Evaluating Implementation Efforts to Support Adult Learners

Initial Lessons Learned from CUNY CareerPATH

National Association of Welfare Research and Statistics (NAWRS)
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Background & Context

- The City University of New York (CUNY)
  - Nation’s largest urban public university
  - 269,000 students in matriculated degree programs
  - 270,000 in certificate and continuing education programs

- CUNY CareerPATH
  - Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Year 1 Grant
  - Partnership between DOE and DOL
  - 3 Year Grant
CUNY CareerPATH: Overview and Goals

- Accelerate progress for unemployed/underemployed workers
- Support adult students in their:
  - Career advancement
  - Transition to college
- Build CUNY’s capacity to serve adult workers
- Focus on industry needs
CareerPATH Program Components

- Integrated Academic Skills Instruction
- Occupational Training
- Employer Partnerships
- Advisement & Enhanced Student Services
- Strengthened Connections Between Continuing Ed & Degree Programs
- Credit Accumulation

CareerPATH Program Components
CareerPATH is Serving Target Population

- Born outside US: 47%
- Female: 68%
- 24 and Older: 77%
- Black/Hispanic: 69%
- Unemployed at Enrollment: 76%
- High School/ GED Only: 63%
- Need Remediation: 96%
**Evaluation Strategy and Efforts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Semi-Structured Interviews</td>
<td>Interviews with Program Directors with a focus on program implementation - challenges and successes: program development, staffing, credit articulation, recruiting and placement.</td>
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<td>Observations</td>
<td>In-class observations focusing on implementation of seminar, integration of academic skills and training content; Common themes emerging during professional development workshops.</td>
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<td>Student Surveys</td>
<td>Program satisfaction and perceived benefits</td>
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<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>Conduct with students at the end of training, focus on key topics including instruction techniques, availability of support services.</td>
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<td>Administrative Data</td>
<td>Participant program performance and service received NYS Department of Labor wage records CUNY academic performance.</td>
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Participant Voices

♣ Assess participant satisfaction with training program

♣ Identify program components and material that were most beneficial

♣ Identify program areas that could be better enhanced
Seminar framework was relevant and provided critical information prior to training

- Provided participants with overview of training program, academic expectations, and introduced them to on-campus resources and support services

- Able to develop relationships with other participants, which for some was important to their ability to successfully complete the program

- Forced participants to think of their career pathway and how this training fit within career goals
Participants’ received quality instruction and increased technical skills

- Instructors were well prepared, knowledgeable of the field and able to incorporate real-life experiences into class discussion

♣ The availability of academic skills instruction was important and useful in understanding training content

♣ Students overwhelmingly noted their sense of preparedness to enter their fields with the technical skills needed for success and advancement
Stronger connection between training and employment is needed

- Timing and frequency of job readiness activities should be revisited to better coincide with the end of training

- Staff should develop stronger relationships with employers

- Additional support on preparing participants to search for employment and be successful is needed
Using Data for Program Improvement

1. Discover
2. Monitor
3. Improve
4. Refine
5. Implement
Evaluation Next Steps

- Continuous use of data for program improvement

- Analysis of participant employment and academic outcomes

- Anticipated Challenges:
  - Identifying an appropriate comparison group(s)
  - Timely confirmation of medium/long term outcomes
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