Overall Goal for Adult-Friendly Initiative:
*Determine ways to increase access and promote affordability initiatives to expand opportunity and ability for Montana’s adult population to pursue higher and continuing education.*

Implementation Team Meeting GOALs & Objectives for ALFI Session-
Adult Friendly Planning and Strategy: Utilize the results garnered from Montana’s recently-completed statewide Adult Friendly Learning Focused Institution (ALFI) project to consider specific steps to take in relation to adult-friendly practice, instruction, assessment of prior learning (PLA), and student services to improve access, retention and success for adult learners. Consider follow-up institution-level and system-level policy changes.

1. Focus on **program design and redesign**, with consideration given to:
   - Development of new innovative, adult-friendly programming.
   - Innovation and reform to institutional and support structures to attract adults as follows:
     - Re-enroll adults with some college but no credential.
     - Build awareness of educational opportunities and support for adults who have never enrolled in higher education.
     - Consider new or hybrid delivery formats.
     - Review options for competency-based programs.
     - Design programs that encourage two-year transfer pathways to a bachelor’s degree.

2. Discuss Montana **ALFI results** with focus on overall strengths and challenges.
   a. **Strengths—Technology and Finance**
      i. Discuss ways to share and capitalize on strengths
   b. **Challenges – Transitions and Outreach**
      i. Dig down and better understand finite characteristics of **transitions and outreach**.
      ii. Share examples of high quality **outreach** efforts (e.g. websites, message, adult mindset, how to connect, avenues utilized to get the message out, etc.)
      iii. Understand key factors for **transitions**
          1. Articulation Agreements
          2. Articulation of Developmental Work
          3. Credit for Work-Related Credentials
          4. Connection to Employment
          5. Partnerships
Breakout Group Report: CAEL/ALFI Adult Friendly Planning & Strategy

OUTREACH
- College websites need to “speak” to adult learners
  - Have focus group try website
  - Have work-study students work on website
  - Provide better links from internet searches
  - Submit RFPs to improve website
- Review ALFI at each campus
- Provide more flexible student support services
  - Online
  - Evening and weekend hours
  - ITV access
- Analyze language and images used in campus publications
- Review and analyze avenues used to reach potential students
- Look at services from the perspective of an adult learner
- Be visible everywhere
- Provide activities for older students on campus
- Ensure persons answering phones are well trained
- Identify more opportunities for internships

TRANSITIONS
- Analyze gaps and barriers for credit transfer
- Encourage local employers to provide or reimburse for employee training
- Reach near-completers through accelerated programs
- Orientation for adult students during evening with childcare provided
- Compressed 14-day schedules of classes
- Better reaction to economic needs
- Need industry partnership in assessment
- Work with Tribal Colleges
- Map programs to complete four-year degree or employment
- MUS auto-articulation of all AA and AS degrees
- Use MCIS
- Use Pathway Advising Sheets
- Better and more advising
Implementation Team Meeting GOALS & Objectives for Prior Learning Assessment Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)-

Understand how the Adult Friendly Learning Focused Institution (ALFI) can lay the foundation for increased support for PLA services. Understand PLA, the many formats it embodies, the need in the state of Montana, and examine various approaches for implementation. Consider follow-up institution-level and system-level policy changes.

1. Review Montana’s workforce needs in context with education.
2. Consider demographic trends, particularly for 25-64 year of age group.
3. Touch on types of PLA possible and review summary of Montana’s two-year education report on current PLA practices.
4. Discuss standards, persistence studies, advantages of PLA.
5. Touch on “system” approaches in various states, including CAEL’s LearningCounts.org option.

Breakout Group Report: Prior Learning Assessment Discussion & Strategy

CREDIT RECOGNITION & TRANSFER
- Examine what types of PLA makes the most sense for MT
- Make people aware of PLA
- NWCCV 25% is an issue
- MUS should approach state legislature about PLA
- Need to streamline operational process
- Fast-track pilot project with veterans
- There are unknowns & discomfort for faculty
- Statewide investigation of PLA practices
- Involve faculty in PLA discussion
- Start PLA conversation at registrar level
- Faculty compensation is important
- Consider standardized assessments

TRANSPARENCY & BUY-IN
- Need consistent policies on PLA
- On-campus trainings about PLA and have a standard point of contact
- Align with state initiative for time-to-degree
- Market to folks already having some college
- Show completion data
- Identify statewide external resources
- Are needs worth the effort?
- Provide PLA information to students
• Seek more data to support PLA
• Provide professional development about PLA
• Look at data to see how students perform at next level after receiving PLA

SUMMARY -- OVERALL

• Provide campus funding to implement ALFI and/or PLA innovation
• Charge College!NOW Adult Friendly workgroup to create RFP to encourage promising ALFI and PLA innovation
• Use scholarships as incentives for adult students
• Develop strategies to reach out to percentage of Montana’s population who have accumulated college credits but not matriculated with a post-secondary credential
• Consider individual institution and system wide practice and policy to better serve adult students

SUMMARY - ALFI

• Revamp websites to be adult-friendly— conduct focus groups to engage adult students for feedback; make navigation easy for students
• Advising – more intensive, comprehensive when students express interest and/or enroll.
• Review “first contact” with students – emphasize importance of customer service and voice contact
• Consider something like “College for Working Adults” as a link on website – must be able to immediately catch the prospective adult learners attention
• Examine flexibility of delivery – evening, hybrid, stackable credentials, accelerated
• Understand “transition points” whether it is as simple as surviving the first two weeks to entering college level math or writing to enrolling second semester to a certificate and so on.
• Understand issues from a systemic level – explore policies and other ideas to improve recruitment and retention of adult learners
• Expand training opportunities for adult learners
• Seek to understand federal financial aid impacts from offering compressed courses

SUMMARY-PLA

• Need to more aggressively market PLA
• PLA should be viewed as a whole – services and programs
• From system perspective – develop transfer policies, transcription policies, and general guidelines for PLA use
• Develop a partnership pilot – suggestion apprenticeship program
• Use PLA as a way to reach out to returning veterans to validate their military training
• Engage faculty and staff at two-year schools to consider PLA in subject areas
• Consider a PLA evaluator position at the system-level

NOTE: John will fund a small group to attend the CAEL PLA Workshop, Nov 7-9