

Message from Complete Florida



*Michelle Horton, Ed.D.
Director of Complete Florida*

Greetings! As we continue to move forward during these unprecedented times, let's take a moment to appreciate the adult learners we all serve. As they earn their degrees to advance their careers, fulfill lifelong goals and improve the quality of life for their families, these non-traditional students exhibit vast amounts of resiliency and perseverance. Even as COVID-19 conditions persist, they continue their online studies as they do their jobs from home, work adjusted or different hours, school their children and fulfill various other obligations. We know our students are uniquely determined to finish what they started no matter what the circumstances are, and it has never been more evident than during this challenging period. We wish you the best as you serve these determined and accomplished scholars as they complete their journeys.

Student Spotlight: Classes and Work Experience Complement Each Other for Day-Care Director



Helga, 34, lives in West Palm Beach with her husband and their two children, ages 6 and 4. In addition to being the director at a pre-school, she is studying for a bachelor's degree in early childhood development at Florida International University. She received an associate degree from Palm Beach State College, graduating with a 3.8 grade point average. Helga enjoyed getting her associate so much, she was enthusiastic about moving ahead to a four-year degree.

"I am getting new information all the time that I apply at work to help me be a better supervisor and coach. Sometimes, I even make copies of what I am reading and tell the teachers, 'Hey, look at this.' "

Ultimately, studying for a master's degree in educational leadership is Helga's goal. She eventually wants to land a job with a school district mentoring and helping teachers in preschools enhance their knowledge and skills about supporting students with special needs like behavioral issues. Taking classes online allows Helga to juggle all her professional and personal obligations with her course work.

"I am always busy," Helga said. "I do school when I have time and set the schedule around my children so I don't have to miss a lot of what is going on in their lives. That means I do work when I am waiting in the lobby for them during dance class, or I do it after they have

gone to bed or on weekends.”

Read more at CompleteFlorida.org/Student-Stories

Partner Spotlight: FGCU Complete Offers Accelerated Options & Coaching for Adult Learners

Complete Florida partner institutions look for innovative ways to support non-traditional students, and Florida Gulf Coast University is no exception. In October of 2018, it started FGCU Complete, a program specifically tailored for returning adult learners. Eight students participated in the pilot program, and as of spring 2020, that number has grown to 150 enrolled students.



The target population is those who have some college credit (at least 30 hours) but who were not able to finish a bachelor's degree. They are time-strapped because of their many obligations, and eight-week semesters fit their needs better than traditional 16-week semesters.

“We wanted to offer an affordable option for an accelerated path to a degree,” said Kristen Vanselow, director of FGCU Complete. “We have implemented new approaches to admission and enrollment, advising, academic support and retention. Students are coached through each phase of the process.”

Approximately 90 percent of FGCU Complete students pursue a bachelor of arts in integrated studies. Students are primarily from the Southwest Florida counties of Lee, Collier, Hendry, Glades and Charlotte, but because classes are offered online and in-person, anyone can enroll.

The program continues to evolve, and FGCU Complete is on track to offer a Prior Learning Assessment option in the fall in which students can earn credit for experience and training they accumulated. FGCU is also exploring creating cohorts of students based at businesses and other employers.

“FGCU Complete is a prime example of how Complete Florida partner institutions serve returning adults flexibly to help meet attainment goals for the state as a whole. It's exciting to see the progress of this program and others that align with it for the greater good,” said Dr. Michelle Horton, director of Complete Florida.



Use Complete Florida's Video Library of Resources

What our Students are Saying

“When I decided I wanted to go back to school, Complete Florida did all the legwork for me making it as easy as possible. I couldn't be any more satisfied.”

*Eleonel
Florida State College at Jacksonville*

“Although it has been challenging raising two children, working full-time and continuing my education, it has been worth every minute. I realize that earning a bachelor's in business administration will open many more opportunities for my future.”

Looking for tips on how to better support military affiliated students or transient students? Need hints for helping adult students update their resume with new skills and knowledge? Want to know more about available Open Educational Resources in the state of Florida? The Complete Florida Networking Group addresses these issues and various others related to serving returning adult students, and all meetings are archived on a YouTube channel for easy reference. Visit it to see the [library of our latest videos](#) for your use.

*Whitney
Hodges University*

"I want to pursue a career in computer science, building the programs people use to make their jobs easier or their lives more enjoyable."

*Steven
St. Petersburg College*

"I am currently working on my bachelor's degree in criminal justice. I would like to work as a counselor for rehabilitating juvenile delinquents to support them in their recovery and to reduce recidivism."

*Danielle
Indian River State College*

What We're Reading



[How will Pass-Fail Affect Students' Future: The Asterisk Semester](#)

[Employer Engagement: Creating a Successful Apprenticeship Program](#)

