

M.Ed. in Adult Learning & Development

2007 NCA Progress Report #10

Introduction/Context:

The Master of Education in Adult Learning and Development (ALD) degree at Cleveland State University is designed for individuals who are interested in or are currently working with adult learners in a variety of settings. These settings could include teaching in and/or administration in adult basic education programs, two- or four-year colleges, continuing education for professions, cooperative extension services, training and development programs in business or industry, medical or health education programs, community development programs, and military education. The ALD program emphasizes research and practice concerning learning and human development theories in adulthood and related methodologies, giving students the abilities and knowledge to create and evaluate professional programs. In addition, students gain an understanding of the history, philosophy and sociology of adult education, allowing them to actively deal with issues of culture, diversity and equity while understanding the political nature of education and how education can promote change in society.

Through a study of human development theories, including researchers such as Erikson, Levinson, Gould, Vaillant, Kohlberg, Gilligan, and Fowler, students gain an understanding of human development throughout the lifespan. Behaviorist (Thorndike, Skinner, and Pavlov), Cognitivist (Kohler, Lewin, and Piaget), Humanist (Maslow, Rogers) and Social Learning (Bandura, Rotter) theories of learning are examined and discussed. In addition to these learning theories, theories of learning in adulthood, such as Self-Directed Learning (Tough), Andragogy (Knowles), the CAL model (Cross), perspective transformation (Mezirow), and conscientization models (Freire) are discussed and modeled in courses. Caffarella, Boone, Cervero, Cervero and Wilson, Tyler, and Kowalski provide models of program planning which strengthen the students' own planning skills and practices. Through the study of these models and application of these theories to their own and other students' practice situations and contexts, students develop a strong theoretical knowledge base grounded in ethical practice.

The Master of Education in Adult Learning and Development shares common research and technology courses with the Master of Education students in CSU's College of Education, equipping students with a broad knowledge base concerning educational research and technology and computing for administrating educational programs for adult learners. In addition to these common core courses, students pursuing an ALD degree take courses in the fundamental nature, function and scope of adult education, foundations and history of adult education, leadership and organizational change, program planning, and adult learning and development theories. Students also complete an internship which provides them with reflective practical experience concerning adult education, helping to bridge the theory to practice gap. In addition to required courses, students may take advisor approved courses in elective areas of study to further enhance their subject matter expertise or their current employment status within the field of adult education.

In summation, the ALD program provides present and future adult educators with theories, skills, knowledge and abilities, enabling them to plan programs for a diverse population of adult

learners in a variety of settings, including technical/vocational colleges, proprietary schools, four-year colleges, and business and industry staff development or human resource development programs. The ALD program at CSU has experienced rapid growth in the past four years and has almost tripled in student size. While the rapid growth has been good for the program, it has created problems staffing courses; the program currently has three full-time faculty members serving approximately 300 degree and certificate seeking graduate students.

Program Goals:

Learning is a lifelong process that extends far beyond formal schooling. Adult education facilitates and enhances this process, helping men and women realize their potential as responsible and productive citizens, workers, and family members. Today's adult educator must possess vision, theory and practical skills to promote active learning and reflection among a diverse population of adult learners.

The ALD Program at Cleveland State University is committed to providing present and future adult educators with the knowledge of theory and practice to be effective adult educators. The ALD program will prepare students to:

1. Be cognizant of the issues and responsive to problems confronting adult educators and the diversity of the adult learner population,
2. Understand the theories, philosophies, history and practices concerning adult education, adult learning theories, and adult developmental psychology and apply these theories in practice,
3. Demonstrate knowledge of program planning, organizational change, and leadership concepts in developing programs for adult learners.

These goals were articulated by faculty members in section meetings during the course of the school year 2004-2005. They have been reviewed and modified this year as per the feedback from the Director in the Office of Assessment.

Outcomes:

Related program outcomes are contained in the table that can be found at the conclusion of this report. These outcomes had not been altered since the NCA Assessment Plan for the ALD program was developed by section faculty; however, in fall 2006, we began instituting a portfolio program, ALD 689, a four-credit-hour elective course that can be used by students as an exit option. We have altered the table in this report to reflect student outcomes in that portfolio option. We also instituted an accelerated weekend masters program at the East Center during the 2006-2007 school year. Students in this cohort program will graduate at the end of fall 2007. Future outcomes will probably reflect objectives related to this weekend accelerated program.

Research:

Direct evidence of the above outcomes was collected from reviewing roster/grade sheets from past semesters. Comprehensive examination evidence was obtained from the Educational Student

Services Center in the College of Education & Human Services at Cleveland State University. Indirect evidence concerning program effectiveness has been gathered by the three full-time faculty members and one visiting faculty member who teach in the program through advising sessions with students, faculty-developed survey forms, and in-class discussions with students.

Findings:

Data were analyzed by faculty members during monthly section meetings. Results for outcomes listed above have been found to be consistent with previous years findings; however, program growth is clearly evident when “N” is examined from prior year’ s reports. “N” size has approximately tripled from the prior year’s report, a clear indication of strong program growth.

Review:

Two ALD faculty members secured a grant for assessment of graduates and developed a program assessment survey, which was sent to program graduates in the summer of 2005. The purpose of the survey was to assess the effectiveness of the program in order to plan future program and course development. The results of the survey showed that the majority of graduates of the program were satisfied to very satisfied with the education they received at CSU in the ALD masters degree program. The results of this survey are still being examined, and faculty members discuss the findings at monthly section meetings to plan for new program innovations and course development.

Actions and Program Innovations

Portfolio Course: As a result of formal and informal surveys of previous year ALD students, ALD faculty members developed the requirements for a portfolio exit option four credit hour course, *ALD 689, Portfolio Development in ALD.*, as an exit option for students. Students who choose to take this course a use it as their exit option to the masters program. Although this course was approved and in the graduate catalog since 2003, the 2006-2007 school year was the first year that ALD 689 was offered (Fall 06, Spring 07, and Summer 07) due to the unavailability of full-time faculty members to teach it previously. The addition of a full-time visiting faculty member this school year allowed us to have enough faculty members to offer this course. ALD 689 was developed and is taught as a web-based course and is generating graduate student credit hours as an exit option for students who are at the end of their programs of study.

On-Line Courses: ALD faculty members have been awarded a total of three COEHS and CSU course release grants to develop on-line courses. During the 2005-2007 school year, we have offered eight on-line courses. (ALD 605, ALD 607, AL D 689, ALD 663). We will continue to work toward developing more on-line courses toward a goal of offering the ALD masters degree totally on-line.

Weekend Program at the East Center: The ALD section developed and offered an accelerated master’s degree program offered weekends at the CSU East Center. The program seems to be popular with working professionals who are eager to participate in a program that fits with their schedules. The students become a cohort and take all courses together, although some students choose to supplement their program of study with ALD courses on our main campus. Our

visiting faculty member coordinates and teaches in this program, as do other ALD faculty as needed.

In summary, the ALD program continues to grow and develop. We were the only program in the CASAL department and one of the few in the College of Education and Human Services that has exhibited continual growth over the past nine years. In order to maintain our growth and provide quality scholarly opportunities for our students, the ALD program needs to keep our visiting faculty position as a full-time tenure track position. Without this position, our growth and development will be hampered and we will be unable to continue offering the ALD accelerated weekend program, and offer ALD 689, the portfolio course and the other specialty courses on a regular basis

NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION STUDENT ASSESSMENT PLAN
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OUTCOMES	TARGETS & ASSESSMENT MEASURES	N	RESULTS	REVIEW, ACTIONS & IMPROVEMENTS
#1 - Graduates will demonstrate skills in completing projects/assignments in field settings.	At least 90% of students will complete activities identified in adult learning and development practicum course (ALD 688) with grade of "B" or better using individual faculty developed scoring rubrics.	21	100% received B or better.	No action required
#2 - Graduates will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of program content in meeting exit requirements through successfully completing comprehensive examinations, thesis, projects, or completing ALD 689, Portfolio Development in ALD, with a grade of "B" or better	At least 90% of ALD students who take the comprehensive exam will pass it.	14	100% passed	No action required Comprehensive exam primer is a component of the internship class (a required course) and helps prepare students for the exam
	Theses and projects will be completed in less than one year.	1	1 Thesis completed	No Action Needed
	Students will complete ALD 689, Portfolio Development in ALD, with a grade of "B" or better using individual faculty developed scoring rubrics.	18	95% students completed ALD 689 with grade of "B" or better	No Action needed
#3 - Students will demonstrate aptitude for understanding and using knowledge of social and educational issues as applied to adults.	90% of students will complete ALD 605 or 607 with a grade of "B" or better using individual faculty developed scoring rubrics.	43	100% had grade of B or better (in ALD 605 and in ALD 607).	No action required