



**FACT SHEET**

**Adult Learner**—may be 24 years of age or older; a veteran of the armed services or active-duty; returning to school after four or more years of employment, homemaking, or other activity; a person who assumes multiple adult roles, such as parent, spouse/partner, and employee.

<b>Undergraduate Adult Students</b>	<b>14/15</b>	<b>15/16</b>	<b>16/17</b>	<b>17/18</b>	<b>18/19</b>
Penn State—all locations	17,987	18,457	17,918	17,004	16,635
Commonwealth Campuses	7,937	7,490	6,667	5,710	5,359
Penn State World Campus	7,649	8,736	9,122	9,538	9,378
University Park	2,745	2,591	2,385	1,982	2,123

*Data Source: Outreach Analytics and Reporting*

**Percentage of Undergraduate Adult Learners Who ...**

- 57%** reside in Pennsylvania
- 60%** are part-time\*
- 84%** are enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program
- 9%** are enrolled in an associate degree program

*\*Includes only undergraduate degree-seeking adult students*

**Top Five Baccalaureate Majors\* in Which Adult Learners Are Enrolled:**

- Business
  - Information Sciences and Technology
  - Nursing
  - Psychology
  - Liberal Arts
- (represents 31% of all bachelor's degree programs)*

*\*includes majors and pre-majors*

**Top Three Associate Degree Majors in Which Adult Learners Are Enrolled:**

- Business Administration
  - Information Sciences and Technology
  - Letters, Arts, and Sciences
- (represents 61% of all associate degree programs)*

**Undergraduate Adult Learners' Financial Facts 2017/18**

- **69%** of all undergraduate adult learners receive some form of financial aid
- Median income for adult students who applied for aid is **\$28,657**, compared to **\$78,709** for all undergraduate aid recipients
- **25%** of adult learner aid recipients are first-generation college students, compared to **22%** for all undergraduate aid recipients
- **27%** have dependent children
- **36%** of undergraduate adult students receive Pell Grants, compared to **23%** of all undergraduate students
- Average loan debt for adult learners who graduated is **\$37,102**, compared to **\$37,036** for all undergraduates who graduated

*Data Source: Office of Student Aid*



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**Focus**

The focus of the Commission for Adult Learners in 2019–20 will be the “access to a pathway to success for the adult learner.” This focus will be based on, but not limited to, four points linking the work that the action teams do within the Commission:

1. **Moving Forward:** Working within the context of the One Penn State 2025 vision, review current Penn State practices regarding how information is shared with the adult learner. Recommend next steps regarding the creation of a central repository housing relevant information related to services available to the adult learner.
2. **Engagement:** Leverage and support University partner groups working with Penn State’s adult learner population in order to strengthen methods of sharing best practices regarding the facilitation of an engagement pathway for adult learners.
3. **Strategic Collaboration:** Collaborate with other organizations and programs across Penn State in order to expand and to strengthen the student success support network available to the adult learner population.
4. **Goal Attainment:** Monitor adult learner data and invite input from student members in order to cover gaps and to identify new practices that will enhance the adult learner’s educational experience, support persistence, and enable completion.

**Mission**

Penn State’s Commission for Adult Learners is composed of faculty, staff, and students from several University locations. Members are dedicated to improving the adult learner experience at Penn State.

**Charge**

1. Provide a visible University-wide body whose primary purpose is to contribute to a supportive climate for adult learners.
2. Monitor the recruitment, retention, and satisfaction of adult learners.
3. Advocate for adult learners’ concerns by recommending changes in policy, practice, and procedures that impact adult learners.
4. Foster coordination and information exchange regarding programs and services that attract and retain adult learners to Penn State.
5. Serve as a repository and facilitating body for adult learner–focused initiatives University-wide.