85% of higher-education seekers do not fit the “traditional” student model
ADULT LEARNER POPULATION:

- **34%** Credit for prior work experience.
- **40%** A faster way to earn my degree.
- **42%** More self-paced courses.
- **35%** The opportunity to test out of what I already know.

Source: Eduventures 2013 survey of prospective adult learners (n=7,587)
Competency for Returning Adults

- Demonstrate what adults ALREADY know and can do
- Flexible, accelerated
- Support to completion
- Focus on career goals
WHAT IS COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION?

- Students progress through learning objectives as they demonstrate mastery of content, at their own pace.
- It allows them to show what they know, as soon as they know it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Competency-Based Education</th>
<th>Traditional Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRICULUM</strong></td>
<td>Variable class structure, testing out of subject matter at different levels</td>
<td>Standardized class structure, regardless of prior knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLASS COMPLETION</strong></td>
<td>Students finish as they are able</td>
<td>End of term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AVERAGE TIME TO GRADUATE</strong></td>
<td>30 months*</td>
<td>60 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data is only from Western Governor's University
National Models of Competency

- Western Governors University
- Capella University Flex Path
- University of Wisconsin Flexible Option
- Kentucky Technical Community College System
- Washington State System
- Southern New Hampshire University: College for America
- Northern Arizona University Personalized System
Key Elements of the Competency Model

- Using Prior Learning Assessment, **prove** what knowledge can be measured prior to program start.
- **Progress** through degree by proving mastery of curriculum competencies through rigorous assessment
- Work at own **pace**, with instructor present
- Gain high levels of ‘concierge’ **support**
- **Focus** on completion and mastery of specific knowledge, skills and abilities
- Take a next step toward **career goals**
Direct Assessment Competency Model

Industry supports identification of competencies
Competency Module

EXAMPLES:
- Analyze Data
- Communicate Effectively
- Think Critically to Solve Problems

COMPETENCIES
Knowledge & Skills

ASSIGNMENTS
Carefully Measures Competencies

EXAMPLES:
- Presentation
- Business Plan
- Research Paper
Monitoring Progress

- YOU HAVE COMPLETED 19 CRITERIA, towards 32 TOTAL CRITERIA
- YOU HAVE COMPLETED 22 of 40 Criteria
- YOU HAVE COMPLETED 5 ASSIGNMENTS, out of 10 TOTAL ASSIGNMENTS

- YOU HAVE 6 COMPETENCIES in this course
- COMPETENCY – 1: Examine the basic business models for e-business. MORE >>
- COMPETENCY – 2: Relate the importance of e-business infrastructure to the economic impact of a business. MORE >>
- COMPETENCY – 3: Examine the relationship of basic e-business strategies to business success. MORE >>
- COMPETENCY – 4: Apply effective e-business planning and implementation. MORE >>
- COMPETENCY – 5: Develop a technology and management e-business plan. MORE >>
- COMPETENCY – 6: Evaluate the management implications of e-business. MORE >>
The Regulatory Environment

• **Federal Department of Education**
  – Title IV eligibility for direct-assessment CBE programs
  – Non-term award

• **Recent Experimental Site Initiative Awards**
  – Competency-based education
  – Prior Learning Assessment
  – Limited Direct Assessment

• **SACSCOC Policy**
  – Competency-based educational programs
  – Direct assessment
  – Hybrid direct assessment
Administrative Considerations

• **Technology and Infrastructure**
  – Open ERP system functionality to support off-cycle admissions and registration
  – Support policy decisions with campus-based programming

• **Policy**
  – Establish a unique transcription model to support “Direct assessment” competency programs
  – Establish model for calculation of faculty load
  – Set fixed-price tuition model in a subscription model to offer reduced student costs
  – Distribution of financial aid for competency student audience
  – Frame a Prior Learning Assessment model
  – Meet regulatory issues to support competency

• **Faculty**
  – Engage faculty in the conversation
  – Provide training, support and extra compensation as available
For more information:

Dr. Pam Northrup
pnorthru@uwf.edu