

## **This Month's Topic: Strategies to Improve Nontraditional Students' Academic Success**

This Spring season's volume offers the greater Crafton Hills College campus community an overview about nontraditional students. This Did You Know will explain the characteristics & challenges faced by nontraditional students, as well as various possible strategies that could be implemented in the classroom setting to improve retention and academic success of nontraditional students on our campus.

### **Characteristics of Nontraditional Students**

- Family responsibilities.
- Working full-time.
- Numerous gap years between high school and enrolling into college.
- Ethnic minorities, older-aged adults (e.g., 25 years and older), and part-time students.
- Military deployment, financial limitations, or learning disabilities that hinder academic success.

### **Challenges Faced by Nontraditional Students**

- Role strain: tough time meeting multiple obligations as spouse, parent, and employee in addition responsibilities being a part-time to full-time student.
- Scheduling both work, school, and other commitments to align with the semester calendar schedule.
- Being away from the classroom setting for long periods of time due to various reasons (e.g., family responsibilities, numerous gap years, unpredictable travel for work).
- Financial constraints that create barriers for nontraditional students.
- Lack of previous academic preparedness (e.g., efficient study methods) to be successful in completion of assignments and exams.

### **Strategies to implement within the classroom setting**



#### **Continue providing ample remote course offerings**

- Flexibility and accessibility
- Allows students to obtain education while balancing priorities
- Numerous course section offering (100% online, hybrid, and in-person)



#### **Supportive faculty and staff that understands the needs of nontraditional students**

- Offer professional development opportunities to faculty and staff on specific needs of nontraditional students.
- Consider continuing to offer professional development opportunities to faculty and staff on how to request/offer to have accommodations for students with learning disabilities.



#### **Strategies utilized by other institutions**

- Flexible/rolling enrollment periods
- Weekend and evening courses
- Academic credit for previous work experience



#### **Continue to provide financial aid/emergency assistance**

- This could cover tuition, books, lab resources, childcare assistance, and transportation

If you're interested in learning more, please check out our report on [Evaluating Student Success Among Traditional and Non-Traditional Students & Strategies to Implement to Increase Retention and Academic Success.](#)

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