

A Survey of Needs and Services for Postsecondary Nontraditional Students

Part III: A Survey of School Departments

As an initiative for the Perkins Career and Technical Education Grant, this survey is designed to collect information that will help postsecondary schools to serve our nontraditional students. For the purposes of the Perkins, “nontraditional” refers only to gender. Nontraditional fields are “occupations or fields of work, for which individuals from one gender comprise less than 25% of the individuals employed in each such occupations or field of work.” By this definition, postsecondary nontraditional students are those enrolled in programs that prepare them to work in these fields.

In order for us to provide services for our nontraditional students, it is important to have information about how your department serves this gender-specific nontraditional population at our school, as well as your opinions and suggestions about what activities would or would not be appropriate for use in the future.

Awareness

1. What information does your department collect about which programs at the school are for nontraditional for males or females, which programs currently have nontraditional students enrolled, and how many nontraditional students are enrolled in each program?
2. What information does your department collect about the characteristics of nontraditional students in programs at the school, such as age and academic, enrollment, employment, marital and financial status, and educational goals?
3. What information does your department collect about which programs with nontraditional students are high priority, high wage careers, according to the PA Workforce Board? What information does your department collect about opportunities for nontraditional students, such as special scholarships or the demand for certain nontraditional students in the workforce?

4. What information does your department collect about the reasons why students enter nontraditional careers or about why they chose to enroll in programs at this school that are nontraditional for their gender?

5. What information does your department collect about the perceived special needs and professional interests of our nontraditional students in such areas as curriculum, counseling, finance, and role-modeling, career-counseling, as well as social and personal issues?

6. What information does your department collect about how our programs address the special needs of nontraditional students, such as recruitment, gender issues, role-models, mentoring, career counseling, and/ or clinical and job placement?

7. Do any of your activities specifically target nontraditional students or target specific programs that are nontraditional for males or females? Why or why not?

8. Does any of the information that you distribute present information about
 - a) specific programs at the school that have nontraditional students, such as academic schedules, flexible hours, role-model and mentoring practices, curriculum that deals with gender-specific professional issues, or
 - b) job potential, such as job availability, salary scales, bonuses, and opportunities for advancement in a given field?

9. What information does your department collect about you about
 - a) the clinical or internship experience provide by the programs at the school that are nontraditional for males or females,
 - b) how many students find employment through the clinical experience, or
 - c) how many students are placed in career jobs after graduation?

10. Are you interested in attracting more nontraditional students to the school? Why or why not?

Recruitment

11. The following is a list of strategies that have been used by schools to recruit nontraditional students. If your department is involved with recruitment activities, put a C before those that you currently use, an O before those that that do not seem practical or appropriate for use at this school, and an X before those that you think would be appropriate for use at this school.
 - a) _____ Consult with directors of programs that are nontraditional and school counselors to discover how the school is addressing the needs of nontraditional students and include this information in your recruiting activities
 - b) _____ Provide secondary school guidance counselors with information about our programs that are nontraditional for males or females
 - c) _____ Obtain information from secondary schools about which of their students have expressed an interest in pursuing nontraditional career paths
 - d) _____ Discover how secondary schools are addressing nontraditional issues, such as gender discrimination, stereotypes, and on the job challenges
 - e) _____ Work with secondary schools on nontraditional workshops and events
 - f) _____ Present at secondary schools regarding the programs at our school that are nontraditional for males for females

- g) _____ Present at secondary schools about the benefits of entering careers that are nontraditional for males or females
- h) _____ Create posters advertising the nontraditional program offerings at the school and distribute them on campus or at secondary schools
- i) _____ Send information to secondary schools about nontraditional events or publications at the school
- j) _____ Sponsor a nontraditional open house introducing perspective students to nontraditional careers programs offerings at the school and other career-specific information
- k) _____ Offer a summer camp for perspective nontraditional secondary students which offers hands-on workshops, exposure to career mentors, and exploration of nontraditional career options
- l) _____ Use visual images of nontraditional students in professional garb
- m) _____ Use role-modeling to attract nontraditional students
- n) _____ Advertise or have articles written in area newspapers highlighting the benefits of entering programs and pursuing careers that are nontraditional for males or females
- o) _____ Use the testimonials of nontraditional alumni, currently-enrolled non-traditional students or those working in nontraditional careers in recruiting efforts
- p) _____ Have the college added to lists of postsecondary schools on websites that advertise nontraditional career options
- q) _____ Present articles or announce events or create a special section concerning nontraditional students on the school website
- r) _____ Investigate what advertising materials are already available for promoting nontraditional career paths
- s) _____ Highlight media coverage of successful nontraditional role models, especially alumni, on school website or in the campus newsletter
- t) _____ At Career Day or Open House events, target students who might be interested in entering nontraditional programs

- u)_____ Create a nontraditional DVD for distribution
- v)_____ Have your staff complete a questionnaire enhance their awareness and knowledge about the needs of nontraditional students and programs for them on campus and about their attitudes regarding gender issues
- w)_____ Provide perspective students with information about special scholarship opportunities for nontraditional students
- x)_____ Add a link(s) to the school’s Facebook and/or Twitter page for nontraditional students in various majors
- y)_____ Create a wiki page or blog for nontraditional students at the school with links to other nontraditional websites or related resources
- z) Please list any other strategies of activities not listed above that you have used or would like to use in recruitment?

Retention and Placement

12. The following is a list of research-based strategies that have been used to retain or place nontraditional students. If your department is involved in retention or placement activities, put a C before those that you currently use, an O before those that that do not seem practical or appropriate for use at the school, and an X before those that you think can be appropriate for use at the school.

- a)_____ Offer a picnic or welcoming event for incoming nontraditional students
- b) _____ Discover what programs at the school are already doing to address important career-related gender issues for their nontraditional students, such a gender biases, stereotyping, on the job challenges, and job discrimination
- c)_____ Coordinate with nontraditional program directors to offer supplementary workshops that address career-specific issues for students enrolled in programs that are nontraditional for their gender

- d)_____ Contact nontraditional consultants and high school guidance counselors to discover what resources materials are available to address the needs and interests of nontraditional students
- e)_____ Investigate what funding is available for nontraditional activities
- f) _____ Invite leaders of community organizations or businesses that employ nontraditional students to participate in school activities for nontraditional students and ask them to provide support, including financial support, presentations, job-shadowing opportunities, and internships
- g)_____ Make use of school bulletin boards and newsletters to highlight nontraditional students and successful nontraditional mentors and to provide information about nontraditional careers
- h)_____ Scan all materials for gender bias
- i)_____ Create career-specific portfolios that provide information about nontraditional careers, such as salary, opportunities for advancement and labor market demand and distribute them to program directors and students at the school
- j)_____ Encourage students to interview currently-enrolled nontraditional students or those employed in nontraditional careers
- k)_____ Invite nontraditional students to private counseling or peer forums and workshops to discuss classroom and workplace gender issues and .to the benefits and the challenges of entering nontraditional careers
- l)_____ Find out what educational, business, or community-based organizations offer workshops and seminars for nontraditional students and give this information to program directors and students
- m)_____ Encourage social and study groups among nontraditional students enrolled in the same programs
- n)_____ Invite currently-enrolled students doing their clinical or internships, nontraditional alumni who completed programs, and individuals currently working in nontraditional fields to participate in activities for in-coming nontraditional students, such as presentations, discussion groups and mentoring, as well as workshops to discuss job related challenges and opportunities for nontraditional students

- o)_____ Create a directory of nontraditional role-models who could make presentations
- p)_____ Provide nontraditional students with information about successful non-traditional alumni
- q)_____ Take students on tours of local businesses that employ nontraditional students
- r)_____ Offer workshops to help nontraditional students develop study skills and job placement skills, such as interviewing, writing resumes and conducting job searches
- s)_____ Create career job links for nontraditional students and alert program directors and students about current job opportunities
- t)_____ Conduct job fairs with nontraditional representatives from targeted employers
- u)_____ Create an advisory board that includes businesses that hire graduates of nontraditional CTE programs
- v)_____ Encourage your staff to take a self-assessment survey to evaluate their attitudes about recommending men or women for nontraditional careers
- w)_____ Add a link(s) to the school’s Facebook and/or Twitter page for nontraditional students in various majors
- y)_____ Create a wiki page or blog for nontraditional students at the school with links to other nontraditional websites or related resources
- z) Please list any other strategies or activities not listed above that you have used or would like to use in your retention and placement efforts?

Comments: _____

Thank you for participating in this survey.