

INSTRUCTORS e-NEWSLETTER

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Purchase Orlando attraction discount tickets in advance

Conference attendees who wish to visit Walt Disney World and other Disney attractions should purchase discounted tickets online in advance at <http://www.orlandomeetinginfo.com/tickets/>. Discounted tickets will not be available on site.

Attendees can also purchase discounted tickets to Sea World and Universal Orlando on the same web site. Discounted admission to Universal Orlando will be available at the Orlando World Center Marriott Hotel. Tickets to other attractions will also be available at the Marriott. Attendees are advised to check with the hotel concierge regarding prices and then compare with online ticket pricing.

Facilitating Student Memberships

AST is upgrading its membership database. This will allow us to better serve our membership through better communication, tracking and customer service. It will also allow us to close a loophole for tracking students. Online applicants for membership will be required to fill in their school names and anticipated graduation dates. These two pieces of information are required to receive the student membership rate of \$45, but the rules have not been enforced in the past. Beginning July 1, if students mail in a form without listing their school and graduation date, they will be contacted for the information. Although the student's payment is received, their memberships will not be activated until they supply us with this information. Once activated, the memberships will run 12 months.

As educators, you can help facilitate this process by asking them to fill out their application forms completely. If you're using an old form, please click on the following link and download a new one at www.ast.org/Content/AboutAST/documents/memapp.pdf.

News & Notes

- *Wrapping Up Galaxy 2004.* Galaxy school should have received their Amazon.com gift certificates in April (primarily through e-mail). Most of the Galaxy certificates have also been mailed. Both were mailed to program directors. If you are a program director and did not receive either the Galaxy certificates or the gift certificate from Amazon.com, please contact Deanna Beckett, 800-637-7433, ext 82508 or dbeckett@ast.org.
- *PAE Reminder.* Important information regarding the PAE. Starting January 1, 2007, **the PAE will no longer be available in written format.** All programs will be required to administer the exam by web based testing. Programs will need to access the PAE using Internet Explorer. Netscape cannot be used to enter the PAE test or the student will receive a Java script error message.

Please get together with the IT department at your institution to make sure the computer infrastructure will be arranged to handle web-based testing.

- Corrections to the second edition of the AST Certifying Exam Study Guide, volume 2, have now been made. A third printing to correct any final errors will occur this summer.

Focus on the Adult Learner (Part 2)

By Julia A. Jackson

Why do adults participate in educational programs?

Adults seek out learning experiences for different reasons and in different ways. Theory and research often refer to motivation when discussing adult learning participation, which can be intrinsic or extrinsic, for both voluntary and involuntary learning. Adult education is mostly a voluntary activity.¹ It is important to differentiate motivation to participate from motivation to learn, when defining meaningful adult learning experiences. In addition, sociocultural issues and pedagogical variations affect participation. Motivating factors, as well as barriers to participation, should be considered in adult education instructional design.

Houle created a typology of motivational orientations of adult learners in his 1961 publication, *The Inquiring Mind*. He described three types of learners: goal oriented, activity oriented, and learning oriented. This model states that goal-oriented learners use education to attain some other goal (eg a job promotion). Activity-oriented learners participate for the experience and the social interaction, such as in an informal seminar. And learning-oriented people seek knowledge simply to gain more knowledge.¹ The reasons that drive adult learning experiences vary considerably.

Boshier's EPS framework outlines six major categories for participation, which build on Houle's typology. Adults seek learning experiences for the following reasons: for social relationships, at the direction of another (involuntary), for social welfare (community service), for professional advancement, for stimulation, and for cognitive reasons.¹

Vella explains a learner-centered, educational philosophy that significantly increases participation.² She describes 12 principles that help the learner establish accountability in a safe learning environment. She advocates that a needs assessment be done before the learning experience and during the instructional design of the course. In doing this, Vella found that she helped learners establish and achieve their learning goals. Each of these educators also learned there are always barriers to participation.

Students must feel they have ownership in their educational experience to remain motivated; if they are uninvolved or bored, they will stop attending. In addition, personal issues, childcare, and job demands are the primary barriers to participation in adult education.³ According to the UNESCO study in 1997, lack of time, cost, and family responsibilities proved to be the primary barriers.¹ Many models explaining social and psychological issues that affect participation have been published.

Cross proposed a framework that addressed this issue in a logical manner. She stated, "participation in a learning activity is the result of a chain of responses to both psychological and environmental factors."¹ This framework includes the participants' reflection, experiences, and attitudes about education, making it the most sensible model for me to understand and relate to participation and learning.

More research should be done on the effect of socioeconomic status and home environment of youth in their adult learning experiences. Many surgical technology students have tremendous barriers to participation, all of which have been mentioned here. I found this research helpful because it enabled me to understand the various contexts in which my students function. .

Editor's note: The third article in this series will discuss the learning process in adulthood.

References

1. Merriman S and Caffarella R. *Learning in Adulthood*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; 1999.
2. Vella J. *Learning to listen, learning to teach: The power of dialogue in educating adults* (Revised Edition). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; 2002.

3. Kerka, S. Adult Learner Retention Revisited. ERIC Digest No. 166. Columbus, Ohio: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult Career and Vocational Education; 1995. www.ericdigests.org/1996-3/adult.htm. Accessed 5/2/05.

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