Adult Degree Program

Robert Gardner, Director; Jeanne Mizher, Secretary

MISSION STATEMENT
In keeping with the Christian mission and academic goals of the University, the purpose of the Adult Degree Program is to provide a broad spectrum of SWAU students an opportunity to learn and to earn college credit through distance education. Distance education is focused on the delivery of a select number of programs and courses. The courses are taught by the same faculty who teach on-campus programs and content, objectives, and outcomes are the same. SWAU faculty and staff are committed to helping distance education students complete their programs successfully.

The Adult Degree Program offers distance education to individuals who often have commitments to family, work, and community that make it impossible to attend classes on campus on a regular basis. Mature and motivated students will find the flexibility of a distance education study program helpful in their pursuit of various higher-education opportunities. SWAU has offered the Adult Degree Program since 1980, and hundreds of students have successfully completed degree and certification programs in this manner.

AIMS OF THE PROGRAM
The objectives of the Adult Degree Program are:
1. To provide students with distance education courses that contain the same rigor, currency, and quality that is offered in the traditional curriculum.
2. To provide appropriate distance education technology and be responsible for the quality of all aspects of the delivery method.
3. To provide adult degree students with the necessary academic activities required to complete a college degree or certification through distance education.
4. To provide distance education students with access to important academic support services including library and learning resources, information on technology employed in the program, and counseling and testing services.
5. To provide distance education students with a full range of student services appropriate to support the program, including admissions, financial aid, academic advising, registration, delivery of course materials, degree audits, and graduation assistance.

ADMISSION
Admission to the Adult Degree Program falls under the Transfer Student admission policies described on pages 6 and 7 of this Bulletin. In addition, the program has set minimum requirements to ensure that the adult orientation of the program is maintained.

Eligible students:
1. Have completed a minimum of 24 transferable semester hours of college credit.
2. Have work experience.
3. Are at least 25 years of age.
4. Have a cumulative grade point average of 2.00 or higher on all previous college work.

Adult degree applicants must:
1. Complete an application for admission.
2. Have official transcripts from all previously attended colleges sent to the Adult Degree Program office.

NEW STUDENT SEMINAR
Students accepted into the Adult Degree Program must attend an admissions seminar prior to beginning classes. The admissions seminar is offered on campus before Fall and Spring semesters. The seminar provides students with academic advisement on degree completion requirements, information about registration and financial aid, classes on information literacy and distance education technology, sessions on alternative ways of acquiring college credit, and other activities to assist the adult student to reenter the world of the university through distance education.

TRANSFER CREDITS
The office of the Registrar is responsible for SWAU’s transfer evaluation service. Transcripts are reviewed to determine which academic credits will transfer and their applicability to SWAU degree requirements. Course credits earned from regionally accredited colleges and universities will be accepted as transfer credit subject to the following guidelines:
1. Courses with grades of C- or higher will transfer.
2. Validation exams may be required for SWAU English composition and mathematics requirements.
3. Concurrent enrollment for transfer credit must be approved prior to registering at another college or university. The student must file a petition with the Adult Degree Program office, and the course(s) must be approved by the Registrar’s office for applicability of credit for degree requirements.
4. A limited amount of transfer credit from certain unaccredited schools may be accepted upon review by the Registrar’s office.
5. Courses considered developmental/remedial, continuing education, co-operative education, extension, English as a Second Language, and non-credit classes will not transfer.
6. Even though credit hours are transferable, the transferred hours may not necessarily apply toward a particular degree program or general education.
7. Religion courses will be considered for transfer.
8. Transfer students’ cumulative grade point averages will include both grades earned in courses accepted in transfer and grades earned in courses taken in the SWAU Adult Degree Program.
9. Transfer credit is recorded on the student’s permanent record after he or she successfully completes 12 hours in the SWAU Adult Degree Program.
10. Transfer of experiential credit is described below in the section on Alternatives for Acquiring Credit.

PROVISIONAL ADMISSION
Students who do not meet the requirements for regular admission may be provisionally admitted for one term. Criteria for regular admission must be met prior to registering for a second term. Students younger than 25 years of age may be granted an exception by the Adult Degree Committee.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
Admission requirements for international students are different from the requirements for U.S. citizens. International students who apply to the Adult Degree Program must comply with the academic admission policies on pages 7 and 8 of this Bulletin. General information related to the on-campus residence of international students does not apply.
Adult Degree Program

READMISSION

Former Adult Degree Program students are encouraged to apply for readmission by submitting an updated application. Application for readmission is required for a student who has not registered for three or more consecutive semesters. Transcripts of subsequent work taken at other colleges or universities will need to be submitted. New degree audits will be prepared and reviewed with readmitted students and their faculty advisors. The degree requirements in effect at the time of readmission will be applicable. Students not maintaining active enrollment will be withdrawn from the program.

ALTERNATIVES FOR ACQUIRING CREDIT

Adult Degree Program students can take advantage of the following alternatives for acquiring college credit:

1. CLEP is a national system of college credit by examination offered by the College Board in Princeton, New Jersey. The SWAU policies on CLEP examinations are described on page 26 of this Bulletin.
2. Proficiency examinations provide the opportunity to challenge a course for credit. The policies for this alternative are also described on page 26 of this Bulletin.
3. Credit for prior learning is available through the portfolio assessment program. The student may receive up to 16 credits for college level learning acquired outside the formal credit granting process. To obtain this credit, the student must register for ADPS 230 Prior Learning Assessment, a one hour course. The course guides the student through the development of a portfolio to document college level learning. The portfolio will be evaluated by faculty in the discipline for which credit is requested. A limited number of courses, primarily in business and religion, are available for experiential credit. The student considering this alternative should consult carefully with the Adult Degree Program office for course applicability. Credit awarded through the portfolio does not apply toward the 32 hour residency requirement. In addition to the tuition for the Portfolio Development course, there is an evaluation and transcription fee for experiential credit.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The tuition rate for students in the Adult Degree Program is $495 per semester credit hour. There are no scholarship or payment plans for this program. All charges must be covered at the time of registration. Students are eligible for many financial aid plans and are encouraged to contact the SWAU Financial Aid office at the time they apply for admission. Students will be issued an ID card and those who are able to come on campus are welcome to use the library and other facilities like the gymnasium.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Students must meet the graduation requirements described on page 28 of this Bulletin. A minimum of 32 hours for the bachelor's degree and 24 hours for the associate degree must be taken from SWAU. Alternatives for acquiring credit do not apply to the residency requirement. The final 12 credits taken prior to graduation must be completed at SWAU.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

The academic policies of the University described from page 21 to page 37 of this Bulletin apply to students in the Adult Degree Program. Since most ADP students have additional responsibilities of employment and family, a normal course load is considered to be two courses per term (6-8 credits). Students may take up to 13 credits per term without petitioning for an overload. Petitions for an overload are filed with the Adult Degree Program office and approved by the University Academic Exceptions Committee.

A student may realize early in the semester that he or she cannot complete a course in a timely manner. The policy for withdrawing from a course is described on page 22 of this Bulletin. Students wishing to drop a course need to notify the Adult Degree Program office prior to the last day to withdraw from a class. This date is listed in the Academic Calendar on the inside cover of the Bulletin. The Adult Degree Program office will regularly inform students of the dates for dropping a class. Refunds to students withdrawing from a course are made on a prorated basis. Students will be informed of the eligible refund at the time they request a withdrawal from a course. Withdrawing from a class may also affect financial aid eligibility. The student should check with the Adult Degree Program office to understand the financial impact of reducing course enrollment.

It is expected that students will complete all academic work for a course during the dates designated for the semester of registration. The policy on Incomplete Grades is on page 24 of this Bulletin. After first seeking the approval of the instructor, the student files a request with the Adult Degree Program office for an incomplete grade and an extension of time to complete the requirements of the course. The Adult Degree Program office will review the request and forward it to the Vice President for Academic Administration for official action. Incomplete grades may adversely affect the assessment of satisfactory academic progress used to determine eligibility for continuing financial aid.
DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distance education courses are available to a wide spectrum of students at SWAU. The Adult Degree Program office is available to provide assistance to students in these other programs. The University uses Desire2Learn (D2L) as the on-line course management system. All courses require the student to have access to the Internet and e-mail. Some courses have video lectures which are played on a computer. Other SWAU programs which currently use distance education courses are described below.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students who are approved by the Registrar's office for independent study may take the course, if it is available, through distance education. Students should contact the Adult Degree Program office for access to the course on D2L, for copies of video lectures and for other course materials.

SUMMER DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distance education courses offered by SWAU are available for traditional, on-campus, undergraduate students during the summer. The Summer Distance Education course schedule is available for students prior to the beginning of summer registration. Students interested in this option should contact the Adult Degree Program office for access to the course on D2L, for copies of video lectures and for other course materials.

ADVENTIST DIGITAL EDUCATION CONSORTIUM (ADEC)

Southwestern Adventist University is a member of the Adventist Digital Education Consortium (ADEC). More information about the consortium and the services it provides is available at its website. SWAU students are eligible to take on-line courses provided by other Seventh-day Adventist colleges and universities. See http://www.adventistedu.org/

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

For a number of years, the Adult Degree Program has offered the Teacher Education Program through distance education. Post-baccalaureate students interested in completing the requirements for teacher certification must apply for admission to the University and to the SWAU Teacher Education Program. See page 61 of this Bulletin for further information or contact the SWAU Department of Education by telephone at (817)645-3921 extension 6256 or on-line at http://www.swau.edu/academics/education.asp. A special distance education teacher certification program for teachers in the Seventh-day Adventist Southwestern Union Conference is also available. Teachers interested in this program should contact the Southwestern Union Department of Education. The e-mail address is education@swuc.org or telephone (817) 295-0476.