

**University of Alberta**

Support for Adult Development Instructors

Experiencing Change at their Workplace

by

Roy Salsbury



A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and  
Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Education

in

Adult and Higher Education

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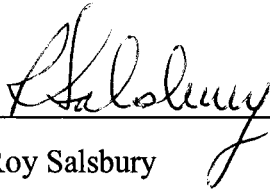
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Glendon, Alberta, Canada

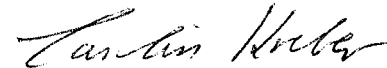
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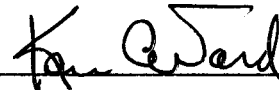
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, the thesis entitled Support for Adult Development Instructors Experiencing Change at their Workplace submitted by Roy Dennis Salsbury in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education, in Adult and Higher Education.



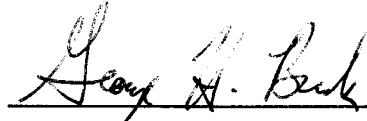
Dr. C. Kreber



Dr. Ken Ward



Dr. Dave Collett



Dr. George Buck

(external examiner)

Date May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2002

## **Abstract**

Throughout the industrialized world, the process of globalization, technological changes, changed demographics of businesses and the work force, an increase in non-standard types of employment and the shift to service industries are impacting education and training systems.

This study focuses on the impact of change on Adult Development Instructors in Alberta who are dealing with adults entering post-secondary institutions without the skills necessary to handle career programs. Front-line instructors and their immediate supervisors were interviewed to identify the changes and challenges experienced in Adult Development programs as well as the support these instructors need in order to effectively deal with these changes and challenges.

The roles of Adult Development instructors were found to be quite unique and thus many of their needs go beyond those of instructors of career programs. The study provides a number of recommendations for institutions and instructors who are navigating through these changing times.

## Acknowledgments

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This thesis is dedicated to my wife, Ann, for her tolerance and understanding throughout this very ambitious undertaking.

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# **SUPPORT FOR ADULT DEVELOPMENT INSTRUCTORS**

## **EXPERIENCING CHANGE AT THEIR WORKPLACE**

### **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

#### **Background to the Problem**

The statement that the only thing constant is change has never been truer than it has been for Advanced Education in Alberta during the 1990s. A government department that focuses on delivering training finds itself not only in an information age, but also witnesses a communication technology explosion. All this is happening while the government is not only privatizing a number of its institutions, but is also mandating fiscal restraint and even cutbacks. To compound this even more, the department is required to march to the tune of the Alberta Student Finance Board while introducing a new Adult Development Reform Initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to develop a high quality and efficient system of adult development programs and services in Alberta that is client-centered, career-focused, outcomes-based, articulated and cost effective (Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1996). Adult development instructors have to meet the consumer, with smiles on their faces, pretending that they know what is happening and what they are doing. Fullan (1991) captures this feeling in the poem he cites,

There is something I don't know  
that I am supposed to know.  
I don't know what it is I don't know,  
and yet am supposed to know.  
And I feel I look stupid  
if I seem both not to know it  
and not know what it is I don't know.  
Therefore, I pretend I know it.  
This is nerve-wracking since I don't  
know what I must pretend to know.  
Therefore, I pretend I know everything.

--R.D.Laing, *Knots* (1970)

(pp.104-5). This certainly sounds like a challenge requiring the cooperation and collaboration of all stakeholders in the industry.

I have been an adult educator for more than thirty years, approximately half of this time as an Adult Development instructor and the balance as supervisor/manager in the same field. I have had the opportunity to sit on a number of provincial committees such as MCABE (Management Committee for Adult Basic Education) and some of its predecessors as well as the Academic Upgrading Coordinators committees in the province earlier in the 1990s when changes seemed less dramatic. However, I have spent the last eight years in the classroom and have personally experienced some major

changes in my job that have prompted me to want to study and share the experiences of other instructors as well as supervisors directly involved in the delivery of Adult Development programs in Alberta.

In Alberta, the Adult Development Reform Initiative was guided by the vision that adult development programs and services are essential to help many adult Albertans obtain and retain employment now and into the next century. The intent of the former Department of Advanced Education was that these programs and services would provide the opportunity for participants to develop that combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for responsible citizenship, lifelong learning and the transition directly to work or through further education/training to work. All of the community colleges and technical institutes in Alberta offer some form of these programs and they were directed to do so within existing resources, through a realignment and restructuring of adult development programs and services into an articulated system that is client-centered, career-focused, collaborative and affordable (Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1996).

### Significance

If colleges are to remain competitive and effective they must carefully manage their most valuable asset, their human resources. Hutton (1997) states,

And in times of change everyone is under a lot of pressure:- emotions run high, and many people are stressed out. In these circumstances, the people issues become more difficult to deal with — but more vital to success than ever (p.1).

To this end, it is necessary to determine the college instructors' needs, and more precisely, the factors that assist college instructors in effectively coping with the changes such as new course content, methods of delivery or uses of technology occurring at their workplaces. Though this study does not qualify as a case study per se, data were collected through interviews and a focus group and the selection of subjects was guided by the same reasons Merriam recommends with respect to case study methodology. Specifically, Merriam (1988) confirms why it is necessary to go directly to the instructors,

The case study worker constantly attempts to capture and portray the world as it appears to the people in it. In a sense for the case study worker what seems true is more important than what is true. For the case study worker ... the internal judgements made by those he studies, or who are close to the situation, are often more significant than the judgements of outsiders (p.167).

Hence, it is critical that the colleges and the Department of Learning study the experiences of those directly involved in the process, in this case the adult development instructors, in order to better understand their perspective and be in a position to respond to their concerns through appropriate planning and support initiatives. Likewise, adult development instructors need to have this information in order to know what support to request. Once the instructors realize that many of their peers have needs similar to their own, and in some cases have found support or training to address these needs, they will be more likely to request support that will make them more effective in their roles.

## Introducing the Problem

I am presently working at Portage College and have done so for more than twenty years. Since this college was formerly one of the four Alberta Vocational Colleges that served the province, its roots are in Adult Development and Community Programs. Portage College is a relatively young college, just over thirty years old, whose mission is to develop knowledgeable, skilled citizens through quality education and training in a dynamic learning environment. The enrolment in the 2001/ 2002 year is slightly less than one thousand full time/load equivalent students. More than half of our full-time students are in some form of Adult Development program. Most are enrolled in regular Academic Upgrading, which focuses on academic prerequisites of skill training programs, some in Academic Preparation, which provides a greater focus on readiness and Life Skills and the balance is enrolled in Employability Skills, which has a large component of work placement.

These programs employ approximately eighty Adult Development instructors and serve some thirteen communities in northeastern Alberta, in addition to Lac La Biche where the main campus is located. Some seventy percent of our students are of aboriginal ancestry and many of the programs are offered right on the reserves and settlements, where the focus has clearly been Adult Development programs. There is little wonder the growth of our Adult Development instructors is extremely significant to our college.

Some of the changes that our college has experienced have included going from provincial governance to board governance, changes in enrolment, changes in client

demographics, changes in delivery methods, changes in communication methods and changes in management including a new president. These changes have resulted in many challenges, not the least of which impact the front line instructors and the need for new levels of support. As an example, the move to board governance has clearly opened the doors to a broader scope of programming. While most see this as a positive shift for the college, some of the Adult Development instructors fear that higher profile career programs may seem more appealing to the board and focus may shift away from the program they see as so significant to the survival of our college in this region of the province. This research was designed to explore these issues on a broader scale in the province by surveying the seventeen colleges and two technical institutes which serve more than ten thousand Preparatory and Basic Upgrading students (Alberta Learning , 2002b). To this end, every community college or technical institute member of the Adult Development Reform Project Advisory Committee of Alberta was contacted to invite participation in this study. Semistructured interviews were conducted with one adult development instructor, with no less than three years experience in that capacity, and his or her supervisor from every community college and technical institute in the province that agreed to participate and could respond within the established time frame.

### Research Problem

What instructional challenges have been experienced by Adult Development Instructors in Alberta and what interventions, support or training do they feel would enhance their performance on the job during these times of change?



The following sub-problems were explored:

1. What types of major changes have occurred during the 1990s that Adult Development Instructors perceive have affected the instruction and services they provide and how they provide them?
2. What instructional challenges have resulted from these changes?
3. How were these instructional challenges managed from the perspective of Adult Development Instructors?
4. How were these instructional challenges managed from the perspective of the Supervisors of Adult Development Instructors?
5. What are the types of interventions, support or training that Adult Development Instructors found effective in coping with these instructional challenges?
6. What strategies do Adult Development Instructors recommend for dealing with the challenges resulting from the changes at their workplace?

#### Definitions

**Adult Development:** A program for adult Albertans who lack the skills necessary to pursue post-secondary and/or skill-training programs and replaces terms like Basic Training for Skill Development (BTSD), Academic Upgrading (AU) or Adult Basic Education (ABE). This new program is to include more coping and job skills than previous programs. This is only one component of adult education, which also includes continuing education efforts for personal and professional growth and enrichment

activities for the highly educated (Verduin, 1977).

**Challenge:** Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1991) provides a definition which seem appropriate; "a summons that is often threatening, provocative, stimulating, or inciting".

**Change:** Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1991) provides the best meaning in its synonyms; "Change implies making either an essential difference often amounting to a loss of original identity or a substitution of one thing for another."

**College:** College and institute are used synonymously to indicate post-secondary institutions in Alberta that are funded by Alberta Learning to offer Adult Development programs.

**Instructional Challenge:** Any challenge that directly affects the learning environment.

**Intervention:** Any action that is taken to reduce the negative impact that may result from changes at the workplace.

**Strategy:** A plan or technique used to increase the chance of achieving the desired outcomes.

**Training:** The acquisition of practical education or skills.

### Assumptions

Reflection on my personal experience and the review of related literature led me to posit three assumptions.

1. Adult development instructors are experiencing changes at their workplaces and these changes result in instructional challenges.

2. It is necessary to identify the changes and challenges at these workplaces in order to understand the context in which coping strategies are employed.
3. These instructors and their supervisors are able and willing to share their descriptions of these changes and resulting challenges as well as recommend strategies for coping with these changes and challenges.

### Delimitations

This study focuses on the changes experienced by Alberta Adult Development Instructors during the 1990s as well as the interventions which they have found to be effective in dealing with the resulting challenges. While certain themes and principles may be somewhat universal and consistent with current literature, the recommended interventions may not be effective in dealing with changes or professions different from those discussed.

## **Chapter 2 - Review of Literature**

### **Introduction**

This literature review is organized in terms of six parts. First, I will focus on changes at the workplace as well as what is meant by change and how it affects those who have to implement it. Second, I will look at literature that deals with how institutions deal with the challenges resulting from changes affecting them. Next, I will explore sources on employee involvement in planning and implementing change. Then I will deal with sources that address the influx of technology into the workplace. This leads to literature that describes the use of technology as it relates to transformative learning. Finally, I will summarize the major conclusions drawn from this literature and discuss how these inform the present study.

### **Changes at the Workplace**

#### **Changes in the Adult Development Program**

One important goal of this study was to identify the significant changes at the workplace of Adult Development Instructors in Alberta during the 1990s. In order to get some background on what has been happening on the provincial scene, several Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development publications were consulted. The one which seemed most relevant is titled, *Employability and Beyond, The Adult Development Reform Initiative, Draft Concept Paper, July 1996*. This document provides the rationale for much of the reform in a department of the Alberta government that was then called Advanced Education and Career Development. The document

states:

Throughout most of the industrialized world pressures from several sources are impacting on education and training systems. The process of globalization, technological changes, changed demographics of businesses and the work force, an increase in non-standard types of employment and the shift to the service industries are a few of the major factors (Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, p.17 ).

This next statement describes the impact on our institutions: “In turn the education and training systems are under pressure to change what is provided and how and when it is provided” (Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, p.17). In other words, the content or curriculum, the methods of delivery and the stage or sequence of delivery are the major changes that have been legislated.

The role and strategies of Advanced Education and Career Development validate the need for a study such as this. One of their recommended strategies is to

Identify relevant professional development opportunities; (Partners in the adult development system will be responsible for initiating and maintaining appropriate professional development activities as required to facilitate the reform.) (Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, p.7).

Interestingly, many of the characteristics recommended for this reformed system might also apply to the Colleges’ employees, specifically their instructors. The Adult Development System will be:

**Client-Centered**

Provide appropriate learning opportunities from a continuum of programs and services that will best match the learner's needs to move to sustainable work and/or further education or training.

**Accessible**

Accommodate learners who are prepared to acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to function more effectively in their workplaces, communities and everyday life.

**Enabling Individual Responsibility**

Promote individual choice and responsibility to enable the adult learner to become both independent and self-directed.

**Enabling Transitions**

Promote successful transitions between learning and work, from training to work, from work to work, and from formal education or training to lifelong learning opportunities.

**Outcomes-Based**

Provide outcomes for adult learners to increase their employability, to prepare them for sustainable work and/or

further learning opportunities and to increase their independence and productivity.

### **Collaborative**

Build effective partnerships among all those involved in the system.(Advanced Education and Career Development, (1996), pp. 3-4)

There are other characteristics listed but these seem most applicable to both the students and the instructors of an Adult Development System. Employability and Beyond, The Adult Development Reform Initiative (Advanced Education and Career Development, 1996) identifies what some of the changes are as well as what must be done to facilitate these changes.

### What Does Change Imply?

Changes cannot be ignored without some definite consequences:

The neglect of the phenomenology of change --- that is, how people actually experience change as distinct from how it might have been intended --- is at the heart of the spectacular lack of success of most social reforms (Fullan, 1991, p.4).

Spencer and Adams (1990) describe what happens as people go through the sequences of adjustments to a change. They refer to the process as having seven stages: “ Stage 1: Losing Focus” (p.13), where they use words and phrases like numbness, feelings of unreality, being overwhelmed, shocked and wandering in a daze. “Stage 2: Minimizing

The Impact” (p.14). This is a time of denial, and in some cases you may find you deny that any change has taken place at all, while putting lots of energy into appearing to be okay. “Stage 3: The Pit” (p.15). This stage is characterized by expressions such as: why is this happening to me, as well as a sense of depression and powerlessness, bursts of anger, feelings of being stressed out, self-doubt and questioning. “Stage 4: Letting Go Of The Past” (p.16). At first it may be difficult to let go, there probably will come a moment when you know you can do it, and from then on it will get easier. This is also a time of forgiveness. “Stage 5: Testing The Limits” (p.17). This stage is exciting; it is full of energy and enthusiasm. You break free of the past, step into the future with renewed confidence, and actively look for ways to test yourself in the new situation to find out how far you can go. You can try out new behaviors and develop new skills. “Stage 6: Searching For Meaning” (p.17). You will likely look back over the transition and try to figure out the meaning of the change for your life as a whole, reflect on what you have been through and try to understand what it has all meant. Many people want to share the wisdom they have gained from their own experience. “Stage 7: Integrating” (p.18). You are able to put your discoveries and experiences into your everyday life. As these begin to sink in and become second nature, you find that you are looking at the world in new, more confident ways, without having to stop and think about it. Spencer and Adams (1990) not only see change as a process with a beginning, middle and end but the adjustment to change as a longer more complex process, one which should be carefully planned, skillfully implemented and thoroughly evaluated.

Coffey, Cook and Hunsaker (1994) focus on change as a process and make



reference to the Kurt Lewin model containing three phases : unfreezing, movement and refreezing (Lewin,1951). Unfreezing means helping employees see that changes are needed. Present attitudes and behaviors need to be altered. Movement means becoming something other than what it was, in some cases it involves a physical change such as a relocation. Refreezing is the process by which the new attitudes and behaviors become a natural, self-reinforcing pattern. While a simple model of change sounds appealing, words like “unfreezing” and “refreezing” suggest that organizations are stable or static both before and after change whereas learning institutions seem to be in a state of constant change.

Curry (1992) also describes change as a simple process similar to the Lewin model.

One less complex typology includes three stages:

- (1) mobilization, whereby the system is prepared for change;
- (2) implementation, whereby change is introduced into the system;
- (3) institutionalization, whereby the system is stabilized in its state of change

(Curry, p.1).

This suggested it would be necessary to explore instructor involvement in both planning and implementing changes that affected them.

Another author who focuses on change as a process and describes what it can mean for educators is Fullan (1991).

There are at least three components or dimensions at stake in implementing any new program or policy :

- (1) the possible new or revised materials

- (direct instructional resources such as curriculum materials or technologies)
- (2) the possible use of new teaching approaches (ie. new teaching strategies or activities)
- (3) the possible alteration of beliefs ( e.g. , pedagogical assumptions and theories underlying particular new policies or programs ) ( p. 37 ).

This suggested to me that my study should explore changes in course content, methods of delivery as well as other driving forces behind these changes.

Miller (1997) offers a very philosophical perspective on change, in general, and how it affects our entire life. The changes discussed include our entire development, both body and mind. This suggests that change is not an event that occurs in isolation, but rather a process that often has a ripple effect throughout not only our work but our lives.

Much of the literature suggests that change in higher education is a result of funding and enrollment restraints, as well as technological change, globalization, and changing demographics in businesses and the work force ( Alberta Advanced Education, 1996; Alsete, 1995; Wolverson, 1993). The literature also clearly supports the idea that change is a process rather than a product or end result (Clemence, 1994; Coffey, Cook, & Hunsaker, 1994; Curry, 1992; Fullan, 1991; Heifetz, 1990; Pysyk, 1994; Spencer & Adams, 1990). This also implies that change must be recognized and subsequently managed as a process as suggested in the next section of my literature review. In order to successfully accommodate change, institutions must be more proactive, in that they must prepare their employees.

## Meeting the Challenges

Now that we have learned more about the nature of change, we must explore ways of dealing with it. Similar to the process described by Spencer and Adams (1990), Heifetz (1997) describes a change cycle that provides a road map to better management of change. The seven stages he describes to illustrate the complexity of the process of managing change are: “Choosing the Target, Setting Goals, Initiating Action, Making Connections, Rebalancing to Integrate the Change, Consolidating the Learning and Moving to the next Cycle” (p.2). In this case, Heifetz (1997) states: “Understanding the flow of organizational change through the cycle, will help managers plan and implement change more effectively” (p.2).

Kerka (1991) refers to the coping skills for managing transition as reported by Leibowitz and Lea (1985). These skills include :

- perceiving and responding to transitions
- developing and using internal and external support system
- reducing emotional and physiological distress
- planning and implementing change

Irwins (1995) quotes Leithwood (1992) arguing that,

Administrators should be concerned with three goals:

(1) helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture,

(2) fostering teacher development,

(3) helping them solve problems together more effectively (Irwins, 1995, p.19).

Coffey, Cook and Hunsaker (1994) also highlight the need for more support for professional development of instructors in the statement, "Provide encouragement and support, training, counselling and resources to help those affected by the change adapt to new requirements" (p.550). The concept of sharing power with employees rather than having power over them prevails throughout their book. Other authors including Rouche, Baker and Rose (1989) see the development of employees as an effective management technique. A commitment to employee development is necessary in the leadership of Adult Development in order to cope with the many changes being faced. Wolverton (1993) suggests one of the options many institutions are considering.

While skeptics rail total quality management is just the 'latest jargon' for collaboration and shared governance, the quality movement nevertheless appears to be making inroads into the hallowed halls of higher education. Spurred on by tightening fiscal resources, rising operating costs and demands for accountability by an increasingly diverse public, colleges and universities across the country eye total quality management as a possible remedy for their ills (p.1).

There are many similarities to the quality circle, a participatory management technique borrowed from Japanese industry (where economic success is evident). Robbins, Coulter and Stuart-Kotze (1997) suggest these quality circles are typically work groups consisting of eight to ten employees and supervisors who meet regularly to discuss and investigate quality problems as well as recommend solutions and take corrective actions. Although the quality circle has its origin in industry, the principle that employee participation in decision-making and problem-solving improves performance is equally

true in education. The concept of developing a quality culture to improve effectiveness is also supported by Freed, Klugman and Fife (1997).

Kutner (1992) states:

There are several ways in which program administrators can create an environment for learning that enables adult education teachers to feel they are key players in their own professional development (p.1).

He also quotes Jones and Lowe (1982) and Lieberman (1988) to make his key point on creating a professional environment.

Teachers need to be 'rewarded' (with money, release time, advancement) for engaging in staff development, 'recognized' for their achievements, and 'respected' as professionals. They also need time and support to pursue new learning and to experiment in their classrooms (Knuter, 1992, p.2).

Kutner was involved in developing a number of publications in the early 1990s with a multitude of other educators sharing these beliefs. Lankard (1992) also supports the integration of TQM (Total Quality Management) in management processes. He places responsibility on management to educate, train and offer support to employees.

Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (1997) portray Total Quality Management as management dedicated to ensuring that an organization as well as all of its members are committed to high quality, continuous improvement and customer satisfaction. In fact W. Edward Deming, the modern day founder of TQM, suggests putting resources into research and education, instituting modern on-the-job training, instilling learning, instituting massive training programs for employees in statistical methods and retraining

people in new skills are all steps progressive organizations must take (Deming, 1982). Although some of these points seem redundant, they certainly emphasize employee development. Others also portray faculty development as one of the most effective tools for dealing with change. Alfano (1994) expresses this very clearly in his statement:

Today faculty development projects are sometimes the only avenue to relieve pressures caused by increases in student enrollment, diversity concerns, student underpreparedness, and the combination of decreasing budget and heavier workloads. Development programs allow the community college faculty to establish links with professional colleagues, to modify and improve instructional material and delivery, and to keep the spark of creativity and enthusiasm alive for themselves and their students (p.3).

Tack and Patitu (1992) as well as Murray (1997) place a good deal of responsibility for the development on the shoulders of administrators but Seagren (1993) best summarizes what the future holds.

Institutions of higher education face a number of challenges in the remainder of the 1990's and beyond; quality, diversity and gender, recruitment and retention of faculty, funding for professional development, faculty workloads, evaluation, minority students, and ethics. These challenges have no quick fixes, and they can be met and dealt with only through the combined efforts of the entire academic leadership team, including the chief executive, the academic officer, deans, chairs, and faculty. Quality leadership must be improved at all levels.

Chairs should consider human resources, the structure of the organization, and political and symbolic frames of reference in providing leadership to the department. They must pay attention to upgrading leadership skills through mentoring, reading, workshops, self-assessment, and networking. Creating a professional development plan can assist chairs to identify needs, specify objectives, and design techniques for assessment (p.2).

The literature is definitely suggesting that change must be managed as a process (Clemence, 1994; Curry, 1992; Fullan, 1991; Heifetz, 1990; Pysyk, 1994; Spencer & Adams, 1990). It also suggest that total quality management is one option for dealing with change (Freed, Klugman, & Fife, 1997; Deming,1982; Kutner, 1992; Schermerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn, 1997; Wolverton, 1993). The other point, and possibly the most important one, is the significance of faculty development during time of change (Alfano, 1994; Coffey, Cook, & Hunsaker, 1994; Conrad, 1993; Murray, 1997; Tack & Patitu, 1992)

### Employee Involvement

The need for early involvement of employees in the planning process for change and the ongoing care, support and training of those most affected by change prevails throughout the literature. This sentiment is clearly supported in a document produced by the New England Regional Leadership Program (1997) and posted by the Center for Rural Studies. In addition to considerable print and electronic literature on Total Quality Management, there is a complete video series which deals extensively with

employee involvement in change in the workplace.

Weaver (1992) emphasizes the role of employees in the decision-making process. Since workers know more about their jobs than managers do, he indicates that workers should be suggesting changes and management should be working to implement these changes. Heifetz (1990) also suggests that even at the first stage of the change cycle more employees should be involved in selecting and defining the target of change. In his discussion of staff development of Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers and volunteers, Kutner (1992) concludes, “The most successful teacher and volunteer training programs involve extensive ongoing training that has a solid theoretical basis and that teachers help to plan, implement and evaluate” (p.3). This clearly emphasizes the importance of teacher involvement at every stage of change. Lashway (1997) quotes Conley, Dunlap and Goldman, when he affirms the early involvement of teachers.

There are also good reasons to involve teachers at the outset, since they are the ones who must ultimately translate abstract ideas into practical classroom applications, and they can do this better when they are actively involved in developing the vision (Lashway, 1997, p.2).

This concept is supported by Zinn in Galbraith (1998) when she states:

Education has as a central focus an intent to effect change— whether that change be an increase in knowledge, the acquisition or improvement of a skill or a change in attitude or behavior (Galbraith, 1998, p.39).

These changes could occur in students, instructors or adult education itself.



Since adult educators are perceived as leaders, their input into the changes in adult education, including their own, is critical. Since many Adult Development instructors function in small, sometimes isolated communities, the idea presented by Knox (1993) that adult educators are leaders in their social context, where they are considered a resource person, holds very true. Apart from their specific role, they are relied upon for their planning, organizational, communication and human relations skills.

Dilworth and Imig (1995) describe how education reform impacts teachers.

Although education reform initiatives offers great promise, researchers suggest that they also pose significant challenges to teachers as individuals and as members of a wider professional community (p.1).

They go on to conclude the professional development of teachers will determine the success of such reforms.

In the current climate of systematic reform, the professional development of teachers has taken on a new prominence. There are a host of reasons for this new urgency, ultimately centering on the importance of the classroom teacher in promoting successful student learning. Without the continuous improvement of teaching (and of professional teachers), the reforms will fail. Professional development must serve the purpose of promoting teachers' continuous learning of integrating new knowledge about teaching and learning within the social contexts in which teaching takes place (p.3).

This is a very strong argument for finding out what is needed by our instructors and

making sure they receive it. In fact, Savard (1993) indicates, from her study on professional development, how frustrated teachers feel when they have not had input into their professional development.

Lankard (1993) presents a view which is unique in the literature reviewed. He proposes that the responsibility for career development lies primarily with the employee. He did not indicate whether he would feel the same way about the development necessary to cope with change that was mandated into a particular career. The involvement of faculty throughout the entire process of change as well as in planning and implementing professional development is critical (Dilworth & Imig, 1995; Heifetz, 1990; Kutner 1992; Lankard, 1993; Lashway, 1997; Savard, 1993; Travis, 1996).

### Influx of Technology

The rapid influx of technology is a very significant change that is loaded with challenges. This explosion of technology is well described by King (2000), who states: “My view of technology and the internet has changed radically. I saw it as a highway now I view it as a landscape” (p.5). The impact of computer technology has been so great that the city of Grande Prairie in Alberta prepared a background paper on *Strategic Planning for Information Technology and Telecommunications*. While this paper recognizes that over the past fifty years other technologies have revolutionized our thinking and living, it makes the bold statement: “But the development of the general-purpose stored-program computer may have been the most significant development of the period” (p.3). This document goes on to state:

Information technology builds tools to manipulate, organize, transmit, and store information in digital form. It amplifies brainpower in a way analogous to that in which the nineteenth century Industrial Revolution's technology of steam engines, metallurgy and giant power tools multiplied muscle power. Information technology builds the most all-purpose tools ever, tools for thought. The capabilities created to process and distribute digital data multiply the scale and speed with which thought and information can be applied. And thought and information can be applied to almost everything, almost everywhere, [almost anytime]. (Background Paper Strategic Planning for Information Technology and Telecommunications, 2001, p.4)

How could adult education resist such tools? Obviously the colleges saw this as an opportunity to off-load some costs and expand their service area to "almost everywhere". Dunlop (1997) clearly states where Canadian community colleges stood.

There is no question that, collectively community colleges across the country are poised on the cusp of a renaissance of innovation in educational technologies that holds the potential to radically alter and expand the boundaries for teaching and learning" (p.1).

While technology may solve some problems, it obviously creates others. While for some faculty members it evokes delight, for others it creates anxiety. There is bound to be faculty resistance engendered by fears of the unknown (Dunlop, 1997). There are other critical issues such as the cost of maintaining and upgrading systems beyond the piloting stage. The initial cost of hardware and software is relatively small compared to

these costs. Effective working models of integrated educational technology are still not plentiful. Strategies and costs for professional development are other considerations that surface. McKinney (1996) supports these concerns by her statements:

Because computer technology is rapidly changing, one of its fundamental features is that nothing remains up-to-date for any substantial length of time.

The cost of computers and other technological supplies are substantial, and they do not include the costs of training personnel how to use the technology.

Unfortunately most colleges cannot hope to support these technologies under their current budgetary constraints (p. 2).

Knowing this, many colleges have made the conscious decision to get on board with technology or risk falling behind. An Alberta Learning document, *Alberta's Post-secondary Education System: Developing the Blueprint for Change (2002a)*, supports this position in the statement:

While the range of learning opportunities for Albertans has expanded, the province's post-secondary institutions increasingly are exposed to competition from a broad range of out-of-province and international learning providers. This global environment has intensified competition for students and faculty, and has created demand for programs that can be applied globally as well as domestically (p. 18).

This, of course, means that Alberta institutions must use innovative delivery methods through the advancements in information and communications technology.

## Technology May Lead to Transformative Learning

Educational technology has provided an opportunity for a paradigm shift in the way that colleges package and deliver courses, but like every change there are certain risks that must be faced. On the one hand we must look at what some instructors are feeling.

For those of us who have been teaching for a while, breaking old habits may be a daunting challenge. Also, the anxiety and resistance this might engender may not be helped by a political context in which technology is viewed as a panacea to be latched onto as a way of putting our financial houses in order (Dunlop,1997, p.1).

On the other hand students are more demanding today; they walk into a classroom expecting state-of-the-art technology and multimedia presentations. After all they expect that the colleges are going to prepare them to work in an information age. This is where technology broadens itself into a landscape. Once a computer is placed on an instructor's desk it becomes a tool for communication (word-processing, e-mail, etc.), for classroom management (spreadsheets, data bases, test banks, etc.), for presentations (power point, etc.), for distance or alternate delivery and for research (internet searches). The instructors must convert this threat to their job into an integrated tool of their profession and their life.

A few years back instructors primarily had to learn to read and read to learn in order to teach others how to read. Now instructors have to learn how to use technology and use technology to learn as well as use technology to teach and teach students how to

use technology. In many instances, the instructors have become less of a content specialist and more of a facilitator of learning. This change in the role of an instructor and subsequent shifts have brought about professional development that is clearly transformative learning. If the instructors can gain emancipatory knowledge, if they can make technology work for them rather than becoming a slave of technology, they experience transformative learning. In many cases adult educators learn about teaching while they are teaching. This is supported by Cranton (1996) in her statement:

We are beginning to understand how adults learn and how educators can foster, support, and challenge that learning. What we seem not to have realized is that the literature applies equally to us as we learn about teaching. What we know about how our learners engage in self-directed learning, critical reflection, transformative learning, and social change will be applied to how we grow and develop as educators. We, too, are adult learners (p.6).

The literature review has come full circle showing that the instructor experiencing change becomes the student experiencing change.

### Conclusions from the Literature

Although some of the literature is based on experiences in other countries or by teachers in public schools, the messages are quite consistent. Educators are experiencing considerable change in their workplaces. This confirmed the need for me to explore the changes being experienced by Adult Development Instructors at their workplaces. Change is a process and should be managed as such in order to make it a positive

experience. This supported the need to identify the challenges that resulted from these changes as well as how these challenges were met. Professional development of faculty is a critical element of managing change. This suggested that a study of the interventions, support and training that these instructors received as well as recommended was critical. Faculty should be involved in all aspects of their institution's changes and their own professional development. This led to a number of questions, used to gather data, regarding instructor involvement in the change process and to inquiries about their involvement in planning their professional development. We are in an information age so the use of information and communication technology is inevitable. I did not ask specific questions in the study to address changes in these technologies as it was obvious that changes at the workplace in the 1990s would include these. These conclusions confirm the need for the present study.

## Chapter 3 - Method

### Preparation

Once the proposal for this study was complete and the application to the Ethics Review Committee of the University of Alberta was approved, I was ready to start my research. After reading an extensive amount of literature related to my research problem, I prepared interview guides, for both the Instructor (Appendix B) and the Supervisor (Appendix C) interviews, that would address the themes that I had discovered in the literature. I validated these guides by piloting the Instructor guide with two Adult Development instructors and the Supervisor guide with two college supervisors. I then made the adjustments that we mutually agreed would improve the guides. Since my plan was to conduct semistructured interviews with one Adult Development Instructor and his or her supervisor from as many Alberta colleges or institutes as possible and a focus group at my own college, my next step was to access the participants.

### Gaining Access

In order to determine which colleges or institutes would participate in my study, I contacted the President of the Alberta Vocational College (now Portage College), Lac La Biche, since he was a member of the Adult Development Reform Project Advisory Committee. He was able to provide me with the names of all the colleges in Alberta that were offering Adult Development Programs. With the aid of this list and the current college calendars, I was able to contact a representative of the Adult Development department from each college. I telephoned these representatives and after introducing



myself, explaining that my research was the basis of my Master's Thesis in Adult and Higher Education, and describing the purpose, method and value of this study to administrators, instructors, and ultimately students, I asked for permission to invite instructors and supervisors to participate in the research. When it was requested, I provided a formal letter of request for this permission. At this point, I also asked each representative to provide the names and telephone numbers of at least one Adult Development instructor, with no less than three years experience in that capacity, and his/her supervisor who the representative thought might be interested and willing to participate in the study. The Director of Academic Upgrading at the Alberta Vocational College, Lac La Biche, was also asked to have some of his instructors (who were known to me) participate in a focus group.

My next step was to contact (face-to-face or by telephone) these potential participants to confirm their interest. I explained the purpose and method of the study as well as outlined the extent of their time commitment and the ethical issues. Each potential participant was informed that he/she could opt out at any time. The first Adult Development instructor from each participating college, who indicated his/her willingness to participate, was then sent a letter of informed consent to be signed and returned and a copy of the research problem and sub-problems as well as a copy of the Instructor Interview Guide. Once these letters were returned I was ready to start my data collection. The same letter of informed consent was given to the members of the focus group prior to their session. And later, the same letter, but this time together with the Supervisor Interview Guide, was sent to the supervisors prior to their interviews.

## Collecting Data

This research project was primarily qualitative in nature. Gay (1996) states that: Qualitative research is clearly inductive. Through intensive and extensive observation, the qualitative researcher seeks to derive and describe findings that promote greater understanding of how and why people behave the way they do. When they share their findings, they present tentative answers, suggestions as it were, as to what they think is/was going on (p.211).

This research contributes

directly to the development of theory, but it is *grounded theory*, i.e., theory based on data collected in the real-world settings which reflect what naturally occurred over an extended period of time (Gay, 1996, p.212).

This form of research seemed likely to provide the answers and/or suggestions I was looking for. To collect these data I chose two processes - semistructured interviews and a focus group. My reason for choosing semistructured interviews is best described by Gall, Borg and Gall (1996):

The semistructured interview involves asking a series of structured questions then probing more deeply using open-form questions to obtain additional information....This interview approach has the advantage of providing reasonably standard data across respondents, but of greater depth than can be obtained from a structured interview (p.310).

These same authors also support the use of focus groups by their statement,

These researchers are finding that the interactions among the participants

stimulate them to state feelings, perceptions, and beliefs that they would not express if interviewed individually (p.308).

The combination of these two forms of data collection provided the depth I was seeking.

The semistructured interviews were used to gather data from one instructor, who had been in Adult Development for at least three years, and his/her supervisor from each college in Alberta that had such a department and was willing to participate. I contacted nineteen colleges or institutes to request their participation. Three of my contacts decided that their college or institute should not participate as all of their Adult Development Instructors were on contracts and there were no provisions for professional development. Two other colleges required extensive documentation before they would allow any research. I complied with all of their requests and was granted permission from one but never received formal approval from the other until months after I had ceased to collect data. One other college indicated that its staff was too busy to participate and the staff of the other three that did not participate could not be contacted during the schedule I had set for the interviews. In the end, I was able to conduct twenty-two interviews, eleven with instructors and eleven with supervisors. The participants from these eleven colleges came from as far south as Lethbridge, as far north as Fort McMurray and included both Edmonton and Calgary.

I carried out all of the instructor interviews over the telephone. In all instances, with the permission of the participants, the interviews were recorded on audio tape in addition to my recording notes of the interview. I carried out these interviews with an

interview guide (Appendix B), consisting of a series of open-ended questions, allowing the participant an opportunity to elaborate on any particular event or feeling. As mentioned earlier, a copy of this guide was provided to each participant along with his/her letter of informed consent. This allowed each participant time to think about the questions prior to the interview. The interview guide for the instructor interviews consisted of five sections to address sub-problems 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 of the study:

1. What types of major changes have occurred during the 1990s that Adult Development Instructors perceive have affected the instruction and services they provide and how they provide them?
2. What instructional challenges have resulted from these changes?
3. How were these instructional challenges managed from the perspective of Adult Development Instructors?
5. What are the types of interventions, support or training which Adult Development Instructors found effective in coping with these instructional challenges?
6. What strategies do Adult Development Instructors recommend for dealing with the challenges resulting from the changes at their workplace?

The instructor interview guide was designed so that the first section explored the changes that instructors experienced at the workplace while the second section explored the challenges resulting from these changes. The third section of the guide revealed the ways in which these challenges were met, in other words, the types of training and interventions provided, while the last section dealt with types of training and

interventions that were recommended for Adult Development Instructors.

After each interview was complete I read back my notes to the participants to assure that I had not missed any key points. I also listened to each of the eleven audio tapes to make certain I had not missed or misunderstood any comments. At the same time, I began compiling a list of “changes” and “challenges” that each instructor identified. This process was repeated for each instructor interview. As these interviews were proceeding, I started hearing about identical or similar experiences from many participants and was able to start identifying common themes and patterns. These interviews were conducted over a period of four weeks.

In order to give greater depth to descriptions of the experiences of these Adult Development Instructors as well as validate the data collected through the interviews, I arranged for an experienced Human Relations facilitator/coach to conduct a focus group with seven local instructors. The reason for involving a facilitator was to keep the discussion moving and allow me to accurately record the information. None of these instructors had participated in the individual interviews, but all had been in Adult Development for at least three years (in fact the minimum was six and the maximum was eighteen years) and all were employed at the Alberta Vocational College (Portage College), Lac La Biche, and thus had experienced similar changes. The participants were provided with the research problem and sub-problems as well as an overview of the themes that had evolved in the individual interviews. They decided to focus on the categories of “changes”, “challenges”, “interventions received” and “interventions recommended”. I recorded these data on flip charts as the discussion was occurring.

The experiences described by this group were very similar to those I had heard during the individual interviews.

In the last stage, I also conducted interviews face-to-face or by telephone, with the supervisors of the Adult Development Instructors. Actually, the only interview that I had the opportunity to carry out face-to-face was with the supervisor from my college. This particular interview was carried out in a vehicle as we travelled to a meeting so it was not recorded on audio tape, but I did read back my notes of the interview to assure I had recorded it accurately. Since I have worked for two colleges that were both multi-site operations I have had extensive experience in using the telephone as communication tool and feel that the difference between my face-to-face and telephone interviews would be so minimal it would not impact my study. For these interviews as well, I provided an interview guide (Appendix C) to each supervisor along with his/her letter of informed consent. I verbally listed the themes in “changes” and “challenges” identified by the instructors. These supervisor interviews focused on only the fourth sub-problem:

4. How were these instructional challenges managed from the perspective of Supervisors of Adult Development Instructors?

After each interview was complete I read back my notes to the participants to assure that I had not missed any key points. I also reviewed the ten audio tapes as a second check for accuracy. The description of identical or similar experiences enabled me to identify common themes and patterns in these interviews.

It was interesting to note a major shift in the communication system of choice. I had assumed that I would be able to contact these educators quite easily by telephone,

but that did not prove to be true. After playing “telephone tag” with many of the potential participants for days, it became necessary to acquire their e-mail addresses in order to set up times and dates to contact these individuals by telephone. Once this was set up everyone was both accessible and cooperative.

### Ethical Issues

Prior to any data collection, the participants were informed that this study had been approved by the Ethics Review Committee of the University of Alberta. Each participant was also asked to sign and return a letter of informed consent that outlined the purpose, method, his/her time commitment and ethical issues including the opportunity to opt out of the study at any time.

### Storing Data

The data collected were stored on audio tape and personal notes prior to being transcribed on computer discs. All information was stored in a locked, staff office until the final report of the study was completed, then all raw data were destroyed.

### Limitations

There are a number of important limitations to this study. The first limitation is the number of institutions that participated. Eleven out of the nineteen colleges and institutes actually participated. Of the eight that did not participate, three institutions chose not to. Of these three, one stated that their employees were too busy and the other

two indicated that their instructors were either on contract or sessionals and thus had no provision for professional development. There is no way of knowing what data would have been collected from these three, but considering that professional development is not offered to these instructors who are on contract sessionals, an even stronger case for this study is made. The second limitation is that this study is only a “snapshot” of the instructors’ and supervisors’ views at this time. Colleges and more specifically the thinking of their employees are clearly not static. A third limitation is that the sampling method of asking members of the Adult Development Reform Advisory Committee to recommend participants, often led to them not only volunteering as supervisors but also recommending instructors who may have shared their views. This process was effective in that it provided access to experienced instructors and supervisors. A fourth limitation is that this was clearly a purposive rather than a random sampling process. In addition, all of the participants were volunteers and could therefore represent a biased sample. A fifth limitation relates to the fact that this study was limited to Alberta colleges and technical institutes that were funded to offer Adult Development programs during the 1990s. The conclusions drawn from this study therefore have limited applicability to other programs or institutions. Finally, the lack of research experience of the researcher must be acknowledged as a limitation.

### Analyzing Data

The data were analyzed in terms of a first level content analysis to identify common themes and patterns. In order to achieve this, the instructor data were collated



under the questions on the instructor interview guide (See Appendix D). In addition, the number of times the same comment was heard was indicated by a number after each statement. While this provided some quantitative support, it was done primarily to identify themes in each section.

Since the instructor interview guide was designed to collect data on changes, challenges, interventions received and interventions recommended, the data from the focus group were collected and tabulated under these headings as well (See Appendix E). These data were used to both support and expand the themes from the individual interviews.

The data from the supervisors were also collated under the questions on the supervisor interview guide (See Appendix F). Here again, the number of times the same comment was heard was indicated after each statement. In this instance, the focus was on the roles of both the supervisors and the instructors in the implementation of change. The comments on how effectively the challenges were met were used to support the comments of instructors with respect to not only the challenges they faced but also the types of training and interventions the instructors received. The comments on what supervisors would do differently were used to support the types of training and interventions instructors recommended.

The data were summarized under the themes that evolved from the instructor interviews and focus group as well as the supervisor interviews and then discussed in relation to each of the sub-problems (Bogdan, 1982).

## Trustworthiness of the Study

The trustworthiness of a study requires that research features ensuring credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are incorporated.

In qualitative research, credibility is linked to the researcher who is the primary instrument of data collection and data analysis. In Chapter 1, I described my experience in the field of adult education. While this helped me to understand situations and feelings described by the participants, it was necessary to take every reasonable precaution to reduce my influence on the study. My role as a researcher was made completely clear to all of the participants in the study. In addition, I used interview guides as well as multiple participants for both the instructor and the supervisor interviews. To assure the data were accurate, extensive notes were taken of every individual interview and all interviews except for one were audio recorded. Notes were also recorded verbatim from the focus group session and my notes of individual interviews were read back to each interviewee to assure accuracy. I used triangulation by collecting data from multiple participants through a variety of methods. As such, I studied the problem from multiple perspectives as well. I also used theory triangulation by comparing the themes from the data with the themes derived from extensive literature research. Although considerable literature was reviewed prior to data collection to help formulate questions for the interview guides, more literature was reviewed after themes were identified in order to link them with other research.

The process of theory triangulation also contributed to the transferability of the findings in that some of the literature reflected findings in Adult Education programs in

the United States and Great Britain as well as the corporate sector. A detailed description of how the study was conducted as well as of the findings and how they relate to the literature, in general, enhances the validity of the conclusions drawn from this study. The readers who find the themes to be legitimately derived from the data and logically explored through the literature may deem the findings and conclusions to be transferable to their own situations.

The study was made dependable and confirmable by maintaining an audit trail of interview and focus group notes as well as audio recordings of most interviews. In addition, the findings are supported by direct quotes from the data. Here again the reference to the literature also enhances the dependability of the study.

This qualitative research was based on the belief that the participants could accurately describe the processes in which they were involved and that themes would emerge from their data that could be related to the literature.

## **Chapter 4 - Results**

### **Information from Instructors Interviews and Focus Group**

If the difficulty I experienced in contacting Adult Development instructors and their supervisors and arranging convenient times for interviews is any indication, these are very busy professionals. I found the use of e-mail as the most effective mode of communication to arrange this type of research. Once the instructors and supervisors were contacted and permission was granted, they were very cooperative and informative participants.

This study explored both changes and their resulting challenges as experienced by Adult Development instructors and their supervisors. Although the changes that were described by these two parties were many and varied, these could be grouped in a number of themes. While certain interview questions were intended to deal with changes in course content and methods of delivery, others dealt with the challenges resulting from these. However, it should be noted that the data went well beyond these two aspects, to describe other changes and challenges which significantly impacted the instructors' jobs. As a result, changes and challenges are discussed in terms of those experienced with respect to instructional content, methods of delivery as well as those considered non-instructional.

### Changes in Course Content

The four themes that emerged related to course content were curriculum shifts, social development of students, employment and work skills as well as computer

training.

Curriculum Shifts: One of the themes that evolved in content dealt with the shifts that have occurred in Alberta Learning curriculum in its alignment with the Western Canada Protocol ( A guide that is being used by the provinces in western Canada to maintain a level of consistency in the curriculum). This change was not just limited to content, but included an integration of technology and a different approach to learning, particularly in mathematics. This approach favoured having students learn by discovery rather than providing background and having students master content and process by practice.

Although not all of the institutions follow the Alberta Learning curriculum, their students are competing with students who do, so some adjustments have been necessary at all sites delivering Adult Development programs. The college represented by the focus group followed the Alberta Learning curriculum and was directly impacted by this change. In fact, all four of the former Alberta Vocational Colleges as well as a number of other institutions indicated that they are following the Alberta Learning curriculum, and therefore could not avoid addressing these changes. Therefore, a theme that was common to most institutions was a change in curriculum.

Social Development of Students: Another theme that became evident was the discussion of content to deal with the lack of social development or maturity that was found to be increasingly evident in many of the students. I heard statements like: “Students are younger”, “Students lack the skills to interact”, “Students bring a lot more baggage” and “We are now dealing with weaker students due to the boost in the economy.” The focus group indicated that they were dealing with “Different clientele.”

The students were described as “younger, less stable, with more learning difficulties and more emotional difficulties.” Some instructors lamented the loss of courses such as Life Skills or C.A.L.M. (Career And Life Management) while others introduced courses such as PEAC (Personal, Employment and Academic Competencies) in order to address these needs. This theme was clearly identified by the focus group as well in their statement: “Get Life Skills back into the college as a core course in Academic Upgrading.” The theme of a need for a curriculum that would address the lack of social development in students was evident.

Employment and Work Skills: The third theme related to content was closely connected to social development, but goes on to address employment and work skills. The following statements identified this: “We have more focus on work skills”, “ We have implemented Life Management Skills using a text which deals with the World of Work” and “We have introduced basic computer training and some employability skills and will be introducing more work experience and relevant courses.” This expansion into the realm of work skills and work experience was new to most institutions, but was in line with the recommendations in the Adult Skills Alberta documents. Here again, the PEAC course was introduced as one answer to these demands. In this area the focus group lamented the loss of their Life Skills course as an integral part of Academic Upgrading. The theme that emerged was a need for curriculum to address employment and work skills.

Computer Training: The last theme dealing with content was the introduction of computer skills training in many programs. This served to provide the students with

skills that would not only be useful in the learning process but would also make them more employable. There were not many direct comments identifying this other than, “We have introduced basic computer training and some employability skills”, but the changes in methodology demanded that computer training become an integral part of the content. These skills also were considered extremely valuable to students in addressing what was referred to as a “knowledge explosion”, particularly in science. The focus group also indicated the need to introduce computer training for students at the lower level so that they would have word-processing, spreadsheet and research/internet skills necessary to be effective learners. There was clearly a theme that identified the need for a wide range of computer training for the students.

#### Changes in Methods of Delivery

The three themes that emerged related to methods of delivery were the introduction of technology, independent study and learning styles.

Introduction of Technology: The most significant theme that arose was the rapid introduction of technology. This technology entered all instructors’ jobs in a wide range of ways. First, computers became a research tool for both instructors and students. Second, the computer became a tool for enhancing classroom instruction, using such programs as Power Point and a variety of test banks. Many institutes also became involved in alternate delivery methods such Tele-writing, Video-Conferencing and Computer-Conferencing. These methods of delivery have been used to greater or lesser extents depending on a variety of factors. This is supported by statements like:

“Computers are now being used for research”, “We have changed from tutoring ADLC (Alberta Distance Learning Center) courses to classroom instruction to alternate or distance delivery”, “We are using more distance delivery such as, WebCT for high school courses” and “The wide variety of resources and methods of accessing these resources adds to the load of both student and teacher, for example; CD’s, Power Point presentations, Internet research and other Audio-visual resources.” These same changes were identified by the focus group. They indicated that, “Technology was implemented for program enhancement, delivery and management.” In all instances, the word “rapid” in “rapid introduction of technology” was the greatest concern. The rapid implementation of communication and information technology into most aspects of the instructors’ jobs was a clear theme.

Independent Study: A second theme had to do with independent or individualized study. Some institutions have moved more toward these method to cover a wider range of students, while others moved away from such programs as those used by ADLC. (Alberta Distance Learning Center) to more streamlined courses to be able to complete in limited time. Interestingly enough, there was no consensus as to which direction programs were moving but rather a clear message that institutions were moving in different directions and most had tried many variations. Statements like: “We have changed from tutoring ADLC (Alberta Distance Learning Center) courses to classroom instruction to alternate or distance delivery”, “We have more self-paced learning”, “Most is still ‘talk and chalk’ with lots of explanations since most are visual learners”, “I try to create independence so they can learn on their own; I facilitate learning” and



“Our college has an Open Learning Center with independent or individualized study but has direct interaction” suggest the wide variations. The theme that was identified was that most instructors tried a variety of strategies and/or programs that ranged from lectures to totally individualized study at different times and for different purposes.

Learning Styles: The last theme involving methodology was an attempt to address the wide range of learning styles found in these adult classes. More attention was given to providing a variety of methods of instruction in order to meet more learning styles. This theme evolved from comments like, “Most are visual learners” and “CD’s, Power Point presentations, Internet research and a variety of other Audio-visual resources do assist in meeting a number of learning styles.” This was consistent with the findings in the focus group. The theme in this instance was that instructors made every possible effort to address as many learning styles as reasonably possible.

#### Non-Instructional Changes

With the exception of the rapid influx of technology some of the most significant themes that became evident could not be categorized as changes in either content or methodology. Some of these changes arose from changes in employer expectations while others were more related to changing times. In all, the five themes described under non-instructional changes were integrating technology into the workplace, doing more with less, quality of students, funding agencies and instructor involvement in planning.

Integrating Technology into the Workplace: Placing computers on instructors’ desks provided an opportunity to download a considerable number of administrative duties

formerly performed by administrative support staff. There was an expectation that this piece of equipment would be an answer for research, communications, course enhancement and alternate delivery. This expectation resulted in statements like: “Our employers expect us to have technology training” , “Employers expect everyone to integrate technology into their programs” and “We are expected to make more use of technology.” This theme was also identified by the focus group in the following statements: “Technology was dumped on staff”, “We were expected to implement technology for enhancement, delivery and program management” and “We are faced with having to determine the suitability of alternate delivery modes; synchronous, asynchronous etc.” While it was clear that the introduction of computers was beneficial, the concern was around the speed with which it was introduced. There was no question that technology is useful in addressing certain issues but clearly it brings with it a host of new challenges.

Doing More with Less: The general theme of doing more with less became the method of operation when institutions experienced funding cutbacks. In many cases, instructional staff numbers were decreased or full-time positions were replaced by part-time, sessional or contract staff. In fact, two institutions would not participate in this research because their faculty in Adult Development were all sessional or on contracts. From another college I heard the statement, “There is a push to replace instructors with sessional staff. We have less security particularly at the lower program levels. Once direct funding stopped, these programs went on ‘soft funding’ and instructors went from full time to mainly sessional to cut costs.” In other cases, instructors were expected to

cover a wider range of courses or levels of students. In some institutions, and most frequently in smaller programs, instructors were expected to cover roles such as counselling (personal, educational and career), writing curriculum and proposals, recruiting, admissions and public relations. This clearly came through in comments like: “With new administration expectations have risen, particularly outside of class; writing proposals, serving on committees, doing curriculum development - it is interesting and we feel involved and it would not be a bad thing if we weren’t so tired”, “Everyone is expected to do more”, “We keep doing more with less”, “We are expected to do more, particularly peripheral things; paperwork, administrivia, recruiting, counselling.” This theme was also identified by the focus group but they also included new duties such as budget preparation and facilities management. This is probably best captured by the quote, “We are expected to do more with less. We have an increased workload; not only more classes and more students per class, but new roles in dealing with budgets, administrative work and facilities.”

Quality of Students: Another theme that received considerable mention was the quality of students. While there was little agreement about the academic skill level, there was a clear message that the average age of students was lower and the level of social development was considerably lower than it had been a few years earlier. Students were described as bringing more baggage to class; failing relationships, substance abuse, legal and financial problems, to name a few issues. The majority of these student had few employment experiences and many lacked the skills necessary to acquire and maintain meaningful employment. In this same area, the Adult Skills Alberta

document led a number of the colleges to become involved in programming that led directly into employment. Here again, the focus group identified the same theme and probably described it best in their comment, “We have a different clientele; they are younger, less stable and have more learning and emotional difficulties.”

Funding Agencies: One of the other trends which occurred along with funding cutbacks and the increase in tuition was an increase in the number of students who received funding. The funding agencies, whether student finance or private, have considerable control over the students, not only through counselling, but also by defining course choices and completion rates. This trend was also experienced by the students of the focus group which stated, “Student Finance now dictates courses and completion rates.”

Instructors in Planning: Another theme which became evident was an increased instructor involvement in the general planning of the colleges. This included considerably more committee work in a variety of areas. In some cases this occurred as a result of colleges changing from being provincially administered to being board governed, while in others it resulted changes of administrative personnel. This was probably best expressed by the instructor who said, “With new administration expectations have risen, particularly outside class; proposal writing, serving on committees, doing curriculum development - it is interesting and we feel involved and it would not be a bad thing if we weren’t so tired.” Both a change to board governance and a change of leaders occurred in the college represented by the focus group.

### Challenges Resulting from Changes in Content

The instructors, as professionals, expected that there would be changes in content so the only significant theme that emerged was having sufficient time and opportunity to implement these changes.

Time and Opportunity: The most significant changes in content dealt with the new Alberta Learning curriculum in mathematics, computer training, training to address social development and training to meet employment skills. As professionals most expected that they would experience these types of changes, but felt that the greatest challenges arose from not having sufficient time to prepare or access the training necessary to become competent in these areas. This was expressed in statements like: “The challenge is to find the time and get organized”, “I have to do preparation on my own time, usually early in the morning” and “The challenge is having time to become familiar with employment skills.” The comments on computer training surfaced more in the comments dealing with methodology and other changes.

### Challenges Resulting from Changes in Methods of Delivery

The three themes that emerged under challenges resulting from changes in methods of delivery were abuse of computers, distance delivery and learning styles.

Abuse of Computers: One of the challenges that has arisen from students using technology for research relates to controlling their abuse of these new tools. This may be in the form of plagiarism from the Internet or inappropriate use of e-mail and chat lines. Instructors described new challenges like, “Dealing with plagiarism from the

Internet (documentation of references is a nightmare), dealing with students abusing chat lines.”

Distance Delivery: A second challenge was the steep learning curve required to become sufficiently prepared to design and deliver courses in a new mode. This could be by way of enhancement or for alternate delivery. I heard comments like: “It required learning a whole new set of skills to interact with students at a distance”, “I had to learn how to design and deliver courses in a new mode”, “I had to take professional development in computer technology including Power Point and e-mail” and “I learned to use Video-Conferencing by trial and error. We were training by accident; students were left on their own to learn how to use the system, they learned to do it because they had to.” There were many other similar comments indicating instructors were expected to use a variety of delivery methods to meet local needs or deliver at a distance.

Learning Styles: Another challenge was to learn enough about learning styles to make the use of a variety of training methods effective. Related to this was the challenge of getting the students to buy into the use of new or different methods of delivery. Accessing training to meet these challenges or learning by trial and error as well as training by accident, are all challenges themselves. In this same area, the focus group were more concerned with determining the suitability of using technology, that is, assessing what does and does not work for particular courses and students.

#### Challenges Resulting from Non-Instructional Changes

As with all changes, having the time and skill to cope with them were the two

greatest challenges. The four themes that emerged specifically from this section were technology, additional roles, external expectations and planning, however, some support for these themes was found in the instructors' descriptions of the changes they experienced at the workplace.

Technology: In the case of technology it meant learning how to use it for a variety of functions as well as trying to keep up with its changes. In some instances, this meant learning how to use a new method of communications effectively. This form of technology is described by Saettler (1990) as information technology, whereas he refers to integrating technology into classroom instruction, using technology to deliver to a virtual classroom or even teaching computer skills as educational technology. The challenges involved in integrating technology were supported by statements like: "There was a steep learning curve particularly in technology with both the computer and the graphing calculator", "There is an assumption that everyone will be at a benchmark in computer training", "To be effective, instructors were expected to take computer training", "Our college has provided a full-time staff member (who is also a teacher) to provide group and one-on-one sessions in technology", "The institution has 'fallen in love' with technology", "We are told we must use technology for communication and instructional enhancement", "We no longer have Administrative Support (one faculty typist for the whole college)" and "We must do our own word processing." This was strongly supported by the focus group in their statements regarding challenges encountered in the changes in methodology. As stated earlier, in every instance the learning curve was steep.

Additional Roles: Dealing with the other roles that became part of the instructor package, in many cases, meant learning whole new sets of skills. These roles include public relations, recruiting, admitting and counselling students; roles not usually addressed in instructor/teacher training. Some of these counselling skills were also required to deal with the increased social development required by many of the students. In most cases, the greatest challenge was trying to fill these new or expanded roles while trying to remain effective in the role for which many felt they were hired, that of an instructor. Statements like: “The challenge is having the time and skills to deal with other roles that have been downloaded, such as recruiting and personal counselling”, “It is difficult explaining to people, within the college and from the public, that you are in the classroom to instruct”, “Our college laid off counsellors and instructors have to do counselling; we have to attend to the students’ immediate needs and also direct them to outside agencies”, “I am spending more time meeting individual student needs, being available to students” and “Full time staff do more mentoring and coaching” support these concerns. The focus group indicated that this was most significant at the smaller, one-class sites, that were often referred to as ‘one-room-school’ sites. They also added that, “Instructors were now also dealing with facilities management.” The focus group probably summed this up best in their point, “The challenge is finding time to do everything else that is expected and still be an effective instructor.”

External Expectations: The combination of the lack of social development of the students and the increased expectations of the student funding agencies and the employers has led to considerable stress for the instructors. Another challenge that



relates to this was that of getting the Student Finance Board to understand the reality of our students. The characteristics of the students were supported by statements earlier and this is coupled with the perception of the focus group that they are “Pressuring students to ‘fast track’ while being expected to prepare them to be successful and competitive.” The indication was clear that Adult Development students needed more support not more pressure.

Planning: The increased involvement on committees for college planning was welcomed on one hand, but resented on the other. This increased involvement may help in directing future change and preventing some of the dilemmas instructors find themselves in now, but finding time for this new role is the present challenge. In this instance, the focus group indicated that this was an even greater challenge for instructors in outreach locations. To attend these sessions face-to-face they often spend considerably more time travelling than meeting. This was not considered very efficient use of the time of a professional who was already feeling overloaded.

Many of the challenges were not identified as such in the section dealing specifically with challenges but were very evident in the changes described. Some examples of this are: “We have more administrative work instead of time for preparation for classes, lots of forms to fill out; the college has more administrative and support people than instructors”, “The teacher has more non-teaching roles: more administration, more advising and must now release grades”, “There is more interference from funding agencies” and “A private career centre provides career counselling; instructors feel undermined; students feel more commitment to the funding agency than to the

instructors and the college”, just to cite a few. The participants were aware that I was not only a researcher but also an instructor and would recognize that they had already identified many challenges before we reached that section of the interview guide.

### Involvement in the Change Process

Most of the responses indicated that the instructors had little to do with planning the changes affecting their jobs, but were ultimately on the front-line when it came to implementing them. The changes that emerged from the data fit into two categories; external and internal changes.

External Changes: Curriculum changes that were initiated by Alberta Learning were heard about in advance and generally had implementation plans.

Internal Changes: Those changes that resulted from college funding cutbacks were commonly dropped as bombshells and the instructors were forced to deal with them. The best description of this was, “When major downsizing occurred at the college, we were brought into a room and shown a video; it was devastating.” Other examples were: “We heard about changes affecting our jobs in staff meetings with ugly threatening tones. There was a major loss of confidence” and “We heard about changes mostly from gossip, with a few formal meetings.” These accounts obviously did little for the morale of the instructors.

In both categories the instructor involvement was considerably less than what they indicated should be the case.

### Interventions, Support or Training Provided

The interventions, support and training provided at these different colleges ranged from absolutely nothing to educational leaves to get graduate degrees. The three categories that did emerge from the data were technology training, curriculum and other support.

Technology Training: It was generally agreed the technology training was available at most colleges. This was supported by statements like: “There were lots of opportunities for computer training” and “Mini-sessions on technology were provided.” Some instructors felt that this area was dealt with the best of any, but in other cases there was not enough, it was scheduled while programs were operating or the instructors did not have sufficient time to access it. Comments like: “Many opportunities are in May, but Academic Upgrading instructors are still in class” and “Sessions are often during class time; it is difficult to attend” support this concern. Particularly those instructors who were delivering courses using technology felt that they could have benefited from more training and more technical support. There was a general feeling that technology was changing so rapidly that this training must be ongoing. Comments like: “Technical training must be ongoing” and “Training on equipment and software must be ongoing” clearly support this.

Curriculum: Training was available through the Alberta Learning Network to prepare for the new mathematics curriculum. This was supported by statements like, “We had in-service in Math on the graphing calculator from experts from the Department of Learning.” Other areas of training were given less attention. Some instructors felt that

their employers think, “It is only Academic Upgrading. How difficult could it be? Figure it out.” Many spent much of their own time learning and preparing in order to cope. This was indicated in comments like: “We were expected to get ready over the summer” and “It required considerable self-study and preparation.”

Other Support: The focus group identified the introduction of a Learning Assistance Centre and more logistical support as being helpful. They also indicated that providing alternate/distance delivery to the smaller sites also helped the instructors.

The opportunities for professional development ranged all the way from, in a word, “Non-existent!” to “We always have opportunities for professional development and we have a good program as well as access to funding.” Another statement that was heard was, “Academic Upgrading Instructors are second class citizens.” and it was supported by statements like, “There are many opportunities in May but Academic Upgrading Instructors are in class.” Some instructors seemed to feel envious of the opportunities available to instructors in career programs and bothered by the status of their programs within the college.

#### Interventions, Support or Training That Should Be Provided

The interventions, support and training that the instructors felt should be provided emerged in three categories; relevant training, hiring practices and other support.

Relevant Training: The concept of ‘Just In Time’ training came up in a number of ways, but it was always used to mean training in what you need, when you need and will

use it. This is very consistent with the principles of adult learning, relating to the relevance of the learning experience ( Knowles, 1980). This concept was applied to training in technology, crisis management, counselling, as well as career planning. If no one else is going to be hired to cover these roles, the instructors need training and preparation. This was expressed clearly in the statement, “If no one else is hired, the teachers need more training, but we have enough work without being counsellors.” It was stated that timing was important, and instructors returning to new assignments and roles should start at least a month earlier or have training during intersession where it existed. This was supported by the statement, “Technology training must be at more convenient times, during intersession.”

Hiring Practices: The focus group suggested that hiring practices might also be a factor. It was stated, “Instructors should be hired for their passion for helping, while administrators should be student-centered and have Adult Education experience.” The feeling was that if the right people were hired the challenges would be handled better.

Other Support: The focus group did not see professional development as a solution to work being downloaded and or new roles evolving, so they suggested, “More technical, logistical and administrative support would help reduce the stress.”

Clearly interventions support and training meant different things to different sites.

#### Interventions, Support or Training Found To Be Effective

When instructors were asked to list interventions, support and training they found

to be effective, they provided names of specific courses, complete programs as well as variety of strategies. The specific courses included: Teaching for Learning - offered at the Devry Institute, Effective Speaking - Part of a Certificate in Adult Continuing Education, as well as various session on graphing calculators - offered by the Learning Network and local sessions on Crisis Intervention and technology. These sessions were often referred to as “just in time” sessions because they were offered when they were needed. The programs they found to be effective included: Outreach Adult Education and Master of Education in Adult and Higher Education - offered at the University of Alberta, True Colours - offered at various colleges throughout the country, Native Adult Instructional Diploma - offered at some of the universities in British Columbia, Adult Community Education - offered at the University of Calgary and Life Skills Training offered at various colleges throughout the country. The examples of other types of interventions found to be helpful included: receiving peer support - either locally or from instructors experienced in distance education such as those at Norquest College, adding more logistical, technical and administrative support, adding Coordinators, adding a Learning Assistance Center and involving instructors in the change process. In all cases, the instructor interviewed, or one of the other instructors at his/her site, had attended the sessions or programs or had experienced the forms of intervention listed.

#### How Would Interventions, Support or Training Help Others Cope with Change?

The data from the instructors indicated commitment, feeling valued and readiness were the three general areas that would be impacted by providing interventions, support

and training.

Commitment: If staff are involved in the change process there will be fewer surprises and they will be more likely to buy in. They would help in planning and managing such changes as growth or downsizing. This was supported by statements like, “Helps to keep staff involved; there are fewer surprises; staff buy into changes.”

Feeling Valued: If training is provided, not only do the instructors feel they are providing a valued service but they can be more effective and efficient rather than learning the hard way. This arose in comments like, “Provide introductory computer courses where necessary so that instructors do not have to teach themselves and learn everything the hard way.”

Readiness: Instructors would be prepared for Alberta Learning’s shifts in focus like the current one to employability skills. Comments like, “Require staff to regularly upgrade their skills” or “Provide advance training, really prepare, over-prepare” are examples to confirm the instructors feel they want to be better prepared.

#### Information from Supervisor Interviews

The twelve themes in changes and eight themes in challenges that arose from the Instructor interviews were identified prior to commencing each supervisor interview and the supervisors indicated that they were able to identify with many of these themes at their institutions.

### Supervisors' Roles in Implementing Change

Two themes arose from the data collected from supervisors regarding their role in implementing change. The first theme dealt with the instructors' workloads while the second dealt with training for instructors.

Workload: The supervisors all recognized the load that was being carried by their instructors. This may have been due in part to the fact that many of the supervisors had recently been instructors or still maintained some instructional roles. There were a number of themes that arose on this topic, but one of the most relevant was the intent indicated to reduce the instructors workload. This was to be accomplished in a variety of ways including: "Freeing the instructors from administrative duties", "Introducing more student orientation", "Assisting in recruiting students", "Searching out and introducing a better student tracking system", "Doing follow-up on student attendance issues", "Trying to get better computers, trying to get technology working for the instructors (instead of the other way around)", "Doing more case-conferencing on student issues" and "Having courses delivered to outreach sites by distance delivery and referring students to outside agencies for counselling." There was no question the supervisors recognized that more support was needed.

More Training: The second significant theme was directed at getting more training for instructors facing significant changes. Some of the roles the supervisors saw for themselves included: "Helping instructors set training goals", "Encouraging training", "Supporting training (in principle and financially)", "Providing in-service training", "Arranging for Employability Skills training" and "Finding and recommending



workshops, conferences and general professional development activities beyond regular professional development, exploring what other providers are doing by way of training and validating staff achievements.” There was a obvious commitment to hire and develop caring, supportive instructors.

### Instructors’ Roles in Implementing Change

The three themes that emerged from the supervisors, data regarding the instructors’ roles in the implementing change were planning, implementing and expectations.

Planning: The role of the instructor was seen as central to the implementation of change. They were seen as the front-line and as such were expected to actually implement the changes as well as lessen the impact on their students. The concept of early involvement of the instructor was illustrated by the comments like: “Instructors are doing considerably more committee work; from visioning with the Board of Governors to selecting paintings in the hallways”and “Instructors are more involved in college-wide committee work.”

Implementing: While planning is one thing, implementation is still another and views on whose responsibility this was varied from shared, “Implementation is a shared role between instructors and supervisors” to delegated, “The instructors are the ones who actually implement change.” This meant the instructors must be competent in content, methodology, technology and relationships and it was stated just that way.

Expectations: If the instructors lacked any of the necessary skills they were expected

to identify these needs and request the training or development that would address these deficiencies. In other cases, the instructors were expected to work harder or smarter, whatever it takes to get the job done. One supervisor was very candid in stating, “Instructors have had to shift from looking at a student in a content area to looking at the whole student; more student-centred lifelong learning. This focus on employability and social skills has been good, but it has put more pressure on the instructor to work harder, work smarter and do more.” This seems to describe the reality many instructors are facing.

### How Effectively Were Instructional Challenges Met?

Themes of training, alternate delivery and support arose from the supervisors’ data on meeting the instructional challenges.

Training: Responses varied from all staff acquiring degrees in Adult Education and coping quite well to staff being left feeling helpless or frustrated. One institution has a Wellness committee, while another has a program titled ‘Becoming a Master Instructor’.

Alternate Delivery: A number of supervisors saw providing alternate delivery to the smaller sites as a solution to the challenge of one instructor having to be a resource person for a wide range of courses and levels. This solution was stated in comments like, “I promote alternate delivery, asynchronous delivery and experiential learning.”

Support: In most cases, efforts are being made to help instructors cope, but all of the supervisors agreed that more support is needed. This was made clear in statements like: “We are trying to free the instructors of much of the administrivia.”, “We are trying to get technology working for us, instead of the other way around” and “We are searching

out and introducing a better student tracking system.”

The supervisors seemed to be very aware of the instructors’ challenges and interested in trying to improve it.

If Your Instructors Were to Meet These Challenges Again, What Would You Like to Do  
or See Done Differently?

This topic had an extremely high number of recommendations, but probably even more significant was their consistency with what instructors identified. The six themes that did emerge were more training, more support, finding time, programs, local planning and broader perspectives.

More Training: It was clear that more training was considered the solution in most instances. It was also agreed that this training should occur as pre-service training, during intersession (if the institution had such a schedule) or during August before classes began. It was felt that they should try to avoid situations where their instructors were “‘Learning by Doing’ - less coping and more training.” This training would be in the form of visitations to other institutions, workshops through Alberta Learning and other external organizations, in-house training sessions (‘Just in Time’ training) as well as educational leaves for professional development. Some of the direct quotes that support this theme are: “We need to offer courses during the last week of August as pre-service training”, “There must be more consultation with other colleges regarding Academic Upgrading for adults”, “We must provide more ‘Just in Time’ training”, “We

must make sure our staff attend conferences and visit other institutions”, “We must recommend that our instructors take refresher courses at university to brush-up on their courses as well as learn new teaching strategies”, “Since instructors are expected to do marketing, recruiting, counselling and work placement, we need to provide formal training in these areas” and “We must provide more training for staff in areas such as: time management, resolving personal problems, coaching students (counselling role), resolving conflicts, getting along with others and some academics.”

More Support: There was recognition that more counselling, technical and administrative support would help to lessen instructors’ loads, but most of the attention was focussed on training. There were however, statements like: “The cutback on counsellors was a mistake”, “We must provide more resources to deal with student issues” and “We must try to reduce the ‘busy work’ caused by computers; we have computers but no administrative support.”

Finding Time: In addition, the supervisors clearly recognized that finding time for training was an issue. This was supported by statements like: “We must schedule more start-up time for training in technology”, “We must arrange for educational leaves for instructors” and “We must provide release time for instructors to take workshops through Alberta Learning before they can implement courses like Applied Math using a discovery method.”

Programs: Another solution that was suggested was to implement new or additional programs to address either social development or the employability skills that were part of a growing demand. This would alleviate the need to devote as much time to these

issues in regular Academic Upgrading programs. Statements like: “We should implement a new program for the lower level students, with a work experience component, so that students may access some employment opportunities” and “We should offer a four week ‘Orientation to College Learning’ program for credit, to help address retention and social development” support this theme.

The next two themes that emerged from the supervisor data were more philosophical and futuristic.

Local Planning: The first was the suggestion that instructors and their supervisors be more involved in the decision-making process. This was indicated in statements like: “Instructors are doing considerably more committee work, from visioning with the Board of Governors to selecting paintings for the hallways” and “We need to have both the instructors and their supervisors involved in the decision making process to help remove the feelings of helplessness.”

Broader Perspectives: The second was to try to get college administrators, Student Finance and the Department of Learning to understand that “Our students our starting with less skills and that they are expecting more and better results.” The other significant one was that “Adult Skills Alberta is still nothing more than a framework and that its concepts need to be developed so that it can give direction to Adult Development in the province.”

### Summary of Findings

The significant elements of the findings were the changes the Adult Development instructors experienced at their workplaces, the challenges they experienced as a result,

how these challenges were handled and how they could be handled better.

First, the changes in content focused on curriculum shifts, social development of students, employment and work skills and computer training. Second, the changes in methods of delivery focused on introduction of technology, independent study and learning styles. Finally, the non-instructional changes dealt with the integration of technology into the workplace, doing more with less, the quality of students, funding agencies and the involvement of instructors in the planning process.

First, the challenges resulting from the changes in content revolved around time and opportunity. Second, the challenges resulting from changes in methods of delivery focused on abuse of computers, increased use of distance delivery and variety of learning styles. Finally, the challenges resulting from non-instructional changes focused on technology, additional roles instructors were expected to take on, external expectations and planning.

In order to meet these challenges effectively instructors and supervisors both identified a need to reduce the instructors' workloads in many instances. One of the strategies suggested was to provide more technical, logistical and administrative support. Second, both instructors and supervisors suggested that more training was necessary in many areas. Training was seen to be needed in some content areas, in methods of delivery and in how to deal with a variety of learning styles. In addition, training was seen to be needed in non-instructional areas as well, such as technology, counselling, admissions, recruiting and public relations. Finally, there were recommendations that institutions as well as government departments become better informed about the Adult

Development program and give instructors and students the attention they deserve. One strategy recommended to accomplish this was to get the Adult Development instructors involved in planning changes that would affect them and in planning their own professional development to help them implement these changes.

## Chapter 5 - Discussion

### Discussion of Results

These have been times of considerable change for the world in general and certainly for the instructors as well as the supervisors that I interviewed or met with in the focus group. With change, of course, come challenges, so this research focussed on ways of meeting these challenges. Since my research problem was to determine what interventions, support or training Adult Development Instructors in Alberta feel would enhance their performance on the job during these times of change, I will structure my discussion around the six sub-problems.

#### **1. What types of major changes have occurred during the 1990s that Adult Development Instructors perceive have affected the instruction and services they provide and how they provide them?**

Based on the interview guide that was used for the instructors the changes fell into three categories; content, methods of delivery and non-instructional.

##### Changes in Content:

Curriculum: The changes in the formal academic content were minimal with the exception of the mathematics curriculum, where there was an alignment with the Western Canada Protocol resulting in changes in content, methods of delivery and philosophy. The other changes in content resulted from the changes in the students' level of social development and the introduction of technology as well as employment and work skills.



### Changes in Methods of Delivery:

Technology: The most rapid, as well as continuous, change that most instructors experienced was the influx of computer technology. This impacted their method of communication, class management, research, as well as face-to-face and distance delivery. When technological change was listed, by Advanced Education, as one of the factors behind the Adult Development Reform Initiatives, one wonders if the impact technology is having on instructors was even part of this vision. For some the computer was seen as a panacea, a solution to all problems, but what about the challenges it brought with it? This probably caused one of the greatest paradigm shifts in the decade. This is clearly supported by Malcolm S. Knowles, in his foreword to Galbraith (1998), when he states, “For the 1990s the most striking developments have been the explosive expansion in the use of computers and of distance education methods and techniques” (p. xiii).

Independent Study: Another change in method involved changing between independent or individualized learning and group or classroom instruction dependent upon changing class sizes and composition. These types of change will be inevitable as the demographics continue to change and whatever works today may be quite ineffective next semester.

Learning Styles: The last significant change that impacted the method of delivery was the effort to recognize different learning styles. An attempt has been made to address some of these difference by using technology in the classroom or by using distance or alternate delivery. These efforts are supported by Saettler (1990) in his reference to a

number of studies carried out in the United States when he says: “In all of these studies, the basic issue is how different learners learn and what approaches or designs are most appropriate or effective for different learners” (p. 462). The value of recognizing different learning styles and matching them to instructional methods is also supported by Morrison, Ross and Kemp (2001).

#### Non-instructional Changes:

The topic of non-instructional changes evolved as the most significant of all.

Funding Cutbacks: Major funding cutbacks were experienced throughout the system and this phenomenon was dealt with in a variety of ways. Not only were instructor numbers reduced and full-time positions replaced by sessional positions or contract instructors, but this was the rationale for expanding the instructors’ roles. Placing a computer on the instructor’s desk was seen as a way to introduce a new communication system, download a number of administrative duties and provide a tool for enhanced and distance delivery. For many this was found to be quite overwhelming and it resulted in considerable frustration and stress. In addition, such responsibilities as recruiting, public relations, admissions and counselling were added to many positions. In many cases it was a choice between doing more or possibly closing the program. All of this was occurring while the average age and social development of the students appeared to be decreasing. These funding cutbacks resulted in increased tuition costs and an increase in the number of funded students. This resulted in greater involvement of funding agencies to the point of dictating course selection and completion rates.

Instructors in Planning: Another change, which seems to have resulted from some colleges becoming board governed and others hiring new administrators, was the increased instructor involvement in the general planning of the colleges. This was achieved primarily by increasing the committee work of the instructors. The concept of having instructors involved at the planning stages of change is clearly supported by literature (Dilworth & Imig, 1995; Heifetz, 1990; Kutner 1992; Lankard, 1993; Lashway, 1997; Savard, 1993; Travis, 1996).

## **2. What instructional challenges have resulted from these changes?**

Curriculum: The greatest challenge that resulted from the changes in content was having sufficient time to prepare or access training necessary to become competent in these areas. In the case of the changes in mathematics curriculum this was a planned change and thus training opportunities were made available to most interested instructors. There were a number of sessions throughout the province that dealt specifically with training teachers and instructors how to use a graphing calculator. This did not necessarily make instructors of adults adopt a learning method whereby students would learn through experimentation. The challenge in this case has more to do with getting adult students, who have time constraints and an inherent urgency to complete programs, to buy into the idea of learning by a discovery method. In fact, the focus group referred to funding agencies forcing our student to “fast track”. Many students see this opportunity not only as a second chance, but as a last chance to pursue skills that will lead to better employment opportunities and a better life. We hear students telling

us to tell them what they need to know so that they can learn it; time is of essence to many of them. This is somewhat inconsistent with the andragogy for adult learning described by Knowles (1980). He suggests that people attach more meaning to “learnings” they gain than those they acquire passively. He also indicates the primary techniques in education are experiential techniques: laboratory experiments, discussion, problem-solving cases, simulation exercises, field experience and the like.

This seeming contradiction is probably a result of the time constraints placed on Adult Development students.

Social Development of Students: The changes in student social development combined with the introduction of employment skills have not resulted in many planned training opportunities. Some instructors feel that the Internet, computer games and video games have contributed to a lack of social development. Many of our students have spent a considerable amount of time facing a screen rather than interacting with other human beings and this has contributed little to their social development. In fact, a comment that I have heard on a number of occasions is that our students are “old children”. Many of our instructors have not been trained to educate these new learners. Moving from social to employment skills, the Adult Development Reform has been referred to as the realignment and restructuring of programming. The paradigm shift that is proposed here is to shift from a program that was primarily academic/basic education with a bit of occupation-specific training and even less employability training to one that comprises each of these three categories in equal status. Again, this represents a skill area for which many instructors were never trained and is clearly one

area of the program where instructors need more development.

One of the challenges that resulted from students using technology for research was the difficulty in controlling their inappropriate use of this technology. This includes issues with referencing as well as abuse of e-mail and chat lines. Another challenge was being able to get sufficient training to effectively use the technology for communication, program management, enhancement and alternate delivery. In addition, in many instances instructors are also required to instruct computer training in order to keep their students current in their research as well as competitive in employment. Acquiring this level of competence and keeping up with the rapid changes in both hardware and software requires considerable time and effort. Although most colleges have considerable technological training, in many cases the timing of the training did not accommodate the schedule of Adult Development programs. In addition to the government providing incentives for the integration of technology, many colleges feel that "If you snooze you lose." This was illustrated by the president of our college in a recent e-mail, when he stated, "It is clear that we must adapt to the constantly changing landscape of post secondary institutions in Alberta. If we are not quick to adapt, opportunities will be more difficult to access." It is no longer a case of if we are going to integrate technology but when we integrate it we must make sure our instructors are trained. This is probably best expressed by Whitesel (1998) in his discussion on creating a virtual classroom when he said, "Technology does not teach students; effective teachers do" (p.1). This was further supported by Rebaza (1998) who suggested that two of the main reasons teachers do not use technology is the lack of training and support.

This training and support has become very critical at a time when we face a paradigm shift from learning to read and reading to learn to learning about technologies to using technologies to learn as well as teach. My own experience as a distance student in the Master of Education Program in Adult and Higher Education offered through the University of Alberta helped me to understand the use of technology from the perspective of both an adult student and an adult education instructor. Since much of my course work involved computer-conferencing and video-conferencing, I, who had been virtually computer illiterate, spent as much time in the first few courses learning how to use the technology as I did learning the content of the courses. At this point, I am able to provide at least limited assistance to students who are learning how to use technology. While learning about new technologies is probably transformative learning at its best, I can clearly empathize with both my students and fellow instructors. At this point, it is important to restate that it has been the *rapid* integration of technology that has caused the greatest challenge.

We are becoming a society that is expanding its use of telecommunication-based communication to deliver education. This generally is categorized as synchronous (same time) or asynchronous (any time) communication. The synchronous communication could involve one-on-one or group learning using simply the telephone (teleconferencing), audioconferencing (audiographics) or videoconferencing (virtual classroom) or possibly the Chat feature of computer conferencing. The asynchronous communication could also involve one-on-one or group learning using facsimiles, e-mail, voicemail, computer conferencing or web-based instruction. While these methods

do provide for certain interactions and prompt feedback, much of the personal contact is lacking or altered and both instructors and students need to learn new skills to be effective.

In our small institution, Portage College, our staff has worked with a number of systems, but has focussed on three. The first is the Learning Server (synchronous technology) described as audiographic technology accessible through the Internet. The second system is Learning Space (asynchronous groupware) described as the instructional side of Lotus Notes. The last system is the Learning Manager (asynchronous computer managed learning) which was chosen as an Internet version of some of our older computer managed learning software. As each of these systems is being used to deliver different courses, the extent to which professional development is required by the instructors to design, deliver and receive these courses becomes evident. This description of the activities at Portage Colleges was only meant as a small sample of the various systems in existence in our various institutions throughout the province and each system is constantly changing. The literature certainly supports the need for considerable training to meet the challenges of implementing distance or alternate education (Gay,1997; Khan,1997; Moore,1998; Moore & Kearsley, 1996; Rebaza, 1998; Sherry, 1997; Whitesel,1998).

There was considerable interest in attempting to address the varied learning styles of adult students. This has challenged many instructors to learn more about this topic and make efforts to address as many styles as possible in their instruction. Here again, the integration of technology for both enhancement and delivery was seen a one

solution to this challenge. An additional challenge was getting students to buy into some of these new methods.

In general, the workload of most instructors has increased considerably. This was particularly evident in sites where instructors were expected to engage in such duties as public relations, recruiting, admitting and counselling students. The greatest challenge was for the instructors to find time to do what they felt they were hired for, that is to instruct. The second challenge, assuming that no-one else was going to perform these functions, was becoming competent in all of the newly assigned roles. In recognition of these multiple roles, the supervisors of these instructors indicated that their hiring criteria focussed on flexibility, the ability to relate to others as well as content expertise. The focus group described the need to hire instructors with exceptional caring and commitment in order to meet these demands. Addressing the lack of social development in their students and trying to meet the expectations of Student Finance, and in some cases their employers, was reported as extremely stressful. Recent increased involvement in the overall planning for the colleges is welcomed by the instructors on the one hand, but dreaded on the other. Instructors feel this type of early involvement will help to prevent some of the challenges of the future, but how to fit it into their busy schedules remains an unsolved issue. This support for early involvement in the change process is clearly provided by Kutner (1992), Lashway (1997) and Weaver (1992). Instructor involvement in decision making is likely an approach that will make change more manageable in the future, but, in the meantime, must be introduced with care.



### **3. How were these instructional challenges managed from the perspective of Adult Development Instructors?**

Instructors felt that if they had been involved earlier in the change process many of these challenges would have been eliminated or at least reduced. Since the instructors are at the front-line when it comes to implementation of change, their input and ownership are critical. This is consistent with the quote from Lashway (1997)

There are also good reasons to involve teachers at the outset, since they are the ones who must ultimately translate abstract ideas into practical classroom applications, and they can do this better when they are actively involved in developing the vision ( p.2).

As far as being prepared for these challenges is concerned, some felt they had no preparation, others felt that training was minimal or not timely, while a minority felt that they were provided as much training or preparation as could reasonably be expected. This translated to some instructors feeling helpless and frustrated while a few felt empowered, but most fell somewhere in between. In cases where training was available, timing as well time to access it were often issues. There was also a feeling that the administrators of many of the institutions did not demonstrate the level of respect many instructors thought they deserved. The attitude that it was merely Academic Upgrading and that anyone could instruct it seemed quite prevalent. These concern are very serious as indicated in the literature:

There are several ways in which program administrators can create an

environment for learning that enables adult education teachers to feel they are key players in their own professional development (Knuter, 1992, p. 1).

Teachers need to be 'rewarded' (with money, release time, advancement) for engaging in staff development, 'recognized' for their achievements, and 'respected' as professionals. They also need time and support to pursue new learning and to experiment in their classrooms (Knuter, 1992, p. 2).

There was consensus among the instructors interviewed that there should be more planning, preparation and training, some of it provided as "just in time" training but all of it prior to confronting students.

#### **4. How were these instructional challenges managed from the perspective of the Supervisors of Adult Development Instructors?**

Most supervisors agreed that both they and their instructors should have more involvement in the planning change. The hope was that this would reduce many of the challenges that have evolved. Not only did they confirm that the instructors were facing a multitude of challenges, but they also expressed a desire to do more to alleviate some of the duties that were not instructional as well as encourage, plan and support professional development where it was needed. In general, there was a clear message that more had to be done.

**5. What are the types of interventions, support or training which Adult Development Instructors found effective in coping with these instructional challenges?**

It was generally felt that Learning Network training sessions on the new mathematics curriculum and graphing calculator were quite effective. It was also indicated that general group sessions on technology, followed by one-on-one sessions, had favourable results. This was often referred to as “just in time” training and since technology is changing so rapidly this must be an ongoing process. As for dealing with the lack of social development and employment skills of students, some of the instructors interviewed felt that Life Skills Coach training was useful, while others felt that strategies like those used in the PEAC program were helpful. In order to cope with the workloads, adding more technical, administrative and logistical support as well as hiring coordinators was found to be of assistance. There is a more extensive list of specific training sessions in the findings, but the critical element was timing. Training should be done in advance whenever possible rather than learning by doing.

**6. What strategies do Adult Development Instructors recommend for dealing with the challenges resulting from the changes at their workplace?**

The first and possibly the strategy that will set the tone for future changes that are inevitable is instructor involvement in planning and managing the change process. Managing the change process is a concept that is elaborated on by Heifetz (1990), Spencer and Adams (1990), Fullan (1991), Curry (1992), Coffey, Cook and Hunsaker (1994), Clemence (1994) and Pysyk (1994). The second and clearly the most

significant strategy, is the development of the instructors. This development is clearly suggested in the literature, for example by Tack and Patitu (1992), Conrad (1993), Alfano (1994), Dilworth and Imig (1995) and Murray (1997). If faced with new content, methodology or duties there is a need to become competent in these new areas and this generally means accessing training and having sufficient time to prepare. This training could take the form of university courses, external training through other institutions or organizations by way of workshops, seminars or visiting other instructors who have particular skills, or in-house training. In some cases independent study could also be an answer. In all cases there is a need for time to gain the necessary skills to be effective. While instructors must be involved in planning their professional development, it is critical that the concept is supported by management both in principle and financially. The other major effort must be directed at removing as many other duties as possible so that the instructors can concentrate on their instructional role. This would be accomplished by providing more administrative, technical, logistical and counselling support. It was also suggested that programs to address social development or employments skills be implemented separately from mainstream Adult Development. These strategies should make coping with change a smoother process.

### Recommendations

I will conclude this chapter by making some recommendations for practice as well as future research.

Recommendations for Practice: Both my research and my literature review suggest that change in higher education is a result of funding and enrollment restraints, as well as technological change, globalization and changing demographics in businesses and the work force. Since these variables are not going to remain constant, how we deal with change becomes critical. To be effective we must not only plan for change but also plan to manage the change process. Whether it is the Department of Learning or a specific program that is planning changes, those who have to implement them should be involved. In fact, Weaver (1992) indicates that frontline workers should be suggesting changes and management should be working to implement them. Instructors should be given more time and opportunities to get involved in the decision-making process.

If change is planned and instructors are more involved they will not only buy into the process, but will have the best idea of what sort of professional development they will need to be competent. It has been suggested that some form of provincial organization be established to accommodate more interaction and sharing between Adult Development Instructors. At this time, ACIFA (Alberta Colleges & Institutes Faculty Association) has started a compilation of the professional development activities offered at the various colleges and institutes throughout the province and this can be accessed at <http://www.gmcc.ab.ca/acifa/profdev.htm>. Instructors deliver programs and as a result are the colleges' most valuable resource. It only makes sense that the colleges invest both time and money in the development of these valuable assets. Here again, the instructors must be involved in planning their growth. Most instructors will not resist change that they helped to bring about, but rather will welcome it as an opportunity to

renew their creativity, revitalize their classrooms and be more effective in helping their students plan and manage changes in their lives.

The Department of Learning, Student Finance and the management of some colleges and institutes must understand that the students in Adult Development programs are some of the most needy and demanding in the educational system. The instructors in this segment of the system are very special and must be given every possible opportunity to grow so that they help the entire system develop. There is a unique opportunity in Adult Development to enhance many of the social and educational cycles; when you teach a father or a mother, you teach the entire family.

Recommendations for Research: Although there are common themes in changes and challenges as well as how these were handled, there are also significant differences in where individual colleges or institutes are going with respect to Adult Development and what is needed for them to get there. As a result, I see the most effective next step as being research at each college or institute to develop a long range plan that will clearly identify what an Adult Development program should look like, what competencies their instructors will need as well as how they will acquire these. Obviously, the instructors must be involved in every step of the way.

It is very interesting to note that as I was doing my research, a colleague in our college was in fact working with our Faculty Association on a thesis titled, Portage College: A Voyage in Learning (Nyquist, 2001). This document is one example of what I am suggesting, namely that each college or institute develop a long range strategic plan that builds in a professional development plan that will enable the college to meet its

objectives and thereby remain competitive. Our college has built in a professional development section into the collective agreement and policy and procedures manual. The following paragraph appears in this section.

The College and the Faculty Association recognize the ongoing professional responsibility of individual members to keep themselves current in their various specializations and disciplines. The College shall provide opportunities and financing to enhance the members' efforts to keep current in their fields and in the technological advances generic to the instructional process. With respect to faculty professional development, the College guideline, Faculty Professional Development will apply. The Employer and the Faculty Association will mutually agree on any alteration to this guideline. (Portage College, 1999, internal document)

This is a very positive step in the right direction, however, it was meant to apply to all of its instructors, so what we need to ask is what does this mean for our Adult Development Instructors? Clearly, being current on content is part of it, and so are technological advances, but there is more that is needed. Since Adult Development Instructors work with students before they move on to career programs, they sometimes deal with the same students at different stages of their development (as only the successful Adult Development student ever reaches career programs). This means that, as I have indicated in my research, the Adult Development Instructor has some very special training or professional development and support needs and there is a need to research these further within the context of each college or institution within the province.

## Concluding Comments

Meeting the needs of college instructors is a challenge to be met by the Department of Learning of Alberta, since “An area of adult education, which has grown spectacularly since 1970 is that of continuing professional education” (Selman et al.,1997, p.384). This an opportunity for our institutions, but obviously we must get our instructors in on the planning.



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## Appendixes

### Appendix A - Letter of Informed Consent

Dear Participant:

I would like to formally introduce myself. My name is Roy Salsbury and I am working toward my Masters of Adult and Higher Education. I was given your name by the Chairperson of your department as a person who could be interested in and willing to contribute to my study. The study I am asking you to participate in is the basis of my thesis.

To clarify the purpose of this study, I am attaching a copy of the research problem and sub-problems as well as a copy of the interview guide that I will use during our interview. I would prefer to tape record our interview, but if you prefer only note-taking, that is also possible. The data from the focus group will be recorded on flip charts. All data collected for this study will be seen only by myself and possibly my thesis advisor and will be stored in a locked staff office (The facilitator of the focus group will follow the same standards as the researcher). Although no names will be used in the final report, any information that is obtained in connection with this study and can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. The tape recording and/or notes of this information will also be destroyed once the compilation of these data is complete.

I anticipate your total time commitment, including reading this package, a face-to-face or telephone interview and reading the narrative of your interview, to be less than



two hours.

I hope to interview one Adult Development Instructor and his/her Supervisor from each college in Alberta that offers Adult Development programming and conduct a focus group at the Alberta vocational College, Lac La biche. By participating in this study, you are contributing to primary research that could be helpful to you, your college and the Department of Advanced Education and Career Development.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me (Roy Salsbury at 780- 645-6465 or 780-635-2565) or my thesis advisor (Dr. Carolin Kreber at 780-492-7623). This study has been approved by an Ethics Review Committee at the University of Alberta and follows the University Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information provided , that you willingly agree to participate and that you can withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this signed form to Roy Salsbury before \_\_\_\_\_ by using the attached self-addressed, stamped envelope. Thank you.

## Appendix B - Guide for Instructor Interviews

### Section 1:

1. How would you compare the job you do as an Adult Development Instructor today with what you did three years ago?
2. If you have been an Adult Development Instructor for more than three years, how would you compare your present job to what it was as far back as you can go after 1990?
3. In what ways has the content of your program changed over the past \_\_\_\_\_ years?
4. In what ways has the method of instruction changed over the past \_\_\_\_\_ years?
5. In what ways have the expectations of your employers changed over the past \_\_\_\_\_ years?

### Section 2:

1. How would you describe the challenges resulting from the change of content?
2. How would you describe the challenges resulting from the changes in methodology?

3. How would you describe the challenges resulting from the changes in employer expectations?

Section 3:

1. When were you made aware of the changes affecting your job?

2. How were you made aware of the changes affecting your job?

3. What was your role in the implementation of the changes affecting your job?

4. How would you describe any interventions, support or training that were provided before or during the implementation of these changes?

5. If no interventions, support or training were provided, how would you describe what you feel should have been provided?

Section 4:

1. Of the interventions, support or training described in Section 3-4, which ones would you consider effective?

2. In what ways were these interventions, support or training effective?

3. Could you describe interventions, support or training you have seen provided to other Adult Development Instructors which you feel would have been effective in your present job

#### Section 5:

1. Of the intervention, support or training listed as effective in Section 4-1 and 4-3, how would you describe the ways that they could help you cope with change in the future?

(Included when you think they should be provided )

2. How could these interventions, support or training help others cope with change?

(Include when they should be provided )

## Appendix C - Guide for Supervisor Interviews

As a result of interviewing a number of Adult Development Instructors, a number of changes in their workplace have been identified. In addition, a number of challenges have been identified as resulting from these changes.

The changes identified are: .....

The challenges identified are: .....

1. For each of the above changes which occurred in your college, what do you see as your role in their implementation?
2. For the same changes, what do you see as the instructors role in the implementation?
3. How effectively do you feel the instructional challenges resulting from these changes were met?
4. If your instructors were to meet these challenges again, is there anything that you would like to do or see done differently?

## Appendix D - Data from Instructor Interviews

The italicized comments are the data received from the interviews. The number following each comment is the number of times the exact comment was expressed; any variations were record separately.

### **Guide for Instructor Interviews**

#### Section 1:

1. How would you compare the job you do as an Adult Development Instructor today with what you did three years ago?

- *students are younger -3*
- *students bring a lot more baggage -1*
- *students have more academic skills but lower maturity, commitment or dedication -1*
- *tried distance delivery but abandoned it -1*
- *students are more demanding, request specific prerequisites -1*
- *computers have replaced administrative support -1*
- *expected to use computers for research, communication and course enhancement -2*

- job is quite similar -3
- teaching assignment is different -2
- was teaching total classroom, now teaching two-thirds alternate or distance delivery -1
- change in administration 3 years ago resulted in drastic improvements - it was so bad previously it was necessary to take a leave of absence to assess future -1
- more funded students -1
- more interference from funding agency -1
- private career center provides career counseling, instructors feel undermined, student feel more commitment to the funding agency than to the instructors and the college -1
- Social Studies is viewed as an unnecessary option by the funding agency -1
- in 1993, funding cuts almost closed the doors of the college, morale couldn't have gotten lower -1
- there is a stronger focus on workplace training -1
- use much more technology -1
- college has changed from being provincially administered to being board governed -3
- are now dealing with weaker students due to the boost in the economy -2
- five years ago was computer illiterate, now developing web-based courses -1
- skill level of students is much lower, both academic and social -1
- students lack the skills to interact, students are fighting in the halls, students a few years ago were more collegial -1
- student behaviour is influenced by drugs and alcohol -1

- the 'bar scene' has occupied their time previous to returning to class -1
- many were young parents and do not get along well with others -1
- many students are intimidated by computers -1
- expectations and personal goals of the students are more unrealistic -1
- students lack critical and conceptual thinking skills -1
- students lack initiative -1
- greater funding stress - accessing funding for students and for programs -1
- more difficult - harder to find funding for students, to fill classrooms -1
- bizarre funding - no local representatives - students must telephone or go to a nearby city to apply for funding, then attend a compulsory 'Returning to Work' Program in that city -1
- ongoing atrophy - with about ninety students, instructors began to settle into Academic Upgrading as a profession, but that all changed with the reduction and changes in staffing -1
- less variety of high school courses, used to almost anything that Alberta Distance Learning Center had, but now funding drives course selection -1
- more administrative work instead of preparation for classes, lots of forms to fill out, the college has more administrative and support people than instructors -1
- does recruiting, personal, educational and career counseling as well as being the local visible college representative - how do you give yourself a preparation period -1
- is a self-taught computer-systems person -1
- quality of student has decreased - wants more direction - does not have time to discover



- *the student is more demanding, that is, the student wants more from the teachers (to be spoon-fed rather than discover) -1*
- *teacher has more non-teaching roles - more administration, more advising , must now release grades -1*
- *has more involvement in the administration of the college -1*
- *has increased teaching hours and more students per class than is approved by academic council -1*
- *morale of teachers is declining - expected to do more with less -1*
- *feeling insecure - afraid to try new things especially individualized programs - you may work your way out of a job-1*
- *no-one quits - there are no new and fresh ideas -1*
- *great increase in enrolments of government sponsored students as tuition rate experienced major increases -1*
- *went from individualized program to group instruction of a homogeneous class to a multi-level class -1*
- *went from non-credit to credit programs -1*
- *students were previously screened -1*

2. If you have been an Adult Development Instructor for more than three years, how would you compare your present job to what it was as far back as you can go after 1990? *(Most of the major changes occurred in the last three years so all changes have been listed under item 1.)*

3. In what ways has the content of your program changed over the past(all 5+) years?

*- use Alberta Learning Curriculum so there is new curriculum in Math -1*

*- different assignments has meant different courses -2*

*- curriculum being changed to Western Canada Protocol - the same is happening to*

*English and Social Studies as happened to Math including the integration of technology -*

*1*

*- content is more diverse, more career programs in the college -2*

*- more of a focus on work skills -1*

*- introduced a PEAC (Personal, Employment and Academic Competencies) Program -1*

*- implemented Pure Math 10 and 20 -1*

*- developing Math 10, 20 and 30 -1*

*- texts are pretty much the same, have developed some our own grammar texts -1*

*- have dropped CALM at the lower level -1*

*- have implemented Life Management Skills using a text which deals with the World of Work -1*

*- students are tuned-out if content is not directly relevant -1*

*- started with Alberta Correspondence packages, but there was poor retention, have tried millions since - now using texts with college course outlines- providing the broadest options for as many as possible -1*

*- has received and delivered Teleconferencing courses since about 1985, many thirty-level high school courses -1*

- content has increased from Grade Three to University Preparation, for example, Math 10 now requires Spreadsheet and Graphing Calculator skills -1
- there is a knowledge explosion, particularly in science - new genetics, for example; 'Dolly' the sheep - this results in a spiraling curriculum -1
- were Alberta Education, now are developing our own material (still using some Alberta Education content) -1
- have introduced basic computer training and some employability skills - will be introducing more work experience and relevant courses -1

4. In what ways has the method of instruction changed over the past (all 5+) years?

- computers are being used for research-1
- from tutoring ADLC (Alberta Distance Learning Center) courses to classroom instruction to alternate or distance delivery -1
- include more quizzes to enhance attendance -1
- more self-paced learning -1
- more distance delivery, using WebCT for high school courses -1
- more Power Point and e-mail -1
- most is still 'chalk and talk', lots of explanations and examples, most are visual learners -1
- has not been involved in distance delivery -1
- the college has an Open Learning Center with independent or individualized study but has direct interaction -1

- *it has improved as I am working on my Masters -1*
- *Instructor Delivery now with Video-Conferencing to two other sites -1*
- *more attentive to learning styles - more variety and balance - try to create independence so they can do things on their own - facilitating learning -1*
- *although primarily classroom taught, the wide variety of resources and methods of accessing these resources adds to the load of both student and teacher, for example; CD's, Power Point presentations, Internet research and a variety of other Audio-visual resources - these do assist in meeting a number of learning styles -1*
- *only dabble in distance delivery - some high school courses to five off-campus sites -1*

5. In what ways have the expectations of your employers changed over the past (all 5+) years?

- *have a new President who wants us to expand and do new things. While this is positive, it is also stressful -1*
- *now there is pressure to write curriculum and proposals -1*
- *everyone is expected to do more -3*
- *more work is downloaded - administrative and committee -1*
- *with new administration, expectations have risen, particularly outside class; writing proposals, serving on committees, doing curriculum development - it is interesting and we feel involved and it would not be a bad thing if we weren't so tired -1*
- *expect instructors to have technology training -3*
- *expect everyone to be flexible in content -1*

- expect everyone to integrate technology into their programs -2
- more use of technology -2
- control over classroom instruction is the instructors responsibility, employer has had little effect on the classroom -1
- expected to cover the same material in less time -1
- keep doing more with less -2
- there is more of a sense that the Academic Upgrading Instructor administers and recruits more than instructs -1
- less Administrative Support -1
- program is expendable, even though it is one of their major programs and is still very, very necessary -1
- expected to do more, particularly peripheral things; paperwork, administrivia, recruiting, counseling -1
- participate more in providing more information to 'bean counters' -1
- make more efforts to get along with others (this is being enforced) -1
- learn new "lingo" of new gurus on motivation initiatives -1
- more accountability, student tracking, record keeping, paperwork, telephone calls etc. -1
- must be familiar with copyright and F.O.I.P. (Freedom Of Information Policy) issues -1
- supervises intake person and deals with mega-documentation -1
- there is a push to replace instructors with sessional staff - less security - particularly at the lower level programs - once direct funding stopped, these programs went on 'soft

*funding' - went from all full time to mainly sessional to cut costs -1*

*- less sense of community -1*

## Section 2:

1. How would you describe the challenges resulting from the change of content?

*- these changes are about to come (in English and Social Studies) -1*

*- most frustrations come from other than content -1*

*- a lot of preparation required including assessments and evaluations instruments -1*

*- weaker students are more challenging to teach -1*

*- weaker students find self-paced learning difficult -1*

*- being able to cover all of the material plus Social Development content, have had to lower academic expectations to allow the student to develop socially -1*

*- officially the content has not changed, the difference is in the development of the attitude of the students, getting them to understand social development and cultural issues (not about being self-directed - 'tell me what I have to learn and I will get on with it') -1*

*- get away from culturally-biased curriculum design - need to have a cohesive family group (aboriginal learning), more socially-directed -1*

*- challenge is to find the time and get organized - have to prepare over the summer and order texts and calculators - have to improvise with spreadsheets ( this sometimes makes the students stronger) -1*

*- have to do preparation on my own time, usually early morning -1*

*- with spiraling and exploding content, we are still trying to teach a group that is anything but homogeneous -1*

*- having time to research curriculum -1*

*- having time to make community connections for field placements -1*

*- having time to become familiar with employment skills -1*

*- having time to coordinate relevant external courses -1*

2. How would you describe the challenges resulting from the changes in methodology?

*- dealing with plagiarism from the Internet-1*

*- dealing with students abusing chat lines-1*

*- documentation of references is a nightmare -1*

*- learning a new set of skills to interact with students at a distance -1*

*- designing and delivering courses in a new mode -1*

*- doing courses and self evaluations -1*

*- trying to improve attendance - hard to progress when attendance is poor, have to backtrack and review rather than move ahead -1*

*- using self-paced learning -1*

*- using more PEAC concepts in the mainstream program -1*

*- raising the bar in method, everyone is expected to use many methods -1*

*- had to take professional development in computer technology including Power Point and e-mail -1*

*- had to learn to use technology to deliver programs and for program management -1*

- lots of repetition, keeping it interesting and relevant -1
- lots of direct interaction -1
- need more time for preparation -1
- learned to use Video-Conferencing by trial and error - training by accident - students were left on their own to learn how to use the system - they learned to do it because they had to -1
- the greatest challenge was getting the students to the stage of interacting -1
- learning about Learning Styles through outreach programs -1
- must keep on top of technology in order to enhance instruction -1
- expanding knowledge of curriculum to deliver multi-level classes -1
- becoming more aware of student needs -1

3. How would you describe the challenges resulting from the changes in employer expectations?

- having the and skills to write curriculum and proposals -1
- having the time and skills to deal with other roles that have been downloaded such as recruiting and personal counseling-1
- the job is interesting but very varied and demanding-1
- more pressure -1
- finding the time -1
- steep learning curve, particularly on the technology - computer and graphing calculator -1



- trying to set up support for students outside of class; tutorials and mentor sessions to address personal life issues -1
- committee has been set up to improve student success -1
- have hired a Student Success Coordinator -1
- employers think that everyone should be able to deliver any and all courses in their area, with it being self-paced -1
- everyone will be at a benchmark in computer training -1
- to be effective, instructors were expected to take computer training -1
- college has provided a full-time staff member (who is also a teacher) to provide group and one-on-one sessions in technology -1
- very high - Adult Education (Upgrading) Programs do not seem to be valued by some institutions, governments and businesses -1
- what is difficult is feeling confident that you will be working with the student again, fulfilling your commitment to the student -1
- the institution has 'fallen out of love' with Technology - the Video Bridge is gone -1
- the Alberta North 'stuff' is substandard equipment -1
- explaining to people that you are in the classroom to instruct -1
- finding time to do preparation and document all of the calls and contacts -1
- finding time for reports (after prioritizing, certain ones don't get done) -1
- must use technology for communication and instructional enhancement -1
- no longer use Administrative Support (one faculty typist for the whole college) - must do our own word processing -1

- laid off counselors - instructors have to do counseling - have to attend to the students' immediate needs and direct to outside agencies -1
- greater responsibility to reduce the impact on students -1
- spending more time meeting individual student needs (available to students) - full time staff do more mentoring/coaching -1
- providing orientation to contract people -1

Section 3:

1. When were you made aware of the changes affecting your job?

- most was gradual with input -1
- chose the change to distance delivery, then found it enjoyable and challenging -1
- had no input, made aware of private counseling center after the fact -1
- vision came from upper management, heard about it at a general meeting -1
- was given one semester to prepare -1
- as it was happening -1
- there is an insidious quality to the process of change - the college talked about developing partnerships with the communities - trying to find money to keep going, doing more ad hoc programming - the outreach programs felt the pinch sooner -1
- learned about curriculum changes in advance, but other changes as they happen -1
- they evolved out of financial and staff cutbacks - didn't see the whole picture - didn't realize the implications - the download of responsibilities -1

2. How were you made aware of the changes affecting your job?

*- when major downsizing occurred at the college, we were brought into a room and shown a video - it was devastating -1*

*- in staff meetings with ugly, threatening tone, there was a major loss of confidence -1*

*- for recent changes in student support system, changes resulted from concerns identified by teachers and counselors -1*

*- when we were told we had to implement technology -1*

*- instructors and coordinator monitor high school system and stay on par with its curriculum -1*

*- gossip mostly - a few formal meetings -1*

*- during P.D. sessions -1*

*- just informed - not involved in decisions -1*

3. What was your role in the implementation of the changes affecting your job?

*- usually have an opportunity for input -1*

*- put in a lot of time and effort into the TIP (Technology Integration Program) then nothing -1*

*- two days training then a lot of preparation on his own -1*

*- no input into the hiring of a new president, but happy with end result -1*

*- set up a committee that recommend a four day week for academics with Friday set aside for supplemental support such as Life Skills and Study Skills -1*

*- self-paced group was separated as a pilot but now all instructors are expected to handle it -1*

*- use Diploma and Grade 9 Exams as a periodic check of standards -1*

*- watch the success of their students compared to students direct from high school -1*

*- none whatsoever -1*

*- front-line role - if you don't do it, we will shut it down - Academic Upgrading*

*Instructors are second class citizens -1*

*- implement the changes -2*

4. How would you describe any interventions, support or training that were provided before or during the implementation of these changes?

*-one excellent session from Devry - "Teaching for Learning" -1*

*- many opportunities are in May but Academic Upgrading Instructors are still in class -1*

*- CACE courses were good -1*

*- lots of opportunities for computer training and other professional development no one is refused -1*

*- required considerable self-study and preparation -1*

*- there were lots of initial problems and glitches with technical hardware and software -1*

*- there was some technical support, but not enough -1*

*- in response to teacher concerns, there was one professional development session last semester to help identify student crises, even counselors feel ill-equipped -1*

*- had in-service in Math on Graphing Calculator from experts from the Department of*

*Learning -3*

- *lots of opportunities for computer and WebCT training at the college -2*
- *were provided peer support, supervisor support and technical support -1*
- *were given time off to attend courses at the high school -1*
- *professional development sessions on Adult Learning -1*
- *also have a full-time counselor on staff, more students come in for personal than for academic counseling -1*
- *always have opportunities for professional development, have a good program as well as access to funding -1*
- *non-existent -1*
- *given the sense that it is not complicated, work with it, figure it out (no consideration for what is involved) -1*
- *by taking a Professional Diploma After Degree was able to specialize in Adult Education - uses some of these strategies to help students individually as schedule allows -1*
- *kept informed about copyright and Freedom Of Information Policy issues -1*
- *Mini-sessions on technology - often during class time, so difficult to attend -1*
- *expected to get ready over the summer -1*
- *some resource people were available recently -1*

5. If no interventions, support or training were provided, how would you describe what you feel should have been provided?

- *'Just in Time' Training - what you need, when you need it and will use it -1*
- *there was training on one set of tools and implementation on another newer set- training needs to be on the same software -1*
- *if no one else is hired, the teachers need more training, but they have enough work without being counselors -1*
- *more planning has taken place over the last month -1*
- *division meetings - more staff meetings - something to avoid feelings of alienation -1*
- *doesn't know if you can be prepared for this - there is no contact between Academic Upgrading Instructors throughout the province, only between Coordinators - we need an Academic Upgrading Conference -1*
- *it should be a Lifelong Learning Process with a focus on Flexibility and Helping Professions -1*
- *technology training at more convenient times - during intersession -1*
- *Crisis Intervention training - college does not want this as it fears the faculty may think they are experts and there may be more liability issues -1*
- *in-service on career planning and career prerequisites -1*
- *time for adjustment -1*
- *more support from the department -1*
- *more orientation on the philosophy behind student support -1*
- *more consistency and continuity within each department regarding standards and evaluation -1*
- *local computer training courses -1*

Section 4:

1. Of the interventions, support or training described in Section 3-4, which ones would you consider effective?

- *representing the college on Alberta Learning English Committee-1*
- *Devry Institute - 'Teaching for Learning' - practical for dealing with difficult situations -1*
- *CACE (Certificate in Adult Continuing Education) - 'Effective Speaking' -1*
- *a week-long training session on Graphing Calculators -1*
- *work with Distance Education Instructors at Norquest College -1*
- *in-service on Graphing Calculator -2*
- *session on crisis intervention -1*
- *peer support, instructional technologist support as well as support from their chair -1*
- *allowed to experiment with technology at first, then provided training when it was needed -1*
- *have scheduled sessions during intersession, then one-on-one when appropriate -1*
- *none -1*
- *nothing really got them ready, what they did was unrelated -1*
- *Outreach Adult Education through the University of Alberta - focused on Adult Learning and matching learners with resources -1*
- *nothing in counseling -1*
- *some noon-hour sessions on the use of the telephone system - helpful, but very limited -1*

- *support from peers who transferred -1*
- *computer training is available to all employees -1*
- *reading on her own - short courses -1*

2. In what ways were these interventions, support or training effective?

- *relevant -1*
- *well done -1*
- *sharing of resources and experience -1*
- *opportunity for role-playing -1*
- *was hands-on, specific -eg. speaking into the microphone, doing simulations, in general, acting as a student and an instructor. This training was timely in that it was right before my distance delivery course started -1*
- *helped with instruction -1*
- *chair provided the necessary pep-talk -1*
- *technical support was critical as the equipment was the main problem -1*
- *not applicable -1*
- *it was ineffective -1*
- *provided curriculum information -1*
- *provided computer skills -1*

3. Could you describe interventions, support or training you have seen provided to other Adult Development Instructors which you feel would have been effective in your present



job?

- *some are involved whenever their courses are impacted -1*
- *keep up with the new technology - Power Point, Lotus Notes -1*
- *learn about alternate formats for Distance Delivery, eg. First Class Client, Learning Space -1*
- *more training in the use of technology and how to teach the technology -1*
- *a series of professional development sessions on basic skills like marks programs -1*
- *need more access to computers, promised one for every classroom, but there is no money for this to happen -1*
- *Ok with what we received, left to our own devices -1*
- *more time off -1*
- *more training on technology -2*
- *'True Colours Program' - a program in Toronto was approved twice but each time the program was canceled -1*
- *have not seen many but know other institutions do better than ours -1*
- *Native Adult Instructional Diploma program offered in B.C. is said to be effective -1*
- *Adult Community Education at the University of Calgary is said to be helpful -1*
- *not aware - somewhat isolated -1*
- *used to have more time for in-service, but now intersession is spent on preparation -1*
- *Life skills Coach Training -2*
- *more employability skills training -1*
- *Life Skills as in-service -1*

Section 5:

1. Of the intervention, support or training listed as effective in Section 4-1 and 4-3, how would you describe the ways that they could help you cope with change in the future? (

Included when you think they should be provided )

- *generic and practical courses help you be prepared -1*
- *having input keeps you involved -1*
- *helps to keep up with rapid changes in technology -1*
- *seeing technology being used in practical ways -1*
- *interactions with other instructors having success or sold on ideas can be an inspiration to try something new -1*
- *need an English Conference to provide peer support to share and help each other -1*
- *teach 10 months so time is an issue for professional development -1*
- *need more release time for department heads to do curriculum development -1*
- *technical training must be ongoing -1*
- *training should be one semester before -1*
- *training on equipment and software must be ongoing -2*
- *more word-processing support -1*
- *with proper timing and counseling to develop a community -1*
- *Human Resources should help with job preparation etc. -1*
- *understanding cultural and sociological differences and the implications -1*
- *dealt with formally in Adult Education - a forum of reflective activities with peers -1*

*- group work on employment related topics and curriculum changes -1*

*- professional development on common student learning barriers -1*

2. How could these interventions, support or training help others cope with change? (

Include when they should be provided )

*- helps to keep staff involved - there are fewer surprises - staff buy in to changes -1*

*- advance training - really prepare - over-prepare -1*

*- need Internet training -1*

*- need technical support, have no computer teachers, other teachers are intimidated by the lab -1*

*- need audio visual training -1*

*- must be more thought put into the use of technology, specifically about the humans at the end of the process -1*

*- there must be a blend of humans with technology -1*

*- administrators must be made aware that technology will not answer all questions, in fact technology can reduce quality -1*

*- instructors must be made aware of how important their role is -1*

*- assure instructors that computers are not going to replace them -1*

*- their chair and dean have taken courses themselves, through Alberta North, and understand they must provide time and support -1*

*- make sure current technology is available in each office -1*

*- classrooms and offices should be on the Internet -1*

*- part-time instructors should be provided with computers and computer training as well -*

1

- *'change' is a very misused and abused word - be honest and actively help employees empower themselves - 'change' often means pink slip! -1*
- *understanding sociological trends - where valid services are not valued, especially our program -1*
- *provide introductory computer courses where necessary so that instructors do not have to teach themselves and learn everything the hard way -1*
- *provide Time Management training, LXR training and training for 'Just in Time' counseling -1*
- *need more orientation for new staff - they should start no later than August 1<sup>st</sup> -1*
- *there is good funding support for professional development during intersession -1*
- *there is also a shared funding scheme in place for educational leaves -1*
- *to meet Alberta Learning's focus on employability -1*
- *prepare staff to provide computer and Internet skills -1*
- *provide staff with Crisis Management training -1*
- *provide staff with Safety in the Workplace training -1*
- *train a staff flexible enough to handle most courses - a generalist -1*
- *require staff to regularly upgrade their skills -1*

Appendix E - Data From Focus Group

<b>Changes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Interventions Received</b>	<b>Interventions Recommended</b>
<p>Different Clientele</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- younger</li> <li>- less stable</li> <li>- more learning difficulties</li> <li>- more emotional difficulties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- engaging students</li> <li>- addressing learning styles</li> <li>- finding out what will work</li> <li>- students and instructors need support - communicating this need to those who make the changes</li> </ul> <p>HAVE TO BE HEARD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- staff commitment to students</li> <li>- staff commitment to self-development</li> <li>- having Learning Assistance Center support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- more on-site support (counselling)</li> <li>- hiring and developing the right staff - hire those with a passion for helping (Loose Cannons)</li> </ul>

<p>Removal of Life Skills as part of Academic Upgrading and as a program in the college</p>	<p>- getting Life Skills back into the college and as a core course in Academic Upgrading</p>	<p>- providing Life Skills Coach Training to Instructors</p>	<p>- providing Life Skills Coach Training to Instructors or hiring Life Skills Coaches with suitable additional training</p>
<p>Less commitment to Personal Development of Instructors from the institution</p>	<p>- finding time for professional development</p>	<p>- staff are committed to each other and to growth</p>	<p>- hiring Administrators who are student-centered (have Adult Education Experience) - staff and student involvement in hiring Administrators</p>

<p>Loss of four-day week and preparation time</p> <p>Programs expanded from eight month project positions to full-time permanent positions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- coping with job stress</li> <li>- finding time to get the job done</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- providing preparation time in advance</li> </ul>
<p>Number of staff has grown considerably</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- maintaining effective communication</li> <li>- having effective meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- adding coordinators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planning and managing growth</li> </ul>

<p>Rapid influx of technology</p>	<p>Implementation of technology for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- enhancement</li> <li>- delivery</li> <li>- management</li> </ul> <p>Acquiring training</p> <p>Determining suitability of technology for learning</p> <p>Determining suitable alternative delivery modes - synchronous, asynchronous etc.- for a particular course and client</p> <p>Coping with having technology DUMPED on staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- financial support for staff to get their Masters of Education Degrees</li> <li>- adding some logistical and delivery (transport) support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- release time to study, share, prepare, implement and evaluate</li> <li>- lighten workload</li> <li>- provide administrative support and technical support</li> <li>- provide an organized training scheme</li> <li>- pilot use of technology in learning and do formal evaluation</li> </ul>
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<p>Doing more with less</p> <p>Increase in workload (Number of students per class and the number of classes)</p> <p>Additional roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- budgets</li> <li>- administrative work</li> <li>- facilities management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- finding time to do everything else that is expected and still be an effective instructor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- having Learning Assistance Center support</li> <li>- providing alternate/distance delivery to aid instructors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- more administrative, technical and logistical support</li> <li>- more training to deliver and receive alternate delivery</li> </ul>
<p>Placed new facilities in aboriginal communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- instructors now dealing with facilities management</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- more local service support</li> </ul>

<p>Student Finance now dictates courses and completion rates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- pressuring students to “fast track’</li> <li>- preparing students so that they can be successful and competitive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- close monitoring of attendance and progress</li> <li>- delivering group sessions</li> <li>- being constantly available to students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- make Student Finance understand the reality of our clients</li> </ul>
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## Appendix F - Data From Supervisor Interviews

The italicized comments are the data received from the interviews. The number following each comment is the number of times the exact comment was expressed; any variations were record separately.

### **Guide for Supervisor Interviews**

As a result of interviewing a number of Adult Development Instructors, a number of changes in their workplace have been identified. In addition, a number of challenges have been identified as resulting from these changes.

The changes identified are: *Before starting each interview I (the Researcher) identified the themes that were developing in the changes being described by the Instructors. In every case the Supervisors elaborated on many of these themes and even identified more changes.*

The challenges identified are: *I (the Researcher) also identified the themes that were developing in the challenges being described by the Instructors and here again the Supervisors elaborated on many of these themes as well as identified more challenges.*

1. For each of the above changes which occurred in your college, what do you see as your role in their implementation?

- to try to free the instructor from much of the administrivia -1
- to do the follow-up on attendance issues -1
- to work on a timetable to do more student orientation -1
- to do more bridging at both ends to address student transition both in and out -1
- search out and introduce a better student tracking system -1
- try to get technology working for us, instead of the other way around - with technology the 'Bar' keeps moving -1
- set agendas for meetings to address student issues and program planning -1
- assist instructors to recruit students -1
- coordinate designing reasonable and relevant curriculum -1
- help instructors set goals, steer and support them in their development -1
- facilitate instructors in finding resources and using technology -1
- to provide in-service training where necessary -1
- promote alternate delivery - distance delivery, asynchronous delivery, experiential learning -1
- keep an eye open, identify needs and recommend training - workshops, conferences and general professional development -1
- changes in technology are so fast that training must be ongoing to meet the demand of our students -1
- training is encouraged and some of it is supported -1

- the college adapted to the lack of Social Services support by providing more support for the students - most of this became one of the roles of the coordinator -1
- assisted in implementing a Career Transition course for three credits (this replaces the Life Skills we once had) - this is a 'Putting Your Life Together' kind of curriculum -1
- refer students to other agencies -1
- have been able to get good computers and training is available to instructors -1
- pushing to get Computer Skills as a core course for Academic Upgrading students, since they have to compete with High School students with these skills for both Post-secondary programs and employment - Career Development is only concerned with 'Fast Tracking' our students -1
- help staff cope with major cutbacks -1
- supporting instructors in their push to extend their programs beyond thirty two weeks to keep curriculum in line with Alberta Learning courses - must remind Management that adults have many other responsibilities -1
- must arrange for Employability Skills training for instructors -1
- must schedule curriculum development over the summers -1
- coping with cutbacks based on seniority not specialties - trying to pick people who can do curriculum development, student advising and admissions -1
- arranging in-house training using staff who have performed certain functions before -1
- set up workshops, for example, on student retention -1
- establish goals for staff to work for -1
- find and recommend workshops, conferences and general professional development

*activities beyond regular professional development - explore what other providers are doing by way of training -1*

*- since at this college 'change' equals 'job loss', none whatsoever -1*

*- be more pro-active for alternate delivery and delivery to other sites through computer mediation -1*

*- do more case-conferencing on student issues -1*

*- maintain a supporting, caring staff - this may mean staffing differently, that is, hiring staff who are able to maintain good relationships as well as know content -1*

*- validate staff achievements -1*

*- coordinate implementation of a special program to address employment skills -1*

*- identify technology applications for students that fit with the college's technology plan -1*

*- reallocate resources to meet changing needs -1*

2. For the same changes, what do you see as the instructors role in the implementation?

*- since the changes were out of their control, they must do whatever they can to lessen the impact on the students -1*

*- they must do more Life Skills at the lower levels -1*

*- they must research careers and employability skills - they may do some of this by*

*contacting employers -1*

*- they must prepare for new and wider ranges of courses -2*

*- they must try to access group or one-on-one training, particularly on computers -1*

*- now that all instructors have their own computers they must do more of their own administrative work -1*

*- use Learning Strategies Program (Master Student) as time permits under Student Finance Board funding -1*

*- instructors are doing considerably more committee work, from visioning with the Board of Governors to selecting paintings for the hallways -1*

*- instructors have had to shift from looking at a student in a content area to looking at the whole student, more student-centered in lifelong learning - this focus on employability and social skills has been good, but it has put more pressure on the instructor to work harder, work smarter and do more -1*

*- instructors are expected to be computer literate, since it is mandated that all students will have access to and/or training on computers -1*

*- instructors are expected to access professional development funds and pursue the development they need on their own -1*

*- instructors have summer contracts to put courses on 'The Learning Manager', a system for asynchronous delivery -1*

*- instructor is responsible for identifying professional development needs and seeking support to meet these -1*

*- instructors are more involved in college-wide committee work -1*

- identify gaps in their training, ask for the necessary training and identify when it would be appropriate -1
- instructors are not ready for the technology -1
- instructors evaluate new material and they feel they are not ready for Applied Math -1
- implementation of change is a shared role between instructors and supervisors -1
- instructors are trying to pick out critical material to get through the curriculum changes -1
- must do curriculum development over the summer -1
- since at this college 'change' equals 'job loss', none whatsoever -1
- those receiving alternate delivery must be familiar with WebCT - those using it need and want more training - this is provided as 'Just in Time' training -1
- instructors are front-line and must be competent in technology, content and relationships -1
- in small sites the instructor must be a flexible generalist, since they are responsible for everything -1
- the instructors are the ones who must actually implement change -1

3. How effectively do you feel the instructional challenges resulting from these changes were met?

- staff training is ongoing, but since our program is thirty-six weeks there is very little



*time for new preparation let alone training - workload increased and there was no development time -1*

*- staff were left feeling helpless -1*

*- staff dream of the 'Good Old Days' -1*

*- since all instructors have degrees in Adult Education and are highly professional, they are holding up quite well -1*

*- most instructors have taken Educational Leaves supported by the college -1*

*- instructors have biweekly meetings to vent, provide peer support, and plan strategies -1*

*- one site has a full-time counselor -1*

*- have a Wellness committee that is recommending workshops on anger and conflict management -1*

*- professional development is usually done by having a general workshop then one-on-one training ( this portion was referred to as 'Just in Time' training) -1*

*- institute provides a staff training program titled 'Becoming a Master Instructor' -1*

*- technical support is not always readily available, so even though the instructors are getting better at trouble-shooting, long delays are frustrating for both students and instructors -1*

*- instructors are frustrated - feel the need more training -2*

*- instructional issues are never discussed - here change is about job security not anything educational -1*

*- traditional instructors often share computers which they use for communication and course enhancement, alternate delivery instructors are trained on WebCT - our*

*'Learning Quality Center' provides extensive training to staff -1*

*- meeting these challenges as effectively as feasible - taking the right steps -1*

*- instructors were expected to take on more committee work for the college - this caused the instructors to be very stretched -1*

*- instructors have done well*

4. If your instructors were to meet these challenges again, is there anything that you would like to do or see done differently?

*- have both the instructors and their supervisors involved in the decision making process, to help remove the feeling of helplessness -1*

*- try to make time available for instructor training - training and a staff trainer are available, but time is not -1*

*- make Management understand that our students are starting with less skills and they are expecting us to get more and better results -1*

*- address the philosophical issue of whether or not we should screen students for Academic Upgrading -1*

*- try to hire staff with Adult Education training -1*

*- push for more orientation, particularly in team-building to enhance the attitude of 'Students First' -1*

*- get instructor concerns addressed before class -1*

- since instructors are expected to do marketing, recruiting, counselling and work placement, provide formal training in these areas -1
- provide more computers and training in technology -3
- try to reduce the 'busy work' caused by computers - we have computers but no administrative support -1
- have hired a new Human Resources Manager, so hopefully there will be more professional development -1
- provide more resources to deal with student issues -1
- explore 'The Great Teacher' program at Grant McEwan College -1
- cutback on counsellors was a mistake -1
- offer courses the last week of August as pre-service training -1
- arrange for a four-day workshop on the graphing calculator -1
- do some training in Math before implementing the new programs - sees some weaknesses in the spreadsheet sections -1
- it is hard to keep up with the technology, if we are to use it, particularly for delivery, training must be ongoing -1
- must schedule more start-up time for training in technology -1
- must arrange for Educational Leave for instructors -2
- must be more consultation with colleges regarding Academic Upgrading for Adults -1
- must provide release time for instructors to take workshops through Alberta Learning before they can implement courses like Applied Math using a discovery method -1
- try to avoid 'Learning by Doing' - less coping and more training -1

- need to teach Administration the importance of Academic Upgrading - if Academic Upgrading is part of the college, give it recognition, structure and clear guidance -1
- Adult Skills Alberta is still nothing more than a framework - its concepts need to be developed so that it can give direction to Adult Development -1
- staff retirements must be managed so that we can hire younger trained staff -1
- provide staff access (by providing hardware, software and training) to their student information system, so that they will be aware of prior training as well as test scores -1
- make sure our students get face-to-face classroom instruction -1
- make sure staff attend conferences and visit other institutions -1
- recommend that instructors take refresher courses at university to brush-up on their courses as well as learn new teaching strategies -1
- implement a new program for lower level students, with a work experience component so that they may access some employment opportunities -1
- provide more training for staff in areas such as; time management, resolving personal problems, coaching students (counsellor role), resolving conflicts, getting along with others and some academics -1
- offer a four week 'Orientation to College Learning' program for credit, to help address retention and social development -1
- provide more 'Just in Time' training -3
- reorganization in terms of helping instructors find new positions within the college -1
- the college should take more leadership in caring for employees -1
- provide enhanced technical support -1

*- better communication around training needs - be more pro-active rather than re-active -*

*1*

*- follow Alberta Learning workshops for the public system in preparation for new Math curriculum -1*

*- offer PEAC (Personal, Employment and Academic Competencies) course for CALM credit -1*

*- more money should be allocated for curriculum development to get content experts involved -1*

*- more in-service training rather than 'learning by doing' -1*

Appendix G - Research Ethics Review

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

**Research Ethics Review Application - - Graduate Student Form**

Name Roy Salsbury Student I.D. 269261

-

Short Title of Study Support For Adult Development Instructors Experiencing Change at their Workplace.

\_\_\_\_\_

M.Ed. Project  Ph.D. Thesis  Ed. D. Thesis

M. Ed. Thesis  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Specify)

Members of the Supervisory Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The applicant agrees to notify the Department Research Ethics Review Committee of any changes in research design after the application has been approved.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Applicant)

\_\_\_\_\_ 19  
(Date)

**For Office Use Only**

Date  
Submitted \_\_\_\_\_

Date  
Decision Conveyed \_\_\_\_\_

Members of the Review Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Decision of Committee \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_

(Approved/Not Approved)

(Date)

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

-

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Coordinator's Signature)

EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

ETHICS REVIEW FORM

Applicant's Name: Roy Salsbury

Short Title:

Support for Adult Development Instructors Experiencing Change at Their Workplace

Date Distributed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Returned \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment (check each item)	Yes	No
1. Does the researcher provide a clear statement of what is to be done?	___	___
2. Has the matter of informed consent of participants been attended to and have consent forms been attached?	___	___
3. Has the right to opt out (at any time) been provided?	___	___
4. If underage (or other "captive" participants are used, has the "opt out right (elsewhere known as veto-right)) of these participants been attended to and have consent forms been attached where appropriate?	___	___
5. Are the provisions for providing anonymity/confidentiality acceptable?	___	___
6. Has assurance been given that the study will not be threatening to	___	___



the participants or other (third party)?

7. Is the instrumentation provided and/or the testing/experimental procedure clearly specified and has an instrument and/or sample questions been attached?

8. Has provision been made for explaining the nature and purpose of the research to subjects (assurance provided that deception will not be used)?

Reviewer's recommendation:

Approve

Acceptable if the researcher satisfies the following conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Further consideration by committee required

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND PROCEDURES FOR OBSERVING ETHICAL  
GUIDELINES (Please Type)

Short Title: Support for Adult Development Instructors Experiencing Change at their  
Workplace

Applicant: Roy Salsbury

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to determine the types of interventions, support and training Adult Development Instructors and their Supervisors recommend to help the instructors cope with the challenges resulting from the many changes occurring at their workplaces. Not only does this help to address the principles of the Adult Development Reform Initiative in the implementation stages, but it will be valuable for administrators and instructors alike in dealing with human resource development in general. The end result is that our students will benefit. I have been involved in Adult Development programs as both an instructor and an administrator for more than thirty years and see this as an opportunity to research an area of great personal interest and to offer some concrete recommendations to my profession.

Methodology:

This study will be limited to the colleges in Alberta that offer Adult Development programs. The chairpersons of these colleges will be contacted by telephone or in writing to obtain permission to contact their employees and to ask for the names of instructors and supervisors who may be interested in participating. The data collection will consist of three stages: 1. A semistructured interview - conducted, either face-to-face or by telephone, with one Adult Development Instructor, with at least three years experience, from each college. 2. A focus group - conducted with Adult Development Instructors (seven to nine participants) having similar experiences, from Portage College (formerly Alberta Vocational College), Lac La Biche. 3. A semistructured interview - conducted, either face-to-face or by telephone, with each Supervisor of the Instructors participating in the interviews or the focus group. The researcher (myself) will conduct the interviews and each will be no more than one hour in length and will be recorded on audio tape unless the participant prefers only written notes. The focus group will be no more than two hours in length and will be conducted by an experienced facilitator. This session will be recorded on audio tape and the researcher (myself) will also take notes.

Each interview and the focus group will be reported as a separate written narrative, although the information gathered will be analyzed for broad themes or patterns. All participants will be provided the considerations outlined in the attached letter of informed consent

#### Nature of Involvement of Human Participants:

Participants will be interviewed, either face-to-face or by telephone, or will

participate in focus group. The interviews will be conducted by the researcher (myself) and will be no longer than one hour in length. The focus group (seven to nine participants) will be conducted by an experienced facilitator and will be no more than two hours in length.

Are underage or "captive" participants involved? Yes \_\_\_ No X

If "yes" provide details (Please attach any consent forms to be used.)

Please describe clearly the specific procedures for observing the University of Alberta ethical guidelines for the research involving human participants.

1. Explaining purpose and nature of research to participants:

Once the Chairpersons of each college offering Adult Development Programs have been contacted, by telephone or face-to-face, to ask for permission to contact their employees and ask for the names of instructors and supervisors who may be interested in participating in the study, these potential participants will be contacted by telephone. The interest of the potential participants will be confirmed and the purpose and methodology will be explained verbally. That is, that this research is part of the requirements for a Masters of Education Degree in Adult and Higher Education and that each participant will be asked to be involved in an interview (not more than one hour long) or a focus group (not more than two hours long). Prior to either the interviews or the focus group involvement each interested participant will be sent a letter of informed

consent (outlining the purpose and the methodology of the study), a copy of the research problem and sub-problems and a copy of the appropriate interview guide.

2. Obtaining informed consent of participants: (Consent forms must be attached.)

The letters of informed consent must be signed and returned before the participant are interviewed or take part in the focus group. (See attached letter)

3. Providing for exercising right to opt out:

The letter of informed consent states that the participants can withdraw consent at any time and discontinue participation. This will be repeated verbally at the beginning of each subsequent contact with the participants.

4. Addressing anonymity and confidentiality issues:

All data collected will be seen only by the researcher and possibly by his thesis advisor and will be stored in a locked staff office. Although no names will be used in the final report, any information that is obtained in connection with this study and can be identified with a participant will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with the permission of the participant. Each participant will be sent a draft of the written narrative of his/her interview or, in the case of focus group participants, a draft of the narrative of the complete focus group. He/she will be asked to approve the draft by signing and returning it or request changes. The narratives requiring changes will be adjusted and each participant involved will again be asked to approve the draft in a similar manner.

The tape recordings and/or notes will be destroyed once the final copy is complete and has the approval of the participants.

5. Avoiding threat or harm to participants or to others:

Since the participants will be involved in interviews and a focus group there is no threat of physical or psychological harm. The questions relate to the participants professional experiences as educators and will not be in any way threatening. The study will be used to recommend strategies to help educators cope with future changes in their workplaces and, therefore, no threats or harm will result from this study.

6. Other procedures relevant to observing ethical guidelines not described above (e.g., training assistants directly involved in data collection):

The facilitator who will conduct the focus group will be required to read and follow the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants.

APPLICANT: Please submit the completed application form together with a copy of the research proposal to the Graduate Secretary in the Department of Educational Policy Studies.

When the application has been reviewed, a copy of the form will be returned to the applicant. The copy of the proposal will be retained on file.