Institutional Mini-Grant Competition:

Tennessee Higher Education Commission Informational Webinar
Webinar Agenda

• THEC will address the process and timeline of the mini-grant competition.
• CAEL will explain the ALFI assessment process and how to use results to be an adult learner focused institution.
• Representatives from Middle Tennessee State University will provide insight into their experience as an existing ALFI institution.
• All three organizations will answer questions at the end of the webinar.
Why be Ready to Reconnect?

• *Drive to 55* relies largely on the recruitment, retention, and completion of adults in higher education.
• Adults make up over 27%, or 55,000, of enrolled public undergraduate students in Tennessee.
• With emphasis on adults returning to higher education, institutions need to have support.
• Ready to Reconnect grants will help institutions improve higher education access and success for adult learners across Tennessee.
Ready to Reconnect Grant

• Maximum awards of up to $50,000
• 12-month grant period
• One submission per institution
• Eligibility requirements:
  – Institution type
  – Letter of Intent
  – ALFI Completion
  – Proposal Submission
Grant Proposal Sections

• Cover Page
• Verification of ALFI Completion
• Illustration of Current Context
  – Focus Area Description; Discussion of Challenges and Strengths
• Project Description
  – Project Description; Project Goals and Evaluation; Budget Narrative and Budget Summary Form
• Sustainability Plan
## Ready to Reconnect Grant Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Date/Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THEC releases Ready to Reconnect RFP</td>
<td>02/10/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution participates in one of two CAEL &amp; THEC hosted ALFI Webinars</td>
<td>02/17 &amp; 02/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution Submits Intent to Participate to THEC</td>
<td>03/02/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution Establishes ALFI Account with CAEL</td>
<td>03/04/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions Complete ALFI Process</td>
<td>05/15/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAEL Releases ALFI Report to Institutions</td>
<td>06/15/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions Submit Grant Proposals to THEC</td>
<td>07/15/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THEC Announces Grant Awards</td>
<td>08/03/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions Begin Grant Activities</td>
<td>09/01/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions Complete Grand Activities</td>
<td>08/30/2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Becoming Adult Learner Focused

CAEL’s Adult-Learning Focused Institution (ALFI) project demonstrates that colleges can take specific steps in instruction, assessment of prior learning and student services to improve access, retention, and success for adult learners.
CAEL and ALFI

• History
  – CAEL’s 1999 Benchmarking Study of six high-performing, adult-serving colleges and universities
  – Released the book Best Practices in Adult Learning
  – Developmental Funding from Pew Charitable Trusts, Ford Foundation and Lumina

• More than 150 institutional surveys have been completed to date
  – 7% have completed ALFI a second time
  – 2 and 4 year institutions are members of the ALFI consortium
  – Used to build capacity to serve adult students
Why ALFI?

• The surveys are based on CAEL’s *Nine Essential Principles of Serving Adult Learners*

• Data obtained with the two surveys help institutions recruit, retain, and graduate adult students

• Compare the survey results
  – *External*: Your team’s and your students’ ratings vs. students and teams at other institutions that have used the ALFI Assessment Tools
  – *Internal*: The institution’s perspective vs. adult learner perspective for each scale

• Together they provide data for identifying both strengths and challenges
CAEL’s Principles of Effectiveness for Serving Adult Learners

1. Outreach
2. Life & Career Planning
3. Financing
4. Assessment of Learning Outcomes
5. Teaching/Learning Process
6. Student Support Systems
7. Technology
8. Strategic Partnerships
9. Transitions
The Principles of Effectiveness are:

- Integrated – they work together
- Indivisible – they form a whole
- Imperative – not just “a good idea”
## Synergies Among Principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Principles Addressed</th>
<th>Insights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Adjusting curriculum to include accelerated approaches, flexible calendar or cohort based approaches | • Outreach  
• Teaching Learning Process  
• Student Support Systems | Created several accelerated programs; Intensive nursing Program                                      |
## Synergies Among Principles

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Inst. Activity</th>
<th>Principles Addressed</th>
<th>Insights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A commitment to serving adult learners is emphasized in the institutional mission statement, catalogs, brochures, view books and orientation | • Assessment of Learning Outcomes  
• Financing  
• Life and Career Planning  
• Teaching & Learning Process  
• Student Support Systems                                                                 |                                               |
| Part-time faculty workshops                                                   | • Life and Career Planning  
• Teaching-Learning Process  
• Student Support Systems                                                                 | Rigor without Mortis Series                   |
Spotlight On

Used the ALFI to:

• Grow the adult student population at NSU.
• Change campus perceptions of the Adult learner experience using the 9 Principles for Serving Adult Learners.
• Change policies and practices. Dr. Williams noted that many of these changes also helped traditional students.

Dr. Darlene Williams, Vice President for Technology, Research and Economic Development
ALFI Assessment Toolkit

The ALFI Assessment Tools Consists of 2 surveys

- *Institutional Self-Assessment Survey* (CAEL & NCHEMS)
  - completed by adult degree program administrators, staff, and faculty.
- *Adult Learner Inventory* (CAEL & Noel-Levitz)
  - completed by adult students
Institutional Self-Assessment Survey is for adult degree program administrators, staff and faculty.

- The ISAS has a two-year & a four-year version
- Approximately 50 items
- One survey completed online and submitted electronically
- Completed by an institutional team
  - Stakeholders should include representatives from key areas that work with adult students
ALI

ALI: The Adult Learner Inventory

• Importance scores
  – How important is it for your program to meet this expectation?

• Satisfaction scores
  – How satisfied are you that your program is meeting this expectation?

• Performance gap scores
  – The discrepancy between the expectation (importance score) and the reality (satisfaction score).
Results

Reports include summaries of the data by survey, best and mean performances as well as a visual comparison of the ISAS and the ALI results.

### ISAS SUMMARY REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALFI Principle</th>
<th>Your Score</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Highest Score</th>
<th>Lowest Score</th>
<th>Rank Order</th>
<th>Number of Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life/Career Planning</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and Learning Process</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How It Works: Overview

- Identify your team
- Pre-survey dialogue facilitated by CAEL
- Receive toolkit including instructions
- Implement surveys (ISAS and ALI)
- Completed surveys returned
- Statistics compiled
- Narrative & Report Created
- Post Survey presentation facilitated by CAEL
- Next steps
How It Works: 2 Steps

1. Email CAEL to start the ISAS process.
2. Email www.noellevitz.com/orderALI to start the ALI process.
How It Works: ISAS

Institutional Self-Assessment Survey

• Institutions send the completed form and are given a user name, password and a link to the survey
• Gather your team and fill out one form on-line
• An alert is sent to the CAEL staff that your institution has completed the ISAS
• CAEL will monitor the ALI FTP site to determine when the ALI has been completed
How It Works: ALI

ALI: The Adult Learner Inventory

- Institutions place an order on the www.noellevitz.com/orderALI website
- Upload names and emails of your adult learners
  - Consider defining the population to include alumni if email addresses are available
- Create email messages and dates they are to go out (reminders)
- Define demographics / adult programs (customization)
- 3-week period for students to complete (can be shorter if institution assists in pushing students to complete)
- Need to get a viable statistical sample (20%)
How It Works: Costs

• Cost for ISAS:
  – CAEL Members – $3150
  – CAEL Non-Members – $3900

• Cost for ALI is based on the following factors:
  – $250 Set up fee
  – Invitations to students – $0.25 each
  – Analysis of responses – $2.30 each
  – 5% Handling Fee applied to the total (fee applies to the ALI portion only)
How It Works: Timeline

ALFI Process Timeline

- Institution decides to participate in ALFI process and selects contact person
- Email signed contract
- Contract form submitted
- CAEL & Noel Levitz create institutional profiles
- CAEL emails Info packet inc. intro letter, instructions, and survey copy
- Pre-survey dialogue
- CAEL check-in
- Surveys completed and returned
- Statistics compiled/Narrative and Report created
- Post-survey dialogue

Contract forms signed and submitted (date initial)

Pre-Survey meeting (date)

Surveys administered (start date and end date)

Surveys returned (date)

Post-Survey meeting (date)

*The process time period is determined by the variables of the items ALI (student surveys) are generally left open for students to respond for 3 weeks.*
Results

The ALFI Basic Report Includes:

• Narrative Report
• The ISAS Scores
• The ALI Scores
• Comparisons to other institutions; rankings on each principle
• Internal comparisons of ISAS and ALI Scores
• Crosswalk of ISAS and ALI questions
• Maximum benchmark scores for ISAS questions/ALFI principles
• Your Institution’s scores for ISAS questions/ALFI principles
Using the Data

• Compare perceptions of students with faculty, staff, and administrators
• Understand institution’s strengths and challenges
• Plan strategic priorities
• Identify specific steps to take
• Support budget requests
• Inform reports/evaluations
• Gain efficiencies
Middle Tennessee State University

• David J. Gotcher, Ph.D.
• Associate Dean/Professor
• Middle Tennessee State University | University College
• www.mtsu.edu/uc
Thank you! Questions?

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