

## **FANSHAWE COLLEGE – MANAGER INTERVIEW**

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Increasing government attention is being focused on meeting the needs of early school leavers who are unable to make a successful transition to postsecondary, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs. We are interested in learning more about how Academic Upgrading funding can facilitate accessible and successful pathways for early school leavers - especially youth, Aboriginals, Ontario Works clients, and online learners. Please provide your thoughts regarding **what works, what improvements/changes are needed at your college, and what supports are needed** in those areas.

### **YOUTH (ESPECIALLY AGED 16 TO 18 YEARS)**

- There is a significant number of youth in the London area programs, many in the 16 to 24 age range, but also some in the 16 to 18 range.

### **ONLINE LEARNERS**

- Nine ACE courses have been claimed for development and offering through OntarioLearn.com consortium
- May be difficult to offer through OntarioLearn.com because of fees attached for OntarioLearn.com courses.
- Sometimes the student will pay extra cost if convenient for them.
- We would need dollars available to pay fees on behalf of student.
- Many colleges have their own online offerings; ask MTCU to fund the online delivery of the courses, but every college can mount it on its own learning management system.
- For example, in Lambton, if MTCU funded the development then curriculum is available to Lambton students, but Lambton has to provide its own facilitator for each course.
- Fund the development of each of the courses, but through CSC courses would be distributed.
- Would need to be careful of all different technical forums they use – Blackboard, D2L, Web CT, etc.
- If anything going to work for online learners, technicalities of current complex systems need to be sorted out.
- There are costs involved from a development perspective; there may also be access, connectivity or maintenance fees. Not all students will have computers at home.
- AlphaRoute experience has not been positive for the colleges.
- First courses to go up should be sciences. Online access to science would assist the teachers and it can be used as classroom resource as well.

### **ABORIGINAL LEARNERS**

- Have been approached by First Nations counseling unit to set something up for them - university and college entrance program. We developed and offered it in the past because of high attrition rates.
- It was successful; Fanshawe provided programming, FNSU provided living allowance.
- The program subsequently died due to reductions in funding.
- Need to have Aboriginal student success advertised
- Also have First Nations support advertised
- Have been talking about mounting a new program through OBS funding for September

### **ONTARIO WORKS CLIENTS**

- It would be good if we had enough numbers to be able to do more prep work with them before moving them in, but we can't afford to do that with smaller numbers.
- We're doing a pilot project with them incorporating essential skills (ES) with OW.
- OW move to outcome measures has had an impact, and there have been changes to OW's reporting.
- OW should support to pay for clients to move into postsecondary – other form of support.
- Since Federal government pulled project-based training, we have not done much short-term vocational training.
- LMPA, MCSS will be at table for all discussions; the focus from agencies is trying to move clients to employment as soon as possible.
- Will have a say on how dollars are being spent and we need to bring these issues to the table so that OW clients can get support to get training without incurring costs.

## **MARKETING ACADEMIC UPGRADING**

- Students hear about the program in various ways:
  - word of mouth
  - referrals from agencies
  - information/career fairs
- Need someone to develop the campaign about ACE as a good alternative
- Can be a conflict with school board so don't want to anger them; need to walk fine line re: reference to grade 12 equivalence
- To track how students hear about the program we just keep general data on what comes in on the registration forms.
- Students choose the college upgrading program because they are able to say they "are at college".
- Couldn't get required credits at adult high school program to get into Fanshawe, but they can through upgrading
- Students not necessarily being advised on how to pick courses at high school when working towards diploma; they just want quickest, fastest way, so they don't always have pre-requisite they need to get into college.
- More advertising – testimonials, articles are needed
- Something on web site about, "How to get into college without grade 12"; need to make a path for the students
- Promotion strategy should be based on success record.
- Competition between programs changes with the economy.
- Reaching out and developing partnerships with organizations that are providing employment assistance services; the hook is ES.
- Job Search Strategy could include doing ½-day workshop with clients about upgrading to confirm their levels or help them learn what they need to address.
- We have positive relationship with Service Canada in terms of referrals; this comes from having spent a lot of time talking with the manager of the organization that does the Service Canada client work (50% of EI numbers in London)
- Also providing support services to in-school apprentices.
- Mainstream promotion through the College is somewhat effective.
- Slight increase in calls each time the Continuing Ed calendar goes out
- A few calls each time flyer goes out (not tracked)
- Best way to promote: ad in Business Monday (career section) once per month all year; this needs promotion budget
- Suggest MTCU can supply budget line for promotion, but not create the ads themselves
- College staff, in general don't know a lot about Academic Upgrading
- They have been sent written materials.
- Registrar's staff have a good handle on it.
- Student Liaison has general overview but can't answer specific questions.
- St. Thomas – works well.
- Simcoe – works well, some co-location, shared staff JC, LBS
- Don't have JC in Woodstock
- If we had funding to pull everyone together to have a day-long forum for PD, that would make great inroads within the college.

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND REFERRAL PROCESSES**

- Referrals through LSP process almost nil; college refers out, but do not receive any back.
- Participation on various committees is time consuming and often comes out of personal time
- Need to make commitment to do these kinds of things- has helped with innovative, new partnerships
- Working group – need to do work along with it
- Now an expectation for people to do these sorts of things has become the norm
- Colocations exist in some areas: started with Service Canada – feds said they'd be shutting down sites – drove co-location in areas
- Would no longer give operational budget to have space in some areas, so some colocation occurred; feds pulled back in the end
- What is going to happen with LMDA/PA? Will province pick that up?
- Colocation has worked well in some areas, but not in others.

### **INTERNAL COLLEGE LINKAGES**

- Guaranteed place in Technology programs for Academic Upgrading students.
- What is attraction to tech?
  - providing *Prepared for Success* information – how successful they'd be
  - number of students who come through programs
  - help with undersubscribed programs – leverage for others
  - good source of well prepared students
- Fanshawe ACE students considered by the Registrar's Office on par with grade 12 grads from the new curriculum.
- Interdepartmental agendas exist which can create barriers.
- Work with front line staff and need some sort of directive and support from management level; it's part of institutional culture.
- Linkage with technology is formal – language re guaranteed places included in calendar.
- No transfer credits for Academic Upgrading to postsecondary.
- ACE grids reviewed by postsecondary as well as upgrading faculty; ACE strongly endorsed by postsecondary.
- LBS funding is used for academic portion of Pre-Apprenticeship.

### **PRE-APPRENTICESHIP AND APPRENTICESHIP LINKAGES**

- Also provide supports to apprentices experiencing difficulty because of poor academic foundation skills.
- Academic Upgrading approached Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship re: what could be done to support their students. However, recent approaches have been made re: essential skills support for tech students.

### **EMPLOYER LINKAGES**

- In the past, work experience placements used for career path exploration. (Some students were hired – never returned to program); lost funding for it.
- Was a great model, but put a strain on contact hour count; therefore created a funding concern
- Essential Skills – employer referrals to resource centre

### **ALTERNATE FORMS OF DELIVERY (online, web-based, software applications, learning technologies, distance delivery)**

- Online/distance - need funding to be able to purchase Building Workplace Skills online.
- Funding needed to develop on line ACE courses – use as supplemental to class work as well as distance – need to figure out how to account for online activity (i.e. contact hours or alternative).
- Huge need for availability of more adaptive technology to our students; this is an increasing need which is not available under OBS funding but provided through regular college grants and therefore very limited.

### **TRACKING, REPORTING, AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Regarding performance indicators from the Ministry: student number continuity needed across all programs and services, as well as deliverers.

### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

- Staff turnover is an issue; new Chairs in various college programs and a lot of longstanding staff retiring.
- Have to build contacts/relationships all over again
- New people can either help or hinder the cause.
- Essential Skills implementation is important.
- Slow buy-in by postsecondary
- Internal champion helps.
- Worked to submit research proposal against internal funds to use TOWES to test incoming postsecondary students.
- Donna Palmer provided ES workshop to college staff as an intro to ES and to talk about the integration of ES in curriculum.

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- Fanshawe provides books – aren't many textbooks that you can buy at higher levels for under \$100. No recognition of increased resource costs at higher levels because funding is the same across all levels.
- Advertising workshops around ES in College would be helpful.
- Six staff being trained as Essential Skills Analysts.
- Formalize the informal relationships between Academic Upgrading programs and postsecondary.

## **FANSHAWE COLLEGE – FACULTY/STAFF FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES**

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### **LEARNER PROFILES**

#### **To what extent does your program serve youth, Aboriginals, and Ontario Works and online learners?**

- We have a lot more 17 year-olds now than before which is causing some problems.

### **STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

#### **How do they know about and gain access to your program? What data do you have about how students find out about Academic Upgrading? What are the main reasons why students select an Academic Upgrading program?**

- They find out about the program from Ontario Works, Service Canada (EI), WSIB, and the Fanshawe course guide.
- Also find out by word of mouth
- Students say it's the best kept secret.
- Age group traditionally left for the boards; territorial to a certain degree
- London is in touch with many community partners and respect each other's territories so referrals happen accordingly.
- Not going to pull students from another program in other community partner program
- Age restriction on writing GED
- For early school leavers in the community there is Transition school – can get grade 9 and 10 credits; refer to Fanshawe program for other courses (Oxford campus).
- Don't have young students –that avenue is not promoted a lot.
- In grade 11 and on, school board has hired someone through Pathways for Success to do follow ups for these students. As a result, school board staff in Woodstock had 250 student contacts for students who have dropped out of school and contacted the program; starting to recognize issue, but not enough.
- Need funding for students who are at risk
- In the main campus ACE Program, if people were on OW, no one would know it. They are referred by Registrar's Office because students hear that they need prerequisites for postsecondary courses; 25-30% of learners are working and will take parts of the program. Only once or twice have we had the type of student who would qualify as a 16-18 age group.
- Have a lot of ESL people who complete assessments; not always evident through assessments that it is an ESL student; this can cause issues down the road.
- A lot of high school students are ESL as well.
- Referral system within college with assessments
- Should assess students and refer appropriately – internally or externally
- In London have new system to help with referrals
- Significant proportion of students that arrive in ACE Program are referred from or have connections to WSIB.
- Feel that college upgrading program is best kept secret
- ACE Program helpful for people considering returning to work since going back to high school is a challenge for a lot of students.
- Many early school leavers come back to school many years later (for variety of reasons).
- A lot of competition with school boards: all providing services; capture small groups each.
- MTCU info session for OW clients; Fanshawe gives OW clients info and referrals to all LBS delivery agencies including Fanshawe.

### **How helpful is the college's 'mainstream' promotion in recruiting learners to Academic Upgrading?**

- Recently reworked – hope to see improvements
- A lot of people say they heard of us through the Fanshawe course guide; we keep data on this.
- Most referrals through partner referrals and the literacy network.
- Woodstock has a good relationship with OW and Service Canada (EI), but mainly referrals are through word of mouth.
- EI relationship is okay, but their priority is to get people back to work as quickly as possible.
- Have done a project with OW, relationship building – sharing common concern
- Get a lot of calls in Woodstock from Fanshawe's web site
- On web site there is a link to GED, so if people type in GED, they are directed to our program (Woodstock).
- Lack of consistency in naming of upgrading programs is an issue
- Fanshawe has Blueprints, ACE and Academic Upgrading. St. Thomas is different again.
- Community knows Blueprints now so don't change it – it would be harder.
- On web site, student will type in what they know; should have common name and then sub-names; they know GED.

### **How well informed are other college staff (Liaison, Job Connect, Contract Training, Apprenticeship, etc.) about Academic Upgrading?**

- Always have the same people who sit at the tables - NWD – meeting same people over and over.
- NWD meeting helped determine how much people know.
- We get incorrect referrals coming from the college.
- Apprenticeship contact seemed to know about what we do.
- Improvement in info sharing since ACE was taken out of General Studies and put into Continuing Education; good move but a work in progress.
- Now seen as a collective with particular target group

## **LEARNER GOALS & CAREER COUNSELLING**

### **In your experience, what are the goals of your learners? In other words, what do they expect the program to do for them? How are the goals of youth and Aboriginal learners different from other students? Do learners come to the program with program goals already set by someone else? By whom?**

- We have to work on a training plan with students to discuss goals (LBS mandate).
- We do some prep with them on training plan within certain timeframe; they have to have at least a goal of where they're heading: personal goals, education, employment.
- Most of them have a goal in mind beforehand.
- For ACE, 80% have identified a postsecondary program they are aiming for. For rest the rest it is self-management/self-direction with a portfolio as the end product.
- Majority are intent on getting English, math and sciences; self-management is not significant or important to those students, so now the option is no longer offered.
- Strong employment target for a lot of the students.
- Self-management/self direction was a tool for people to determine goal; if no goal they are recommended to speak to counselor. Woodstock is still offering this option – class format – attendance is low – 5 to 6 students but most complete the course and recommend it to others, they say they find it very helpful.
- Blueprints is pre-ACE (i.e. foundations)
- Use LBS/OBS continuum to structure courses; OBS funding – tied to ACE.
- Younger students – less lag time between quitting and returning. More helpful for more?
- Working on developing – careers, inventory skills, hands on exposure.
- ACE – students determine goals. Many are WSIB and have experienced working though goal process with external counselor at some point prior to entering the program.
- People who are employed have been given info re apprenticeship or tech programs and what level they need.
- Fanshawe program guide lists prerequisite courses required; students are told what they need to move forward.
- Student having a goal is a real motivator - really important
- Some want to do upgrading, but are not aware of next steps; goal gets identified quickly.

**What are the factors that affect why they do not reach goals?**

- Occasionally people change goals: level of math required is unrealistic and perhaps not enough time to get it.
- Expectation that you can't work on your own – not the luxury at postsecondary end
- Academic challenges
- Time required
- Style of learning required in future to get into certain field
- If problems in ACE, signal for challenges in future in postsecondary environment; options not there

**CURRICULUM, CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERY DESIGN**

**How do student's learning and your teaching needs affect the way you design curriculum, deliver it, or use alternate learning strategies (i.e. technology)? What specific adjustments are made for youth, older and Aboriginal learners?**

- Youth would have significant impact; we would need changes.
- Mixture of different age ranges would be helpful for younger students; they can learn from more mature students.
- Processes around trying to ensure clarity around what requirements are – how are we measuring progress
- Wouldn't change content, but some elements added in would be important, especially career development for youth
- If we/they can come up with a realistic goal, they can be hooked; this provides motivation.
- Orientation for all of them – all age groups together.
- Project though OW re: goal establishment

**What benefits or challenges do youth, older and Aboriginal learners present in your learning environment?**

- Benefit to youth being in this environment
- Age is not always indicator of people's behaviors.
- Challenge – reasons people leave school early are the kinds of things that are going to be a challenge in ACE: expectations to attend, take responsibility for work that you do, participate as self-directed learner. When they don't meet expectations, they face issues as to why left high school in first place.
- Reasons they left often had nothing to do with academics but with interpersonal things.

**EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS**

**Describe how your college program serves these groups of students through external partnerships with educational or employment providers.**

- The challenge will be getting more people into Academic Upgrading.

**What are the barriers?**

- One barrier is the automatic respect for territories (other programs); this results in competition.
- Financial reasons: people can't afford to be off work, not able to go to school; sometimes daycare is an issue.
- Not all can work part-time and go to school
- Costs of daycare can be an issue because many clients are not funded beyond some educational supplies.
- Some people have social barriers like drug addictions or disabilities.

**How could barrier be overcome?**

- Communication is good now with other programs; we get along.
- Maybe more knowledge on the front-line level would help.
- Information is at the managerial level now, but needs to move down the system as well which sometimes requires PD and funds to do some of that.
- A lot to do with knowledge to the right people; for example, it's the case worker that gets to make the decision.
- We refer to school board but board doesn't necessarily refer back to us. Why is that?

## **INTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS**

**Describe how your program serves these groups of students through internal partnerships with the college's programs and services. Do your students have access to the same programs and services as funded post secondary students?**

- Students with disabilities have support.
- If it's available on site, students can access tutoring.
- Through learning centre students can go in and ask someone to go through some work and get some feedback.
- Not ever had a student with a problem using the lab.
- Upgrading students don't pay fees, so they don't have access to some of the resources that some of the fee-payers get.
- There are some advantages in terms of getting support for transportation or child care top-up.
- Come to college upgrading because it's in a college – prestige
- St. Thomas has a small library, a counselor half day/wk; these limited resources can impact service.
- There is a huge benefit to people considering registering in postsecondary programs.
- They have a head-start by going through the Academic Upgrading Program; they start to find their way around and get used to conversations about going to the Registrar's Office and other college services; this makes a difference.
- For a lot of adults there're fewer stigmas attached when someone says, "I'm taking courses at Fanshawe College", versus a school board program.
- More mature environment at college causes a change in the way things look.

## **APPRENTICESHIP**

**Are you aware of links with apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs at your college? Describe them. How did you find out about them?**

- TOWES is a link between ACE and apprenticeship.
- LBS pays for upgrading for Pre-Apprenticeship at Fanshawe.
- Technology likes to admit them with grade 12; some students in Truck and Coach didn't have it but did some upgrading on English and math.
- Hard to put people without grade 12 through Pre-Apprenticeship because the hours for upgrading in Pre-App. aren't adequate.
- Recent familiarization of ACE with apprenticeship program at community meeting is helping with familiarity.

## **BLENDED, ONLINE AND DISTANCE DELIVERY**

**Describe your experience with using alternate forms of delivery (i.e. online, web-based, software applications, learning technologies, distance delivery). What are the opportunities and challenges?**

- What we have now isn't working (AlphaRoute); it's not appropriate to college clients.
- Would be wonderful if students had access to some distance delivery
- Need tracking system so we could get credit for students using these forms of delivery
- Putting policies and procedures in place and information area for these students
- Workshop assignments (if missed, they could work on it next day)
- 2010 System – Students did well with math component; software good tool for people to work out their own pace. Ideas in writing section were good but software kept on crashing; had to buy more resources and books after we lost the software

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**How do you anticipate your professional development needs changing if this group of learners has a more significant role in your teaching practice?**

- Assume that government would encourage people to go through upgrading.
- Behavioural issues – attitudes, learning disabilities and other disabilities. Are we doing something different to ensure that they succeed this time?

- Need understanding of what this group is, how teachers understand it, how staff and students can cope with it. Teachers need to understand that some learners need special concessions to help them learn (head phones, hats, etc.)
- Teachers need strategies to work with that clientele.
- May need to adjust curriculum – where did they leave off and where do they need to continue?
- Commonality amongst all of the colleges – books, texts. Is there an opportunity to get together and share these resources?
- Common assessment and common delivery – could be transferable across colleges.

### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

**Given the increasing government attention to meeting the needs of early school leavers unable to make the successful transition to post secondary, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, do you have additional suggestions to ensure your program is able to fully respond to the learning needs of youth, Aboriginals, Ontario Works and online learners?**

- We need staff and space! We are tight on both.
- The evening component to ACE has been a wonderful addition.

### **FANSHAWE COLLEGE – LEARNER FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES**

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#### **What motivated you to enroll in the Academic Upgrading Program?**

- Went to Robarts School for Deaf – graduated and went to Beal for art program; then went to ATN, found out about Blueprints and need for college
- Left school in grade 9 (20 years ago); went into workforce, picked up interesting job without skills, 3 month job with spay/neuter program – decided that this was something she wanted to do; someone put her in touch with Blueprints
- Have PSW – went to college with equivalency; wasn't what I wanted to do – went to retail for 8-9 years
- Came from North and decided to go back to school; doesn't have GED; can do things without out GED, but wants to have it on paper
- GED is a prerequisite to a lot of college courses; capable of doing a lot without GED, but need it to get into college; wants a career where employer knows that she knows what she's doing – esteem issue; wants respect from employer
- Left high school in grade 10, went back, left in grade 12; didn't feel high school was meeting personal needs; had many jobs, traveled, had kids; ready now to find more of a career, not a job, perhaps in health sciences, management program
- Different person now than after high school and first postsecondary courses
- Graduated in Quebec but got low marks, not sure how he did it; moved to Ontario and got a job in printing industry; still making same wage as 15 years ago; did it for the money but hated job; wants career now in ecology field; tried programs from home but too many distractions so needs to learn outside home
- Earned 3 credits in high school; spent most time in prison then released in 1995; got into sales; now wants GED; single father with 2 year old daughter; finished level 3 but a few more to go; staff at Blueprints has been great experience; some education in prison through Bridge reading projects; wants to continue furthering education
- Was going to graduate at 17 years old but got kicked out for hanging out with wrong people; new high school went down hill, skipped, drinking; then worked doing carpets in cars and began to go to school; 1 month later got laid off and had to decide to stay in school or not; found a lot more support in these classes; math was hard but he's getting it now; it's working and it feels good to get rid of frustration; have to do it
- Have grade 12 and a trade for 23 years. Became medical secretary; decided to go for MBA; need to write GMAT and then degree; individual in career centre would help with application to ACE; more flexible here than in adult centres; actual parts in change of curriculum that she hasn't learned so she is filling in gaps; business skills and school skills are different
- Quit school with half of grade 9; later found out grade 9 credits no longer applicable to high school diploma; tried correspondence but gave up; been working in factory for 16 years; had injury last year so not able to return to that job; WSIB client now in upgrading to go back to school; not sure what she wanted to do because she was comfortable where she was but worked with counselors to help decide



### **Why did you choose a college upgrading program?**

- Because working individually student would be able to master English and math better than in another program.
- Friends encouraged me to take Blueprints because it would be good for my future; they said, “You need to go, it gives you confidence.” I didn’t have confidence so I decided to go for it.
- Should have one name for all of these kinds of programs; happened with ACE – college recognized
- Huge disconnect between college and employment assistant programs; I’m on EI benefits but they didn’t tell me anything; went to WIL – they put me in touch with Goodwill which is hired by HRDC to do employment training
- Needed to be in controlled environment at my own pace
- Moved to London; only certain things could take without GED; applied for OW right away, wouldn’t give me EI benefits because I quit my job; wanted me to get a job right away, no assistance; looked into school herself; found out she could take classes while kids were in school (single mom); couldn’t be picky on OW and decided to go to school for new career
- Through trial and error; I wanted education for a while; the Woodstock campus closest to me; did personal research through Internet, Service Canada Centre, brochures, newspapers, word of mouth – not a magic formula; this is a launching pad to build self confidence and it’s individual, one on one, night or day, flexible
- Knew courses I wanted to take once unemployed; inquired at Sir Sanford Fleming College; wrote their tests and they said I needed to upgrade tech writing and math/technology; I was going to take a night course at Fanshawe for \$700 but couldn’t afford it; EI said that I could get GED but Fleming didn’t recognize it; found out about ACE Program; didn’t know about it and nobody mentioned it before; called Fleming back; they don’t recognize GED but do recognize ACE so I decided to get ACE at that point
- Program is free during the day; I’d have to pay at night and get a babysitter
- Wanted to get an education; made a firm decision; Blueprints program was downtown – all about location because he has no car
- Told about it through work; need upgrading to go to college; wanted to get a college experience
- On her own; learning centres not good for her; program is flexible
- WSIB client; started with Blueprints, then ACE and then college

### **Have any of you found ACE/Blueprints in the college catalogue?**

- No, it’s hard to find.
- At the very back of book – should be at front
- Word of mouth is a common way to hear about the program.
- Made aware of option from speaking with one person

### **What was the process like for getting into the program? What worked well?**

- Pretty straightforward process: pre-test, got paperwork and level; first day of class got you set up and worked your way from there; best part is that you can work at your own pace but the teacher is available if needed.
- Have really valid issues for not attending; don’t want to be seen as taking advantage (like other stereotype); documentation can help
- When I came in, the woman who helped me talked to me like someone who has a future; I felt important, respected; came up with strategy, set up process; test helped me remember what I’d forgotten; didn’t mind the test
- Evaluated me and I can go at my own pace; made me feel comfortable; there is recognition that each student is unique
- Personal, one on one, test made non-intimidating, explained need for it; relaxed, smooth, start where need to start; draw attention to where you not making progress and will get you help if you need
- Had a bit of waiting time; as long as you take initiative, she’ll help you along the way; straightforward, individualized process
- Process was quick; called to enquire and they wanted her in there next week for testing. wanted her to start right away; testing was great; she was uncomfortable but they helped re: seeing what she needs help with; all feel equal as people; there is respect for individual pace and a support system for all students; background not an issue
- Smooth intake, once I got it figured out; was up and running in 4 weeks; well organized; if anything, need more help for individual attention
- After friends encouraged me, I went up and felt that I couldn’t go through with it, went back to ATN; gave me confidence; then made an appointment, and too test– big test; will be starting ACE soon; test was okay; I guess I have to show them what skills I have got!

### What could be improved?

- Government – better to inform people on the street; didn't know about options to get GED other than correspondence
- Teacher switch so now there's a new teacher and there's a bit of a time lag now; not always there when you need something
- People who have valid documented reasons for hours missed need consideration when high; consequence for making up hours slowly; some people need more time than generally designated; need to have the basics; flexibility to work at pace that allows external circumstances allow
- Need help with English grammar; can speak it and understand it; have a student who acts as a tutor once a week; have learning centre with tutors to get extra help outside class
- One teacher is doing almost everything; teacher is great, but she could use more support.
- Extra funds for student resources
- Wish this was funded through EI; should be able to claim EI while on this program; could speed up my progress; more teacher support
- Info needs to be better communicated on ground level; you get mixed messages, nobody knows about it; need more support staff; classes are getting bigger; should be going year round, not stopping in summer because that's a big interruption; practical application to what you're doing and what your goals are; get you out there, like a co-op; give you a chance to try it out and to get people skills; self-management course is okay but work experience would be good to help offset theory; connection from college to university if you want to move on beyond
- EI and OW should recognize the fact that if they told everyone that this could help and get them moved on rather than returning; government funding people to take programs they don't really need/like; options need to be presented; co-op is beneficial because you are not spending all that money for a degree; then decide you don't like it and have to start over
- One teacher for a lot of people; there's always a line up; can be frustrating and could discourage questions
- More interpreters there and longer hours; limited hours now (9:30-2:00); students there longer; not always interpreter there when needed; if teacher can understand/help at time, have to wait until next day; teacher under so much stress; doesn't get break/lunch; needs some support!!
- We need teacher and backup people; teacher just broke one day – too much stress; a lot of respect for teacher; glad that teacher is taking initiative to learn how to sign; very appreciative

### Both the Federal and Provincial governments have identified a need to increase the number of people in apprenticeship if Canada and Ontario are to continue to compete successfully in the global economy. What information do you have about job opportunities and the apprenticeship system? What would you like to know more about?

- Don't know much; course she'll be taking will have co-op part; would go to info booth at Fanshawe at Galleria to get information
- Informed in class about apprenticeship
- Check Yellow pages, Blue pages
- Ask teacher – able to help
- Ask around college
- Someone came into class from Job Connect and gave brochures, but they only deal with students 16-24 years; what about older students, especially those with a disability?
- Interested in finding out more about apprenticeship (four people).

### What computer assisted learning activities have you had either in Academic Upgrading or in previous learning environments? In what ways have these activities been positive or negative?

- Have had experience with it – it's wonderful; good inspiration; help organize in general and good for anyone; extra reference materials and tutors essential; child care support limited up to a certain age
- Never even heard of it; want to get into it and find out more
- Have access to computers; a lot of people just getting familiar with computers; no structure with integrating technology into curriculum; may improve with the right staff
- Limited use in GED; like the way it's set up right now; like access to teacher because the computer is too far removed; want human contact; computer doesn't allow for special circumstances and questions
- Starting sciences; can't get disk that is supposed to go with the book; lab would be helpful
- Have experience with technology; great experience; should be offered to everyone; needs to be brought out more to help with comfort level

- Powerful tool; ease people who aren't comfortable with it
- Like computer assisted learning but best learning style is one-on-one; great backup if you have a computer at home
- Have computer skills; learning from computers all the time is boring; when I first started, I had some time for assisted courses on the computer; it helped with English and math; it's okay; can type out essays and spell check but would rather use paper and book when it comes to learning
- Like to have teacher there
- We need better chairs at computer lab; they're lousy.
- Ergonomics of computer stations – not comfortable now

**Do you have any additional comments or recommendations you would like to make about college academic upgrading programs?**

- Not in competition with grade 12
- Like to learn with other adults and not younger students; they are too disruptive
- Better for government to help people get bigger jobs and not be drain on system
- Need to get advertising out there to get word out about ACE and Blueprints so people know where to go