Non-Traditional Pathways to a College Degree

The path to a postsecondary degree is far different than it used to be. Students are different, programs are different, requirements are different, and the delivery of content is different. This session explores just some of the challenges students face on their path to a postsecondary degree in three distinct contexts and some potential solutions. The first paper explores how course constraints in the largest vocational programs in California's community colleges, which serves many non-traditional students, impact student success. The second paper examines how a single prior learning assessment exam - CLEP - catapults students, especially military members and veterans, students older than 24 years old, and home schoolers, to attain postsecondary degrees. Finally, the last paper studies how professors and their behaviors can impact student performance in an online classroom. Collectively, these papers demonstrate effective policies and practices that improve outcomes for students and programs that challenge the typical notion of a college experience.