

Are you interested in:

- * Forming Discussion Groups?
- * Developing Programs?
- * Planning Events?
- * Organizing Off-Campus Activities?
- * Contributing to the Hiking Huskie?
- * Inviting Guest Speakers?
- * Advocating for Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Issues?

We can assist you!

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Grand Opening of Office & Collegia

The Division of Student Affairs at Northern Illinois University and the campus community celebrated the grand opening of its Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services on Thursday, Sept. 28, at the office's new location in Holmes Student Center Room 023. The theme "There's No Place Like Holmes" highlighted the department's efforts to create a "home away from home" for NIU commuter and non-traditional students. The event featured food from

vendors and dining centers in Holmes Student Center. The department also celebrated the opening of two student Collegia centers.



Both centers are equipped with refrigerators, microwaves, computer access, and locker storage. Beyond a location for studying and

relaxing, the lounges also serve as campus information and learning centers for the commuter and non-traditional student. Programming, meetings and discussions with faculty and staff are part of the Collegia model on which the lounges are based. Collegia lounges are located next to the office in Holmes Student Center and in the northwest corner of the Chick Evans Field House.

Off-Campus Housing Fair

The second annual Off-Campus Housing Fair will take place at the North end of the Chick Evans Field House on Wednesday, November 15 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Off-Campus Housing Fair offers students

who are considering residing off-campus the opportunity to learn about various housing and renting options.

Property management agencies, realtors, landlords and other services and

agencies which offer or assist in providing housing, or services to students living off-campus who would like to participate in the Off-Campus Housing Fair call 815.-753-0100 to reserve a table.

Research on Adult College Students

Nationwide the number of adults aged 25 and over has experienced triple digit percentage college enrollment increases over the past 20 years. The most significant increases were by women aged 35 and older with a 500% enrollment growth from 1970 to 2000. Characteristics of adult and nontraditional students, which set the group apart from traditional aged college students are:

Adult students typically have major family responsibilities

Adult students are more likely to be part-time college students

Adult students are more likely to combine full-time work with collegiate studies

Adult students are more likely to be first-generation college attendees

Adults students are more likely to come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds

Adults students are more likely to be reentry students and to have experienced other collegiate institutions and academic programs

Adult students have a different resource base for financing college attendance

Adult students report their highest issue and most stressful concern is their financial fragility in supporting college attendance

Adults students represent a major subgroup of disabled college students

The academic characteristics of adult students are:

Adult students receive similar, if not higher, grade point averages in comparison to younger students

Adult college freshmen typically enter college with lower high school grade-point averages and lower class rankings in high school

Adult students reflect uneven prior academic subject preparation when compared to younger students

Adult students report higher levels of satisfaction with their academic experience in comparison with younger students

Adult students participate in a variety of credit course offerings beyond the collegiate campus

Barriers Adult Students often face in higher education:

Policies toward traditional aged learners

Lack of relevant and accessible academic programs and convenient course scheduling

Problematic student financial support

Demeaning faculty & staff

Indifferent academic bureaucracy

“Adult students receive similar, if not higher, grade point averages in comparison to younger students.”

News from the Chick Evans Collegia

Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services is working diligently to provide an inclusive social and learning environment for our commuting and non-traditional students. The Collegia Lounge, located in the Chick Evans Field House, has successfully captured the interest of a diverse population of undergraduate and graduate students from varying degree programs and regional locations. Currently, we are proud to announce that our free membership has risen to over 130 students and counting.

Fall 2006 kicked off to a great start! Our lounge has been revered as “one of the coolest student-centered spaces on campus” –*Collegia Lounge member*. Student spaces like the Collegia Lounge are hard to find nowadays on college campuses. We

are fully equipped with a private study room with couches, tables, and a sound system; an educational resources room including off-campus housing and social programming materials; a conference room-style meeting area with a fridge and microwave, and a social lounge furnished with cozy recliner couches, a flat screen television, DVD/VCR, and a booming sound system. Also for your convenience, we have provided free wireless connections for laptop users.

Our space is uniquely managed by commuter and non-traditional students to ensure that we are continually meeting the needs of our members. We encourage you to become involved with our Commuter Student Association and/or the Non-Traditional Student Association. These groups play an

integral role in your experience with the Collegia Lounge and as a NIU student.

We have been honored to host speaker series with some of NIU’s campus leaders. We have discussed topics from career development to NIU History. Come out and enjoy our next speaker series On October 25th at 12:00 pm in the Collegia Lounge. Gail Jacky, Director of the Writing Center, will present on research writing and final revision/editing tips. Join this well-timed discussion as you prepare for term paper and semester final writing projects. Please forward any ideas you may have for programming that our commuter and non-traditional student members may benefit from.

“It’s fun to just sit around and talk about nothing, to just relax and not be so intense”

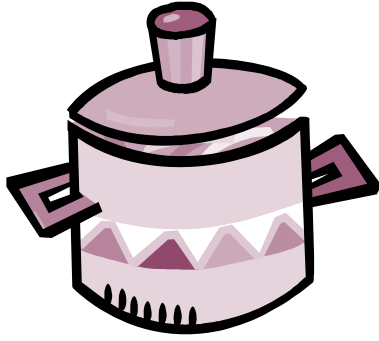


Collegial Conversations

“As a member of S.W.A.N. (Students Who Are Nontraditional) since 1999 I have seen more people using the HSC area. This was what we (S.W.A.N.) wanted but never had the resources to make happen. Coming down to this area is a place for older students and commuting students to network on campus. S.W.A.N. would like to plan some social activities. One thing that is difficult when it comes to event or program planning for the commuter and nontraditional students is that although it is a large group of students on the NIU campus, it is also a diverse group in terms of interests and time schedules.”-**Heather**

“I like the Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services Collegia space because it feels homey. There is no pressure. I can sit and study, or visit with people without a preconceived agenda or planned structure for conversation, which occurs in the classroom. I like meeting with other commuters and getting to know them and just talking about whatever comes up. Sometimes we talk about campus issues, such as parking.”-**Andy**

“One reason I started coming to the Collegia is to look for people to carpool with. Although the Carpool Connections is available online, I would prefer to meet a person before I would decide to ride with them. Usually I am down in the Holmes Student Center area to study, but I sometimes like to socialize and can usually find someone to talk with in the Collegia. This is important to me because otherwise I hardly talk to anyone all day. It’s fun to just sit around and talk about nothing, to just relax and not be so intense.”-**Christina**



Quick Tips for Commuters

Do you have a favorite finals week comfort food? Do you have a favorite recipe, or quick and easy meal, that you prepare for family or friends in between classes, commuting, and homework?

Several of the Holmes Student Center Collegia students would like to formulate a Commuter Cookbook to share recipes, meal preparation tips, or other multi-tasking skills with fellow commuting students.

If you would like to participate in this project, **email kcastelein@niu.edu** and attach your recipe or helpful hint as a Word Document. Student recipes and ideas will be organized and added to the Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services website at www.niu.edu/comnontrad. If you would like to volunteer your time and knowledge to creating the project online, indicate this to Karen in your email.

NIU Commuting Students Go the Distance!

Nearly 3,000 Northern Illinois University undergraduate students are estimated to live off-campus. One-third of commuting students live within 20 miles of campus, 1/3 of commuting students travel between 30-40 miles and the remaining third travel over 40 miles one-way to attend classes in DeKalb.

Check out the Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services Share the Ride database at www.niu.edu/comnontrad if you are looking to share the commute with others.



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We can help you. There are several ways you can get involved. Space for meetings, bulletin boards for posting announcements, invitations, or messages are available in each Collegia. We encourage you to participate in a variety of established student organizations, or to form your own based on needs or interests. You may want to consider joining the Off-Campus Student Association, or the Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Association, or S.W.A.N. (Students Who are Non-Traditional).