

Orientation for Adult Education

PDIG 2021-2022

Was the project carried out to plan?

Our team had many creative ideas when coming together to work on an orientation for the centre. Adult Education, without exception, is a time where we should be reinforcing student support and celebrate individuality and success. So, while our team was on board for creating the framework for what a productive and beneficial orientation could look like, we realized very quickly that there were many challenges that lie ahead of us. The differences and variety in programs at Nova meant that we couldn't map out an exact orientation process but more of a set of guidelines and predetermined workshops that could be offered; the key word being could. Since our welding and auto mechanics departments already do their own versions of orientation, we used their models to build from. Again, as another covid year took place, we found it difficult to truly implement things. There is a general sense of overwhelmingness across most educators, and so our work became more theoretical, but not without progress and a plan of action.

Project Goals

Our original goal was to create a framework and present it before Christmas, so that incoming programs (or even 1 program) could try to implement the orientation for their new group. Our attempt of consultations for program needs from each department was pretty unsuccessful as we didn't receive a lot of input. We also ran into some issues with how to orient our work towards both Academic and Vocational programs since they ran so differently. However, in the end, we successfully managed to develop a strong framework. So, implementation would have to be for the new school year.

Project Outcomes

We created a strong framework and PowerPoint presentation that now needs to be presented to the director of the centre; following this, the team will present to the staff and act as support people for the implementation of centre wide orientations. If anything, the teachers involved who already have investments in student orientations are now equipped to act as resource and support people for others who are new to formal orientation. The teachers were also very creative with their knowledge of their programs and their experience with students showed strong understanding of the clientele walking through the door. It makes them excellent leaders for this orientation initiative.

Reinvestment

Every school should be engaging in pro-active intervention through orientation. It is an opportunity for teachers to understand their students more deeply both personally and academically from the get go, which in turn alleviates the often reactive nature of student support. More so, so many students who come to our adult centre are very isolated from the other departments and even some sections of the building. It allows them an opportunity to be able to make the whole school their community; a community of support. All of these things that we have discussed over the course of this PDIG are, in our opinion, useful for other centres within the English education community, and so I hope that others can pick up our framework and adapt it to their programs and needs and take part in proactive support all our students need.