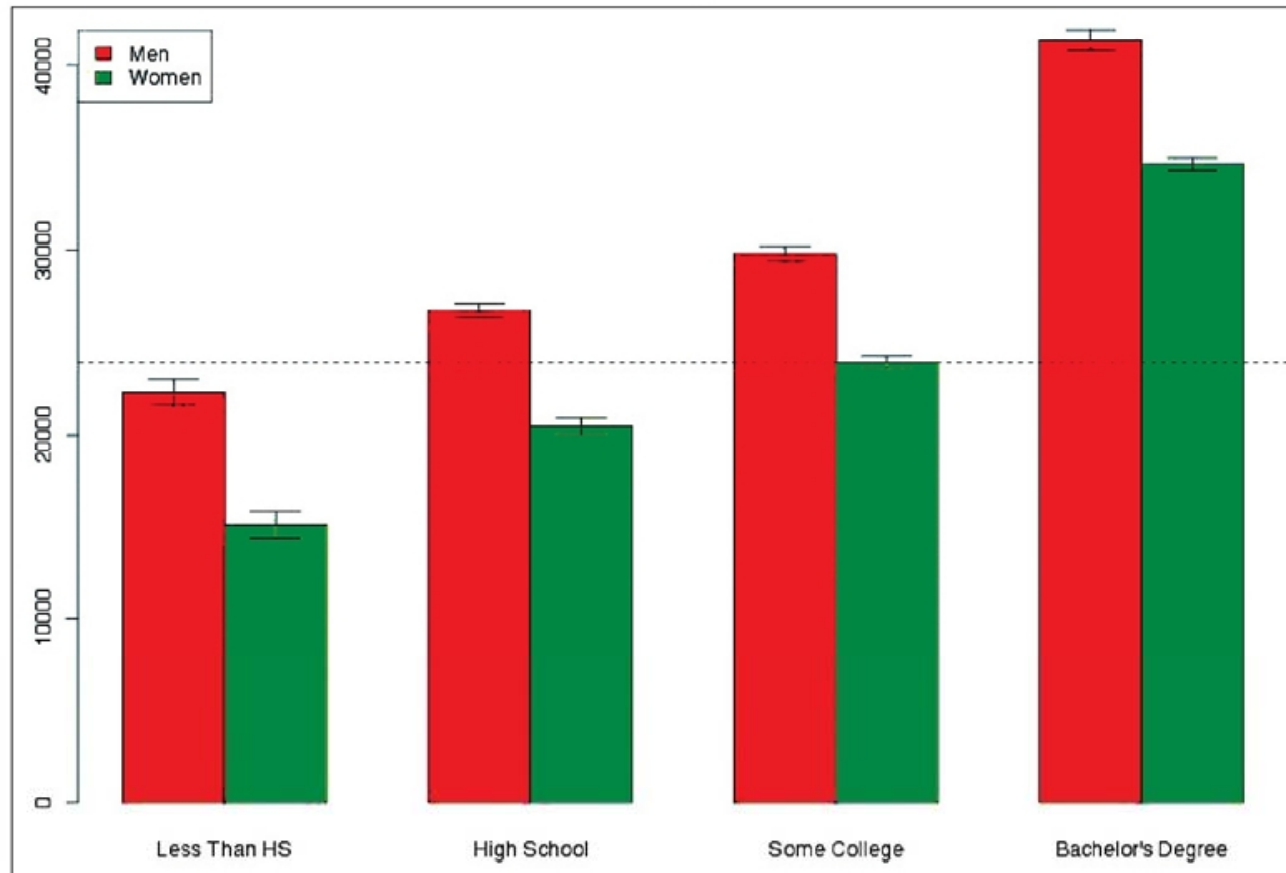
- 1) Statement of the Problem
- 2) Best Practices
- 3) Program Components
- 4) Implementation Timeline
- 5) Evaluation

THE CORE ISSUES (PROBLEM)

- ◉ Mature students comprise over 40% of the college population
- ◉ Difficult to define: can include degree seeking, job training, etc.
- ◉ Studies identify a myriad of reasons why mature students enroll in college but reasons are usually financial
- ◉ Women and men enroll for the same reasons
- ◉ But, women tend to be in different life situations

Mature women who enroll in college are more likely to make less money than their male counterparts AND have more complicated life situations. Why?

FIGURE 2. WAGES OR SALARY INCOME OF UNMARRIED, EMPLOYED 25- TO 29-YEAR-OLDS BY GENDER, 2006–08

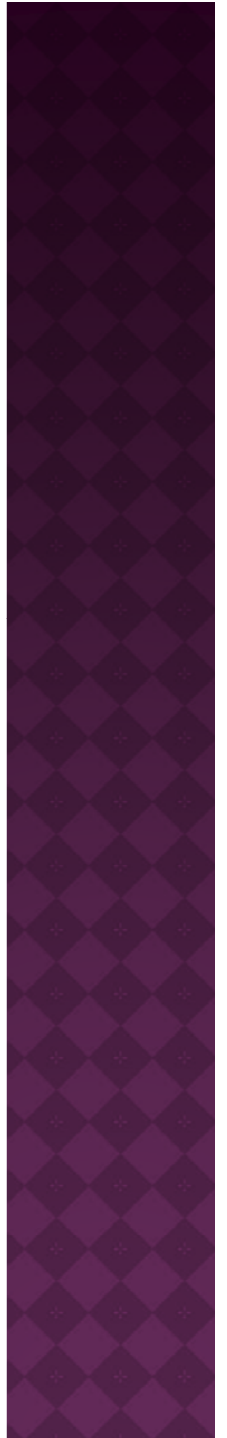
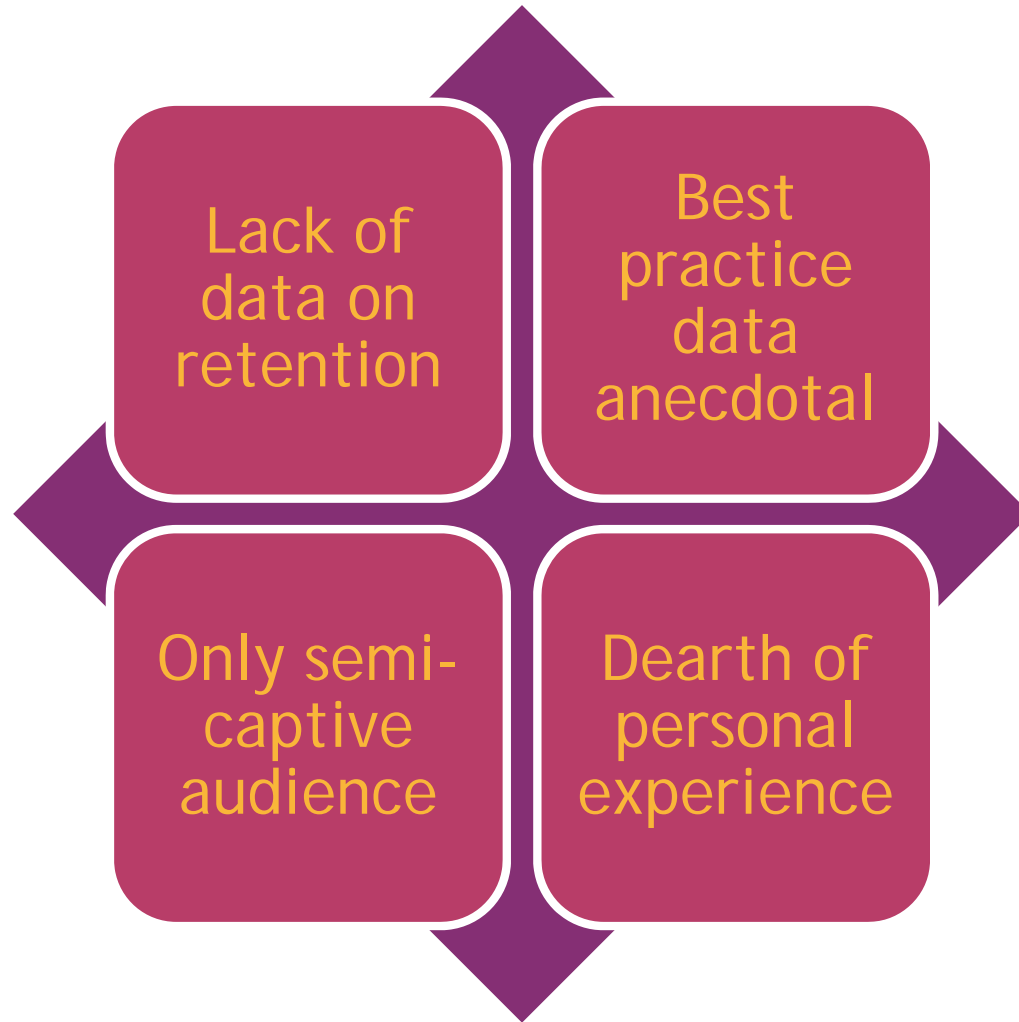


Source: American Community Survey Public Use Microdata. Lines indicate 95 percent confidence interval, an indication of uncertainty around the estimate.

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

- ◉ Average GPA - 3.17
- ◉ 18 Seniors, 11 Juniors
- ◉ 50% of them have children
- ◉ At least 6 of them are single parents
- ◉ 4 of them are taking care of a sick child or parent
- ◉ 5 of them were recently laid off or had to leave work because of illness & injury
- ◉ 100% of them have clear career goals

CHALLENGES



WE NEEDED A PROGRAM THAT...

- ◉ Acknowledges the students' different experiences
- ◉ Recognizes how gender impacts retention and completion
- ◉ Provides peer support
- ◉ Establishes a sense of connection to TU
- ◉ Accommodates their lifestyles
- ◉ Always keeps their career goals/needs in mind



PROGRAM MISSION AND GOALS

The goal of the Charlotte Newcombe Scholarship program is to support students 25 and older in the completion of a first bachelor's degree so they can advance their careers and receive a more equitable salary after completion.

Three Key Areas:

1. Completion
2. Community
3. Career

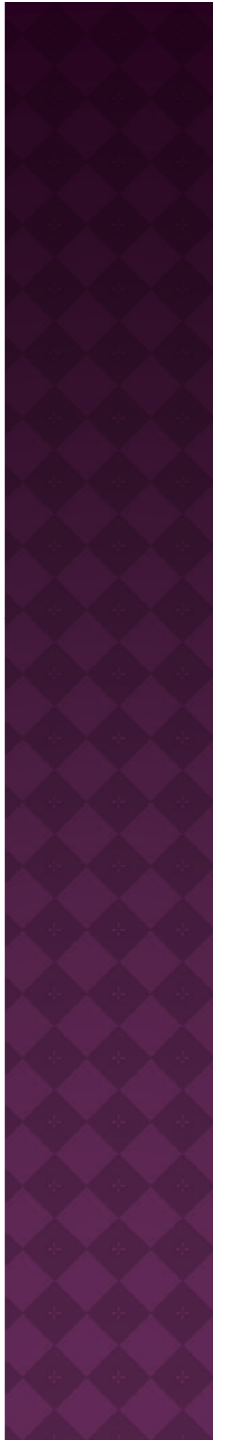


COMPLETION

Create a
cohort of
30 scholars
Allows for
larger
awards

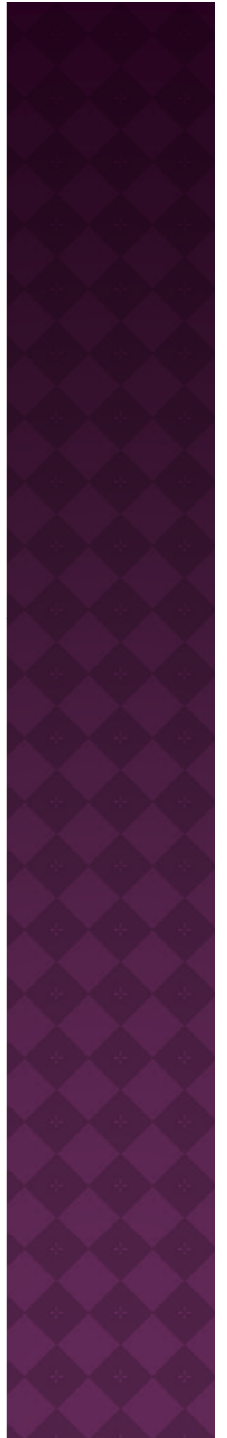
Create a
structured
two year
program

Meet
regularly
with
students
twice a
semester



COMMUNITY

- ◉ Fall scholarship dinner
- ◉ Monthly peer support group for mature students
 - Open to all mature students on campus
 - Includes lunch
 - At a time where students already have childcare
- ◉ Future goals?
 - Mothers support group at University Childcare
 - Mutual Mentoring Program



CAREER

- ◉ Students set clear career goals
 - established vs. new careers moves
- ◉ Partnership with Career Center
 - Special events for mature students
 - OR students can do one on one appointments at Center
 - Once in the first year, twice in the second
- ◉ Identify and meet with a mentor
- ◉ Future goal
 - Track graduating students to see if/how they experienced career improvement

TIMELINE/IMPLEMENTATION

- ◉ Secure funding for new programming
- ◉ Create on-campus partnerships
- ◉ Implement less-intimidating measures first
 - Support Group
 - Banquet
- ◉ Focus on new program members and juniors
- ◉ Hold off on developing more extensive programming until after student feedback
 - Career
 - Mentoring

EVALUATING EFFECTIVENESS

Student Engagement

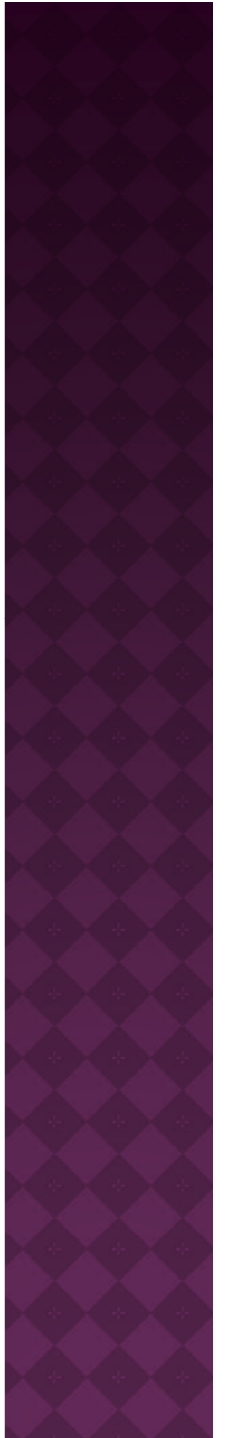
- Attendance above and beyond
- Anonymous evaluations

Program Outcomes

- Academic progress
- Completion of goals

Long-term impact

- Impact on careers
- Student Participation



SOME EARLY INDICATORS

◉ Challenges

- Building investment is tough
- High anxiety levels of students, making things *required* makes this worse
- Differences in academic departments

◉ Successes

- Group bonding (scholarship dinner)
- Connections with other mature students
- Partnerships with other departments

FUTURE GOALS

- ◉ Create more of a sense of a cohort by engaging students earlier
- ◉ Develop specialized career workshops for mature students
- ◉ Establish a mutual mentoring program with traditionally aged students
- ◉ Partner with academic departments to offer programs in most common majors
 - Example: Praxis study groups
- ◉ Investigate employment opportunities for high need students

CITATIONS

- ◉ National Center for Education Statistics
 - [Nces.ed.gov](http://nces.ed.gov)
- ◉ Deutsch, N. and B. Schmertz. "Starting from Ground Zero: Constraints and Experiences of Adult Women Returning to College". *The Review of Higher Education*. Spring 2011.
- ◉ Hardin, C. "Adult Students in Higher Education: A Portrait of Transitions". *New Directions for Higher Education*. Winter 2008.
- ◉ Hostetler, A., S. Sweet, P. Moen. "Gendered Career Paths: A Life Course Perspective on Returning to School". *Sex Roles*. 2007.
- ◉ Contact info: Marie Lilly, mlilly@towson.edu