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Retraining Adult Learners:
A Case Study of Three Programmes
from the Quebec CEGEP System.

Cecile Blackett

A Thesis

in

the Department of
Educational Technology

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

March 1993

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ISBN 0-315-84661-5

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ABSTRACT

Retraining Adult Learners: A Case Study of Three Programmes from the Quebec CEGEP System

Cecile Blackett

The need to develop and implement retraining programmes which facilitate re-entry into the workforce and fill the gap between present skills and those needed for future employment is one which has acquired renewed importance in recent times. One problem, however, lies in selecting a strategy which will be the most effective in meeting the retraining needs of this significant target group.

Through a review of the relevant literature and a case-study approach, three Quebec examples will be studied with reference, for purposes of contrasting approaches, to the British approach.

The results of a survey questionnaire administered to forty-three students in three retraining programmes in Quebec will also be used to examine critical aspects of

retraining programmes, namely: 1) how adult students are prepared for return to school on a full-time basis, 2) the length of retraining programmes; 3) the content of programmes; 4) psychological issues; 5) counselling, and 6) follow-up services. Feedback from the questionnaire, combined with results of the literature review, can be used in two ways: 1) to determine the structure and approach(es) best suited to helping adult learners achieve academic and career goals; and 2) to assist developers of retraining programmes in creating a more comprehensive and effective system which addresses the immediate retraining needs of the unemployed, i.e., returning to the workforce with new or updated skills as quickly as possible.

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INTRODUCTION

The unemployed have been defined as an economic category or group whose size and composition may vary but generally consisting of people without paid work, often financially dependent upon others (usually the State).¹ This tends to be the universal view of the unemployed although there may be slight variations in the basic definition between various countries. According to Statistics Canada (1992), the unemployed in Canada are those who, during the reference week met one of three criteria: a) were without work, including full-time students seeking part-time work, had actively looked for work in the past four weeks (ending with reference week), and were available for work, or who reported that there was no reason why they could not take a job or if they could not take a job it was because of "own illness or disability", "personal or family responsibilities", or "already had a job"; or, b) had not actively looked for work in the past four weeks but had been on layoff, i.e. expect to return to the job from which they were laid off, and were available for work; or, c) had not actively looked

¹Wilson, Valerie. (1987) Educating the Unemployed. Adult Education, 60, 151

for work in the past four weeks but had a new job to start in four weeks or less from the reference week, and were available for work.

With a labour force comprising, according to Statistics Canada (1992), a "civilian non-institutional population fifteen years of age and over" and with unemployment on the rise, governments have begun to channel funds into programmes aimed at retraining unemployed workers by updating their skills so that they may have a better chance of being able to re-enter the workforce. The need to develop and implement such retraining programmes is one which has acquired renewed importance in recent times.

Retraining is often seen as a solution for one type of unemployment, that is, unemployment when it is believed to be temporary or resulting from what Senior (1984) refers to as a mismatch between demand for and supply of skills." Retraining is, however, a viable strategy not only for the temporarily unemployed, but also for the long-term unemployed and is according to Wood (1987) ideally aimed at the unemployed, providing

short (usually "refresher") training courses and a counselling service, all intended to help people get back into work and fill a need in industry for skilled clerical, secretarial, accounting, administrative, medical or electrotechnology workers, to name a few.

In retraining programmes, the learners generally tend to be unemployed adults, therefore, it is important to understand the effects of unemployment on the individual and to be aware of the needs which they have. These needs have been outlined in Clayton and Smith (1987) as including: vocational; self-actualization or the development of "hidden talents"; acquisition of knowledge; self-improvement or expanding and growing as a person; meeting societal expectations; self-improvement; career preparation, and escape from boredom. As Wood (1987) states, "although State benefits covered the basic needs of the unemployed, they do not compensate for the loss of social contact and the opportunity to use skills that paid employment provides."

NATURE OF RETRAINING PROGRAMMES

Very often adults who need to acquire new skills or upgrade existing skills have the option of returning to university, college or adult classes in high school on a full- or part-time basis. These, however, may not be feasible choices for a number of reasons. Firstly, costs may be prohibitive and secondly, most unemployed workers want to return to the workforce in a matter of months, not years as may be the case with part-time study. There is a definite need to develop programmes in which specific new skills could be acquired in a relatively short period of time and at little or no personal expense, thus enabling unemployed workers to return to the workforce as quickly as possible.

Another factor which must be considered is that while the unemployed share some common experiences, there are many differences within this group. These differences include the way in which they experience unemployment, their preferred learning environment (formal classroom as opposed to distance education), as well as differences in abilities, level of education, employment experience, amount of time unemployed and

age which for many older adults may mean that retraining is not be a viable option because they may have a lesser chance of employment in the future.

Senior (1984) suggests that the following provisions be met to take into account these within-group differences: 1) recognise the different assumptions about the nature of unemployment and therefore the possible solutions; 2) reflect the needs which are common to the majority of unemployed people; and, 3) appreciate that unemployed people are individuals who react to their situation in ways specific to them, their families and communities. If those responsible for dissemination of information regarding retraining programmes recognize these differences and strive to provide programmes which allow for: 1) social interaction with others in similar situations; 2) a forum for dealing with problems; and 3) an opportunity to assess what employers want, then they make it possible for students to make informed and realistic decisions regarding courses which can help them achieve their goals regarding future career plans.

THE CANADIAN PERSPECTIVE

Government initiatives have targeted the unemployed as the group which has the greatest need of retraining. There is a need for retraining programmes which can upgrade the skills of the unemployed in as short a period of time as possible, thus increasing their chances of returning to the workforce. There is also a demand for specific retraining programmes which would address the particular needs of several categories of unemployed worker. According to Janis Foord Kirk (1992), signs suggest a social marketing campaign is underway to convince us of the importance of retraining to the future of Canada, one of the many countries, including the United States and Britain which has a well-defined retraining programme strategy. The problems facing many countries lie in the approach used to address the need for retraining and in determining which method(s) should be used in order to produce the best results, since no one model has been designated as the one to follow. To add more confusion to the matter, there are a variety of interpretations of official policy on retraining between provinces or states in the same country.

Witter (1991) notes eight "consistent deficiencies" in Canada's training policy over the past three decades of which the "most glaring" is a fragmented and divided jurisdiction resulting in too many interpretations and approaches within the Canadian system. Because of this division, Witter (1991) argues that the needs of employers and students have become secondary due to the rigid control exercised by Employment and Immigration Canada in the areas of criteria, length of programmes and training plans. Witter (1991) further states that the federal government has been short-sighted in emphasizing short-term training, and passive income maintenance; in creating inconsistencies regarding basic skills training; in making training programmes too rigid and inflexible; in contributing to the mismatch of training to the needs of the economy; in gathering insufficient data on training needs; and in failing to promote greater involvement of the business sector in training. In short, the federal government policy on training and retraining suffers from what Witter (1991) terms the lack of a "more solid partnership" between the federal government and the provinces and territories.

Although the federal government provides the funding for retraining programmes, the provinces are responsible for providing the courses and, as such, must take some responsibility for the state of retraining/training programmes. Each province strives to follow its own interpretation of official government retraining policy. In some Canadian centres, such as the Toronto area (city of York), efforts have been made to accommodate the student by allowing them to take courses on a flex-time basis, i.e., students come to class when they are able to even though courses are scheduled every day from 9 to 3:30. This may mean that they come to class three days a week or only mornings/afternoons. While this may be beneficial to the student, it may be a negative factor from two perspectives. First, the student who misses classes does not have the opportunity to "catch up" since a specific amount of material must be covered by a given date in order to meet provincial requirements. This means that the student is unable to fully benefit from instruction offered and from the "whole" retraining process. Second, it is difficult for teachers to continue to teach new material to part of the class

while helping those students who have missed classes do the current work and explain what they have missed.

In contrast, the Quebec CEGEP system expects that students entering full-time retraining programmes will be available for "full-time" study and will attend all courses at the scheduled time. In order to ensure that the programme is the main priority of the student, they continue to receive unemployment benefits during the program and for a three-week period after the programme ends. For the purposes of this paper, the Canadian example used will be taken from the CEGEP (College d'Enseignement general et professionnel) system in the Province of Quebec.

In the CEGEP system, the focus is on providing a "well-rounded" education with courses in English, French, and other "service" subjects being added to "core" subjects. There are several reasons why this is a good system. Firstly, it re-introduces the student to the work day, since they are in school for at least six to eight hours per day. Secondly, it can allow for an increase in self-esteem, self-worth, and self-

confidence as students meet people who share common problems and with whom they can interact and learn from. In addition, the focus on language skills is an excellent idea particularly with renewed emphasis on oral and written as well as interpersonal communication skills.

On the negative side, however, this type of programme which mixes "core" and "service" subjects leads to a heavy course load of six to seven courses per semester (see Appendix A) and up to 35 hours of instruction per week. The end result may be that the student may have to "sacrifice" one course in order to concentrate on those which are seen as being more important in achieving the goal of successfully re-entering and remaining in the workforce. They are also unprepared for the amount and variety of information being introduced, the long hours in school, the difficulty in balancing housework, family and school work. Students, many of whom have not been back to school in several years, often find this overwhelming and disheartening. Administrators who prepare and develop retraining programmes, while striving to

provide a well-rounded educational experience for the student, may not realize that the pressures students face could, when coupled with an already present fear of failure, serve to lower self-confidence, self-worth and self-esteem.

Participants in retraining programmes tend to represent a socially diverse cross-section of ages, backgrounds and educational abilities. According to Dolan, Fitzgerald, Messer and Townsend (1984), they are often apprehensive and unsure of their future direction and unfamiliar with higher education. Many members of these groups also tend to have some degree of alienation from formal academic learning.

In Canada, students are generally recruited from the Canada Employment Centres and from ads placed in major newspapers. Little emphasis is placed on the following key aspects of a retraining programme:

- a) counselling students as to the variety of programmes available to them before they decide upon a programme;
- b) testing students to determine their educational level, aptitude, programme preferences;
- c) *considering*

the amount of time a student has been out of school; and d) providing students with in-depth orientation prior to the programme. This orientation could provide students with the opportunity to speak to administrators and teachers and gain a better understanding of what is expected of them in class, approximate amount of time to be spent on homework, opportunities available once they have completed the program, services available through the school and government (both federal and provincial) once they complete the programme and familiarization with the educational institution.

In Britain, there are many training strategies which address the needs of the unemployed. Most of these programmes are administered by REPLAN which was implemented by the Department of Education and Science, the Welsh Office Education Department and the Manpower Services (now Training) Commission, to provide unemployed workers with courses which, according to Groombridge (1987), are likely to improve the quality, variety, and relevance of educational opportunities open to unemployed adults.

In a report on education and training for unemployed adults, Uden (1987) outlined REPLAN's five key goals to help the unemployed to: 1) develop the knowledge, skills and aptitudes which will increase their chances of finding and keeping a job; 2) cope with unemployment including the psychological effects of being unemployed; 3) understand the larger economic reasons for unemployment; 4) develop knowledge, skills and attitudes which help them make good use of their leisure time; and 5) see that there may be opportunities apart from paid or waged employment, such as self-employment. These goals would be achieved through upgrading of basic educational skills, dissemination of information concerning career and employment options, vocational training and counselling, as well as courses and workshops on self-evaluation and the importance of setting well-defined personal goals.

Another programme which addresses the needs of a particular group of unemployed workers, i.e., women, but whose findings can be used to address the general problems facing unemployed workers is *New Opportunities*:

for Women (NOW) promote a more gradual re-introduction to school by providing candidates for retraining with seminars and workshops describing what it will mean for them to return to school, discussing the problems they may face in trying to balance housework with homework, enabling students to explore a variety of subjects while providing seminars on study skills, resume writing, interview skills, career options, alternative training options and counselling; and even the opportunity to go through a "dry run" of school by attending classes for a day or a week in the actual school environment. In analyzing their experience in the NOW course, Dolan, Fitzgerald, Messer and Townsend (1984) felt that all students had benefitted from sharing experiences with each other and found the course, in many ways, was a good introduction to what they would be facing once they were able to return to work. They cited two key aspects of the programme. First, a short course on study skills which provided a gentle push to return to study and to work. Second, daily counselling sessions which gave them greater self-confidence and armed them with the necessary resources to look for jobs and to explore educational

options such as Open University, management courses, word processor courses, and teaching. Because of the programme, they felt better prepared to set more realistic goals and to know what resources were available to help them make choices.

The Canadian system, while containing many positive aspects, could also benefit from some of the lessons learned by the British programme. To this end, more revision and updating of existing training programmes should be carried out with recommendations made concerning the ways in which these programmes can better address the training needs of workers who must face constant technological change and ever-changing skill requirements.

Through this revision process as well as a more in-depth needs analysis from the perspective of business, workers, government, high schools and universities, not only could old programmes be overhauled, but new programmes developed which start the training process from high school and makes it an ongoing process to ensure that Canada's "labour market

policy and occupational training policy" are kept up-to-date and effective. The results of such a needs analysis might well show that there is a need for the business sector to be more actively involved in training programmes not only in terms of defining what skills are needed, but also to have ongoing upgrading and retraining of workers who are still employed with the costs shared between the employers and government. It might also point out that the needs of the unemployed should include not only receiving unemployment insurance, but access to short-term courses which will allow them to acquire practical and useful skills as quickly as possible so that they may re-enter the job market as better skilled workers.

Also emphasized might be the fact that jurisdictional discord hamper rather than encourage any solutions to the problem of providing effective training/retraining programmes which government initiatives might create or support. On the provincial side, such a needs analysis might also stress the need for flexibility and a process of ongoing revision perhaps leading to a redefinition of the type, length

and focus of training programmes including the courses offered, criteria for admission and matching of student abilities and interests to programmes offered them.

The results of the literature review indicate, as Witter (1991) notes, that by paying more attention to previous mistakes and correcting gaps in training policy, Canada can avoid repeating mistakes every five or ten years when old programs are dusted off and given a different name with the same results, an ineffective training programme which fails to meet the needs of employed workers, the unemployed and industry. Many of the British programmes focused on the use of questionnaires, interviews and reports from students in training programmes to examine existing retraining programmes. The results of these interviews, questionnaires and reports can help us to more clearly identify changes needed, gain valuable feedback from an important, but often overlooked view, that of the student and provide us with a much clearer direction in which to take retraining programmes into the future. Finally, needs analysis might serve three key purposes:

- 1) rectifying the mismatch of existing training

programmes to the needs of the economy; 2) emphasizing the need to focus on the development of a skilled labour force capable of coping with ever-changing technology; and, 3) provide the data needed to produce, design and deliver effective and efficient training programmes.

THREE QUEBEC CEGEP RETRAINING PROGRAMMES

The federal government, through Canada Employment centres and using guidelines from the Ministry of Education as to duration and content, funds several full-time career retraining programmes at CEGEPs throughout the province of Quebec.

With the creation of these programmes, certain criteria were established. In the programmes which are being examined for the purposes of this thesis, the chosen area of emphasis was the acquisition of secretarial skills for the automated office. In order to be accepted into the programme, potential students had to meet the following criteria: be unemployed, have a good knowledge of English and French; and, have had two or more years of experience in an office in any

capacity. The programme assumed that students had no prior knowledge of computers or computer applications.

With this set of criteria in mind, three intensive full-time retraining programmes, one of thirty-five weeks duration and two of forty-nine weeks were implemented at Dawson College in Montreal and at Champlain Regional College in St-Lambert. Based on the three-year Office Systems Technology programme, all three emphasized the acquisition of office automation skills, with the one of shorter duration (35 weeks) having slightly more emphasis on accounting skills.

According to the 1988 programme outline for "Techniques bureautiques," (See Appendix B) the aim of the Manpower Office Systems Technology programme was to enable students with previous office experience to acquire the skills necessary to perform the office manager's role in either a traditional or automated office through a mastery of new office technology. Some of the related aims of the programme are to enable the student to become computer literate and to provide retraining through a structured course of full-time

study focusing on computer applications such as word processing, electronic spreadsheets, databases and hard disk management. Ultimately, it is hoped that the students graduating from the programme will have a better chance of finding employment, and once employed, a better chance of promotion. In addition, attention would also be given to developing other skills such as decision making and the ability to study effectively, since, according to Ford (1985), absence of these skills is often a common source of difficulty, unhappiness and subsequent failure within education.

To determine which method(s) or approach(es) best meet the requirements of retraining programmes it is important that needs assessment be conducted, particularly since there are several needs to be met such as basic, expressed, normative and comparative. Scissons (1984) sees three key issues in the area of needs assessment: 1) definition of need; 2) measurement of need indicators; and 3) inference of need based on available indicators, but believes that "the job of any end user of needs assessment data is to be certain that the definition of need used to compile

the estimates of needs are well known and that they are in agreement with the necessity of the situation in which they are being used." In addition, Rosenblum and Darkenwald (1983) suggest that a cardinal principle of adult education is that adults should participate in planning their own learning activities, however, this principle is too often ignored. Banks (1983) takes this argument a step further by suggesting that if we don't know the needs of the students then how can we provide educational facilities to meet those needs. If administrators or retraining programmes are made aware of the needs of the target audience, perhaps through the results of such information gathering tools as questionnaires and/or interview, then they can streamline the courses to a specific audience using the most effective tools available.

To fully understand the needs of the unemployed in retraining programmes, many information gathering techniques have been used with particular emphasis on interview or questionnaire. On the basis of the literature review, the best approach seemed to be the use of needs analysis as a design tool in the form of a

combination of questionnaire (see Appendix C) and interview with students currently enrolled in retraining programmes. Through the needs analysis, student reactions to two key issues would be gauged. Firstly, how they felt about returning to school on a full-time basis and secondly, what their opinion was about retraining in general and their programme, in particular. The needs analysis instrument or questionnaire would also provide a useful profile of the learner through information gathered in the Background Information section. This tool would also address the need to assess adult and continuing education retraining programmes from the student's perspective. Through feedback received from students in the programmes involved would provide valuable insight into the needs of unemployed adults in retraining programmes which may be of use in the development and design of new programmes and in the evaluation of existing programmes. This feedback can also help shape and determine the structure and approaches which may be most conducive to the success of adult learners in achieving the academic and psychological goals of such programmes. The responses

can also help us to determine in which specific areas the CEGEP training system needs changing, if any, and, which approach(es) would best satisfy the needs of the unemployed in retraining programmes.

The interviews and questionnaires administered to students would also examine the various factors with which the adult learner must cope with a view to providing ways to help the learner to develop a more positive attitude and greater self-confidence, while attaining the goal of acquiring a marketable skill.

The three programmes which comprised the case study will be examined in a five-part process comprising: The Sample, Selection of Survey Tool, Design of the Questionnaire, Administering the Questionnaire, Analysis of Questionnaire Results (Results of Questionnaire - Parts I, Part II, and Part III) and General Conclusions from the Questionnaire.

The Sample

At Champlain Regional College, two Manpower training programmes were offered: one a forty-nine week UIC-supported Manpower Office Systems Technology programme with an enrolment of fifteen students and another thirty-five week Welfare-sponsored programme with 13 students. At Dawson College, nineteen students were enrolled in a forty-nine week UIC-sponsored Manpower Office Systems Technology programme. All were selected from lists of candidates registered at participating Canada Employment Centres. In most cases, admittance was on a first-come, first-served basis. At both CEGEPs, it was assumed that the student population would have little or no computer literacy. The students, all of whom are adult learners met the following entry requirements: 1) they had already been in the workforce for two years; 2) they had their DEC or equivalent; 3) they were eligible for unemployment insurance benefits or Welfare (in the case of the 35-week programme); 4) they have a very good command of English; and, 5) they have a good knowledge of French.

Of the nineteen candidates who began the course at Dawson College in November, seventeen were women and two men. Since November, two (both women) have withdrawn, having found secretarial jobs. In the 49-week Champlain programme, fourteen of the students are female with one male. None of the students in this programme have withdrawn since the programme began in October while four (three females and one male) of the fifteen students (twelve female and three males) who began the 35-week programme at Champlain have since withdrawn.

Students in both programmes have an excellent chance of re-entering the workforce as skilled workers in an automated office environment after having upgraded their computer skills and improved their written and oral communication skills in English and French. This would be accomplished through a structured course of study with particular emphasis on the attainment of mastery level skills in all areas of office automation software tools. In addition to these computer applications courses, they would be taught or re-introduced to the principles of writing business

documents such as letters, memos and reports. Seminars and courses would also be offered in how to prepare effective resumes and covering letters.

The students would have access to classrooms and labs at specified times, and would be able to practice whenever the computer labs were not in use. As students of the College, they would have borrowing privileges at the College's library and would also have access to any specialized books available in the Office Systems Technology Department at each college. All books, diskettes, and other supplies would be provided by the government and they would receive unemployment/welfare benefits based on their attendance. If necessary, additional books would be purchased through Canada Employment Centres at no additional cost to the student.

Selection of Survey Tool

With the hectic school and home schedule of the student, a questionnaire seemed to be the best information gathering tool as well as the best technique for needs analysis and assessment with which

to determine the positive and negative aspects of one type of retraining programme, that which is geared toward "recycling" the unemployed office worker.

The questionnaire drew from the experience of students in three related Manpower Office Systems Technology programmes. Its purpose was to determine student feelings about the programme as it exists and the way(s), if any, in which they would change the programme to make it more ideally suited to retraining. In order to make the questionnaire as comprehensive as possible, students were interviewed informally so as to determine the types of questions they believed should be asked. The questionnaire was based on: 1) the results of these informal interviews regarding important components of retraining programmes; 2) the impact of returning to school on a full-time basis on various aspects of students' lives; 3) readings on the subject from selected journals; and 4) the readings related to needs assessment and the importance of adults being involved in determining the content of programmes in which they are enrolled.

The questionnaire attempted to cover as much material as if in-depth interviews had been conducted and was organized into three main sections: Background Information, Views on the Programme, and the effects of Returning to School Full-time. The questionnaire, once written, word processed, proofread and edited was then administered to 43 students (26 at Champlain Regional College and 17 at Dawson College) who were able to complete it at home and return it one week later

Design of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part comprised twenty-five questions pertaining to background information such as age, gender and education with which to form a profile of the learners. The second part focused on twenty-five questions relating to the students' views on the programme in which they are presently registered, how they would change it, which subjects should be emphasized and whether it addressed their particular needs in terms of skills and as adult learners. The third part concentrated on several aspects of returning to school on a full-time basis and entailed answering five

related questions. In each of the three parts, a mixture of YES/NO and open-ended questions, as well as those in which more than one choice could or should be selected.

Administering the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered in the third semester of each programme for the following reasons. By this time, the students had: a) been in school full-time for over six months (the programmes began in October 1991 at Champlain and November 1991 at Dawson); b) taken several difference core and service courses in the programme; c) been able to reflect on the changes, if any, that returning to school full-time had on their lives; and d) gained a better ability to comment on such topics as the type of education they were receiving, its relevance, strengths and weaknesses.

Once the questionnaire was ready in its final form, it was distributed in class to the 43 students involved. They were given instructions as to which questions were to be answered YES or NO, which were open ended, and which could have as many answers as

possible. In addition, students were reassured about the confidentiality of the information obtained. Since the questionnaire was lengthy, students were able to take it home in order to carefully read the questions and think about their responses. The questionnaires were then collected within a week and the information compiled and sorted into various categories from which to draw conclusions and spot trends. Collection of questionnaires was, however, one of the most difficult phases since students forgot or misplaced them. However, with a little prodding, approximately three-quarters (33) were returned and all proved to contain worthwhile and insightful comments.

Analysis of Questionnaire Results

Responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The SuperStat shareware programme for IBM PCs and compatibles was used to compile the data gathered. This package uses a system of code files for the variables (questions) and value labels (types of responses) with corresponding data files for recording the actual responses received. The questionnaire was divided into five sections: Part 1a, Part 1b and Part

1c (it was necessary to separate the information due to the limitation in the number of variables accepted by the programme) for Background Information, Part 2 for students' views on their programme; and Part 3 on the return to school on a full-time basis. A frequency distribution was then performed producing a count according to answer and corresponding graphs were also produced to show the results in percentages.

Results of the Questionnaire - Part I

It had been expected that the student population in these programmes would be primarily composed of women over 25 years of age, many of whom have been out of the workforce for over ten years. In fact, over 80% of the students are women. The total number of students for all three groups combined was 47 at the beginning of each programme. Since that time, a total of four have dropped out leaving 43 students. Of the 43 students, there were 38 females and 5 males. Of the 33 students who returned the questionnaire, over 60% were between the ages of 30 and 49 with the largest percent (42.3) being between 40 and 49. Fifty percent

of the respondents were single and 46% married. Over 50% had children.

In terms of educational background, over 35% had completed high school, 23% had completed CEGEP, 34% had completed an undergraduate degree and one had a Master's degree in Immunobiology. Prior to hearing about the course, slightly less than half (46%) had thought of returning to school on a full-time basis to upgrade their skills or to learn something completely new. The fact that half of the respondents had not thought of returning to school full-time was not due to any negative feelings about school, but to other factors such as long absence from school (over 50% had not been in school for over 10 years) as well as limited finances, time, family constraints (babysitting), and fear that unemployment insurance benefits would be cancelled if the courses they took were not sanctioned by Employment and Immigration. In fact, over 60% had positive past educational experiences and were happy to return to school while receiving unemployment/welfare benefits and without the need to pay school fees or purchase textbooks. Under

these circumstances, most felt they could now pursue their present educational interests in the areas of computer subjects (73%) and accounting (42%).

Over 90% of the student had held jobs prior to enrolment in the programme. The length of time on the workforce varied from less than one year to over fifteen years with the majority (over 30%) having worked from ten to fifteen years and 27% having worked more than fifteen years. Of those who had worked prior to enrolling in the programme, over 95% had held full-time jobs with an almost equal number having been unemployed either from 4-6 months (31%) or over nine months (31%) before they began the programme. Over 50% said the programme would enable them to upgrade already existing skills. After having completed two semesters of their respective programmes, over 40% believed that their best opportunity for a job was now in the field of word processing.

In the latter part of Part I, the respondents were asked, among other things, to describe their feelings about being on unemployment or welfare. The highest

percentage of responses were for the following feelings: low self-esteem (58%), the need for self-improvement (69%), the need to do something to stay emotionally and mentally healthy (54%), the need to upgrade skills so that in future jobs they would be more valued by the employer (77%), low self-confidence (50%), the need to return to school to learn something completely new (54%). Some other responses which students provided in the "Other" choices were the need to socialize, feelings of anxiety and anger at not being able to find a job; feelings of worthlessness and depression and fear for those on unemployment that the next step would be welfare.

In terms of their fears about returning to school, most were afraid that they would not be able to cope with the work (35%) and an equal number feared that they would not be able to satisfactorily balance housework and school homework. Some (12%) believed they were too old to learn, would not be able to make new friends (12%), or that they would not be able to adjust to the new school routine (19%).

Over 85% believed that adult student had special needs which were different from those of regular day students at CEGEP (17 to 20 year olds). They linked those special needs to the fact that it was difficult to balance house work with school homework especially when there were children and family obligations involved. Finally, most (73%) found that it was more tiring to be in school than to be working because the evenings were not yours but were spent on homework and preparations for classes.

Students commented that they benefitted from the relatively low student:teacher ratio of approximately 17:1 which enabled the instructor to provide more personalized instruction. This was especially critical to the success of the computer component of the programme since many of the students had two major anxieties: 1) fear of learning and using new technology and 2) fear that they would not be able to keep up with or understand the classwork. Having more time to work with the students allowed the instructors to address student fears and give the students more confidence in their ability to master the software.

packages being taught while providing remediation or enrichment as needed.

Lack of recent exposure to a formal educational environment has implications in the type of anxieties which typify adult learners re-entering the classroom since most are related to being in a new learning situation. They are intensified by factors such as emphasis on marks and the need to acquire computer skills which may lead to computer anxiety. This is an important consideration, according to Marcoulides (1988) given that the recent growth in availability of computers in the work environment has made familiarity with computers and the ability to use them effectively a requirement for success in most fields.

With the clientele being served by this programme, an examination of the psychological and societal factors which might negatively impact on their learning experience had to be addressed. Feedback from other CEGEPS (Vanier) which had run similar programmes, aimed at adult learners, but targeting different populations was used to determine the structure and approaches

which might be most conducive to the success of the learner in achieving the goals of the programme. These goals, as outlined by the Ministry of Education include: 1) re-entry onto the job market with new, up-to-date skills; 2) developing a more positive self-image; and 3) improving communication skills. All of these goals, if successfully attained, could lead to greater self-confidence and transfer of skills to an automated office setting.

Some of the major problems which the students noted could be divided into two major categories: student-based and equipment-based. Concerning the equipment-based problems, they were categorized by lack of practice time and fear of new technology. Student-based problems were, however more on the level of interpersonal conflicts, fear and insecurity about new subjects, lack of previous computer experience, feelings of inadequacy, fear of returning to school, and general insecurity among the students. These factors, combined with the stress and fatigue

experienced by both students and teachers due to the heavy schedule of courses (seven courses per semester) led to a lack of motivation on the part of some students. There was also a need for constant attention and reassurance by other students which led to problems from some in the group who felt they were being "held back" by the slower students. This was compounded by the presence of different skill levels among students in all subject areas. Although one of the prerequisites for entrance into the programme was a DEC or equivalent, this was not always strictly adhered to and did not guarantee that all students would have the same aptitude for the same subjects in the classes offered throughout the programme.

Since many of the students were between 30 and 49, there was some resentment of students in the regular day programme due to their age (17 to 21 years old) and the fact that they had a better grasp of computer applications. Students in the manpower programme began to see the regular day students as their "competition" and themselves as "second class" with little or no chance of ever getting a job. This was compounded by

the residual anger and hostility which they harboured at former employers because of the way in which they had lost their jobs. Yet, the same complaints about what had gone on in their former workplaces did not prevent an "office politics" mentality from entering the classroom with accusations of favouritism, cheating, malicious gossip, etc. These interpersonal problems were magnified because the student often spend more time with each other in school than they do with their families. Most of the problems were eventually resolved once they were confronted and dealt with directly.

No easy solutions existed to many of the problems outlined, whether equipment- or student-based. Personality clashes seemed to lessen with the passage of time and general talking things over. Students even began to feel less inadequate, less angry and more committed to using the time at school to their best advantage being grateful that they were being paid to attend courses which they could otherwise not have afforded at a private college. Regarding the equipment-based problems, unfortunately due to

budgetary constraints it was very unlikely that the problems outlined such as the lack of practice time in computer labs during the week or the need for new computers could be rectified. The problem of new technology is also difficult to deal with particularly in the 60-hour time frame given for the computer classes. This time is locked in by the Ministry of Education and will not likely change in the near future.

Results of the Questionnaire - Part II

Over 80% of the students indicated that they had learned about the programme from the newspaper (The Gazette) or from friends. They enrolled in the programme for the most part to improve upon existing skills and to learn new skills. For over 90% of the students the programme was financed by UIC or Welfare. Had the programme not been financed by one of these two sources, over 60% felt that they would not have been able to enrol for financial reasons while others cited lack of interest. They expected a lot of work and felt there would be many practical courses particularly computer applications, however, many felt the amount of

work exceeded their expectations and felt that some of the courses were too rushed, while others such as Shorthand (Notemaking) need not have been offered at all since they were not a necessity in today's automated office.

Among the most important courses they listed word processing, French, and computerized accounting. Students felt they needed to have related skills such as oral and written communication in French and English improved, however, they wondered whether they could have had these in workshop or seminar format, rather than as credit courses with exams and homework. Many thought these concerns could have been addressed prior to the programme if they had had the benefit of an orientation. What they received in terms of an information session was too quick and did not adequately prepare them for many aspects of the programme. On average, over 50% believed that the course load was too heavy and involved too much time on homework and not enough time in class. This, many added, was a constant bone of contention in relationships with family and friends.

In spite of some of the negative aspects of the programme, over 85% indicated that they would not hesitate to recommend the programme to others adding that the instruction was geared to adults (66%) and the programme was more than just a secretarial course (77%). Many thought that after the programme, they had a good chance of re-entering the job market as accounting clerks or word processing operators, but also felt that their re-introduction to school meant that they would view these as temporary positions and would try to advance within a company through more courses. For the most part, they thought the courses provided were of a practical nature (92%) and prepared them for reentry into the workforce (85%) with the exception of a few courses such as Shorthand and Office Automation Overview. On the negative side, they did not feel that they had learned about new job possibilities or career options while in the programme(89%) and felt that too many of their classmates expected to be spoon-fed, not having to open a book, read, understand, interpret or try things for themselves.

Computer applications played an important part in the three programmes being surveyed particularly because so many unemployed workers need to upgrade their computer skills in order to have a "competitive edge" in today's job market. Computers are here to stay. They are becoming an integral part of industry of all types and the fact that many companies are becoming automated for better productivity and increased profitability means that workers must also become computer literate as quickly as possible. According to Cambre and Cook (1985) this technological change often leads to concern about how persons will react both cognitively and emotionally to computers. They further state that this is particularly true of computer literacy courses in which students often come with a full range of attitudes and expectations of the courses and with varying degrees of anxiety regarding their ability to use computers. Sixty-two percent of the students indicated that they were below average in computer skills prior to the programme but felt (70%) that they were now average. In the related area of fear or anxiety toward computers, 77% indicated that prior

to the programme they had computer anxiety and 96% were now comfortable with the computer.

If they were able to redesign the programme, many felt that there should be more screening of applicants to make sure that everyone was at about the same level of ability in order to make for a better learning environment and experience. They believed that administration should be less lenient towards students who ask to be exempted from certain courses because they were too difficult or too stressful. Many suggested that the programme be spread over a longer period of time so fewer courses could be offered per semester thereby giving them more time to spend on each course. In addition, they believed that there should be more time off between and during semesters such as is the case for the regular day students. As an alternative, they suggested that there be shorter programmes which focussed on a specific type of course such as word processing or accounting. They also thought that there should be more focus on oral French as opposed to written. Further, they thought that practical courses should be emphasized and less time

devoted to non-essential courses. Most expressed a strong need to determine what the interests of the students were prior to being registered in a programme. This would allow those who are more secretarial in orientation to be streamed into one programme while those more interested in accounting could be placed in another. More and better orientation should be given to make students aware of what is involved in terms of the number of courses, amount of time to be spent on homework and goals of the programme.

Another suggestion was that a math prerequisite should exist for accounting and Lotus courses in which students would be tested prior to enrolment. Many also believed that the regular day programme guidelines should not be adopted for these programmes and that employers should be consulted to see what specific needs exist in the workforce in order to create a programme geared to meeting these needs.

Results of the Questionnaire - Part III

Over 80% believed that their lifestyle had changed since being in the programme. Most attributed this

change to the fact that they were busy all day in classes as well as at night and during the weekend making dinner, doing homework and housework. Related to this was the effect that being in the programme had on relationships with family and friends (69% saw a change). In some cases, there was more emotional support given (19%) but an almost equal number believed that they were receiving less emotional support. There was less financial support. Responses were almost evenly distributed between those who said that they received more help with the housework (23%) and those who said they received less help (19%). Most said that they were more impatient, felt more stressed, had more arguments but in general said that even if they did not receive more emotional, financial or housework support, they felt that their families knew that they were doing this not only for themselves but for the good of the family. Some were frustrated, however, and felt that there was no enjoyment in life any more, only school work or housework.

In terms of benefits from the programme, 92% felt that the new computer skills they had acquired would

benefit them greatly in the future. Also high on the list of benefits were the new friends they had made (65%), the fact that they were now thinking about continuing to become more specialized in one area (50%), the increased self-esteem (42%), the accounting courses (69%), the new people they met (65%), increased self confidence (54%), and the fact that they were certainly less bored than when they were without work or school (42%). The most difficult aspects of returning to school were primarily the lack of time for themselves and their families, the neglect of social life and the difficulty for some of a return to school after a long period away from the classroom. The positive aspects mentioned above as well as the intellectual stimulation, the new skills, being busy and learning how to organize and prioritize seemed to make up for most of the negative aspects of returning to school full-time. One student mentioned that if she had realized how hard some of the subjects were she would never have been so hard on her own children when they were in school.

Finally, most said their priority after graduation was to find a job and they agreed that the programme had made them feel more confident about job search and their chances of re-entering the workforce.

General Conclusions From The Questionnaire

The students questioned indicated that there were two fairly strong streams of thought which they believed retraining programmes should follow. The first emphasized skills upgrading. Students believed that if retraining programmes were meant to upgrade skills lacking by unemployed workers, then only courses which serve to upgrade those essential skills such as computer applications (word processing, spreadsheets, databases), accounting (traditional and/or computerized), or programming should be offered. This would mean programmes of shorter duration addressing only those specific skills.

The second viewpoint reflected the fact that while many students felt the retraining programme in which they were participating was a good one, it would span a longer period of time. They noted that the programmes,

as they exist, require students to take five to seven courses per semester. This results in two major problems on the part of the student. Firstly, one or two courses often have to be sacrificed in order to concentrate on the really important courses with the result being that the students were not benefitting from all the courses being offered.

Secondly, for students who have not been in formal educational institutions for many years, it is a difficult re-entry into school and study. They find themselves having to balance totally new subject matter with hours of homework. They are, for the most part, dedicated to retraining in order to make themselves more marketable and they realize that much work will be required of them, but they would prefer to see that work be more concentrated on specific core courses rather than have to be spread out over five to seven courses each semester. When this happens the programme loses its effectiveness, the students see learning as a negative experience and the overall goals of the programme will not have been met.

Instead of being bombarded with five to seven courses per semester, extend the time period of the entire programme or shorten it so that only core courses are taught. In addition, more flexibility must be shown to the length of certain courses, particularly the computer applications. If the programme length remains as it is now, then increase the number of hours for computer applications courses to 75 or 90 hours per semester instead of the current sixty and reduce the number of hours for service courses such as shorthand, interaction in the workplace or records management or make them available as seminars. In this way, the challenges of providing a "well-rounded" education would be met with students receiving necessary instruction and practice time in core subjects while being able to upgrade skills in grammar and office procedures.

Finally, the questionnaire respondents touched on another key area, that of the need to provide them with post-programme follow-up and referral services. Many students noted that once they have completed the programme, including the stage, they would like to know

that there was still somewhere in the College they could visit for guidance, vocational counselling or just to discuss a variety of topics. Although it was stressed that after graduation, the students would be more than welcome to visit the school, many students thought that this was addressing their needs on a social level to keep in touch with a place and people who had become familiar over a period of up to a year. Their real concern, however, was the career and counselling aspect. If a job was not forthcoming in the space of one to three months after they graduated from the programme, where could they go to receive additional counselling, to have their resumes updated, to get help with a new covering letter or even to practice on the computer so that their newly acquired "upgraded" skills would not become rusty.

One recommendation might be to stress one area such as word processing and offer courses related to that area. Over a shorter period of time, perhaps twelve to fourteen weeks, courses could be offered in an intensive programme which would allow sufficient

time for instruction, practice and the development of mastery level skills.

Another suggestion would be to place greater emphasis on the identification of needs of the students and of industry and to set up a training programme which places students in a company in an apprentice position. Expenses for this type of programme could be shared by the government (federal and provincial) and, to a certain extent, the participating company. Related to this would be matching student needs with student preferences and programmes with industry needs.

Provision should also be made to provide more access to pre-, during and post-course counselling services which Groombridge (1987) stresses would help the unemployed: 1) cope with unemployment, 2) improve their confidence and ability to seek employment; 3) consider getting more education by showing them the types of programmes available to them and to people of all levels of ability; and 4) develop or preserve vocational skills.

A successful training/retraining programme should emphasize needs assessment; realistic rather than ad hoc recruitment policies; orientation to see if student expectations and course realities are in sync; adaptability on the part of the educational institution and the government regarding course content, variety and length of programmes; needs of teachers of the unemployed; more community involvement; and an active process of ongoing evaluation of courses based on feedback from previous courses. All of this would help to meet the goal of providing the unemployed worker with a positive learning experience in which they can grow not only through the skills they acquire but also through an increase in their levels of self-confidence and self-assurance.

CONCLUSION

There is a great deal which we can learn from adult students in retraining programmes regarding the content, direction, goals, objectives and structures of the programme. Inputs come from many areas: government agencies, society in general expressing a need for certain types of courses, departments in

educational institutions such as Office Systems Technology, administrators, teachers and students. It is important to note, however, that one of the most important elements of the system, the students, are rarely surveyed even though they are the principal output of the system in that if they are successful in completing the programme and their work stage, they are returned to the workforce in various capacities.

If a system is "any group of purposefully interrelated things, material or abstract" then one of its principal aims is to remain viable or self-organizing and self-regulating, successfully adapting to a changing environment. It must be able to react to unforeseen external disturbances. Perhaps this is the essence of the differences which exist in approaches to retraining programmes. To continue being viable in this way implies that there should be continuing and ongoing needs assessment. It is obvious from the unemployment statistics that many workers need to have their skills updated and upgraded if they are to re-enter the workforce. Even those workers presently in the workforce must continually be retrained to keep up

with ever-changing technology. Therefore, there is a rationale for providing retraining programmes, but little needs assessment has been done regarding the content of programmes or the needs of the students.

Often good programmes exist with clear guidelines from the Ministry of Education, however, modifications may be needed to update the programmes themselves. If needs assessment has not been performed on the content within the last five to ten years, the programmes stagnate and do not serve the needs of the target group. As technology changes, so should the content and structure of many programmes if retraining programmes are to directly meet the requirements of the groups for which they are intended.

In the Quebec examples presented, it was clear that many students enter programmes with an unrealistic view of what will be required of them during the programme. Many are not questioned as to their needs and interests and are, therefore, streamed into the wrong type of program such as secretarial instead of accounting simply because that is what is available at

that given time. They are not made aware of other options available to them and sometimes, owing to the language factor, their choices can be further limited. Furthermore, adult learners, sometimes in their 40s and 50s who have not taken courses on a full-time basis for more than 10 years, are unprepared for re-entry into the rigours of full-time school, including the number of courses they must take in a semester and the number of hours they will be in the classroom on a weekly basis, not to mention homework. Realistically, they expect that the only courses they will be taking are word processing courses, if they are registered for a course in word processing. In this, their expectations and the actual content of the courses tend to be far apart. They often find themselves taking, in addition to the word processing courses, courses in filing, shorthand, psychology, business administration, math and accounting, all of which may be useful but which the student is unprepared for.

The three programmes which have been examined in this paper all have positive aspects in that their aim is to provide the student with a "well-rounded"

educational experience in which a variety of complementary or service courses are given in conjunction with the required courses. The problem, however, is that this approach, while having its merits, is often not suited to the needs of the unemployed. People who have had several years experience in an office do not always appreciate having to attend a course on filing twice a week for six hours over a twelve week period. They want courses which address their particular skills gap whether it be updating electrotechnology skills or computer skills. They also want access to counselling services after they finish the programme. They realize that in these tough economic times not everyone will find a job immediately. They want and need someone to counsel them if their job search proves unsuccessful and their newly found self-confidence starts floundering or when they need advice on other career opportunities or new avenues to explore or even to find out where they can get information about starting a small-business or the feasibility of staying in school for a longer period.

Most of the literature on adult education seems to suggest that one method of achieving results is to find some method of tailoring training to meet individual needs. This is the ideal in adult education, but particularly in retraining programmes which aim to provide adults with the skills they require to get back into the workforce quickly. These skills must be practical and relevant. Not only technical skills, but also transferable skills and interpersonal skills such as the ability to communicate confidence, willingness to make a commitment, and the ability to "market" oneself or to have an idea of what employers are looking for in potential employees. Administrators and bureaucrats, as well as teachers may have a good idea of the skills needed by students in retraining programmes, but if they are to streamline programmes to suit the needs of a wide variety of students, they must look to the students at least partially to answer the question of what is needed, what special requirements exist, and what types of courses should or should not be included in such programmes. They must also seek input from the business sector so that the skills being taught are realistic, as well as from teachers and administrators

who are aware of the needs of the programmes, the students and the community. Suggestions from all of these groups give us valuable insight into the needs of such programmes. They also shed new light into possible changes which focus on the actual needs not only of the unemployed, but of industry as well and serve to create a workforce which can keep up with ever-changing technology.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE LIST OF COURSES BY SEMESTER
 DAWSON COLLEGE
 MANPOWER OFFICE SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMME
 NOVEMBER 18, 1991 TO NOVEMBER 20, 1992
49 WEEKS

SEMESTER I (12 WEEKS) NOVEMBER 18 TO DECEMBER 20, 1991 &
JANUARY 6 TO FEBRUARY 21, 1992

<u>COURS NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u># OF HOURS</u>	<u>#OF UNITS</u>
*C 412-101-87	KEYBOARDING & FORMATTING	60	
*C 412-111-89	OFFICE AUTOMATION OVERVIEW	60	
*C 412-802-89	HARD DISK MANAGEMENT	60	
*S 201-113-85	MATHEMATICS & STATISTICS	60	
*S 602-323-72	FRENCH	45	
*S 603-915-76	BUSINESS ENGLISH	45	
		330	

SEMESTER II (12 WEEKS) FEBRUARY 24, 1992 TO MAY 15, 1992

*C 412-201-87	WORD PROCESSING I	60	
*C 412-415-89	NOTEMAKING	60	
*C 412-525-89	SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS	60	
*S 410-110-79	ACCOUNTING I (10 WEEKS)	60	
*S 410-165-91	COMPUTERIZED ACCOUNTING	15	
*S 601-423-72	FRENCH	45	
		300	

SEMESTER III (12 WEEKS) MAY 18, 1992 TO AUGUST 21, 1992**

*C 412-301-87	WORD PROCESSING-INTENSIVE	60	
*C 412-305-89	BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS I	60	
** 412-535-89	RECORDS MANAGEMENT I	45	1.66
** 412-615-85	DATABASES AND DATABANKS	60	2
*C 412-702-91	RESEARCH TECHNIQUES	15	
*S 401-102-85	ORGANIZING/AUTOMATING TECH.	45	
*S 602-908-74	BUSINESS FRENCH	45	
		330	3.66

****VACATION PERIOD: AUGUST 10 TO 21, 1992**

SEMESTER IV (13 WEEKS) AUGUST 24 TO NOVEMBER 20, 1992***

<u>COURSE NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u># OF HOURS</u>	<u># OF UNITS</u>
*C 412-401-87	INFORMATION PROCESSING	60	2
** 412-405-89	FR. BUSINESS COMMUNICATION	60	2
*C 412-635-85	WORK STUDY PROJECT (STAGE)	120	
** 412-801-89	FRENCH NOTETAKING	60	2
*S 350-906-77	INTERACTION IN THE BUSINESS WORLD	45	
		345	6.00
	TOTAL HOURS & EXTRA UNITS	1,305	9.66
*C	REQUIRED CORE COURSES		
*S	REQUIRED SERVICE COURSE		
**	ADDITIONAL COURSES		
***	INCLUDES THREE-WEEK STAGE (NOVEMBER 2 TO 20, 1992)		

APPENDIX B

1988 TECHNIQUES DE GESTION DE BUREAU PROGRAMME OUTLINE

Secteur professionnel:

412.00 TECHNIQUES DE GESTION DE BUREAU

412.62 Techniques de bureau

(1988)

TYPE DE SANCTION:

CERTIFICAT D'ETUDES COLLEGIALES

MIN. 40% UNITES

Établissements autorisés:

cégep de l'Abitibi-Temiscamingue
cegep André-Laurendeau
cégep de Baie-Comeau
cégep de Bois-de-Boulogne
Champlain Regional College
(campus Lennoxville)
(campus Saint-Lambert)
(campus St. Lawrence)
cégep de Chicoutimi
Dawson College
cégep de Drummondville
cégep Edouard-Montpetit
cégep François-Xavier-Garneau
cégep de la Gaspésie et des Iles
cégep de Granby
cégep Héritage
John Abbott College
cégep de Joliette-de Lanaudière
cégep de Jonquière
cégep de La Pocatière
cégep de Lévis-Lauzon
cégep de Limoilou
cégep Lionel-Groulx
cégep de Maisonneuve
cégep de Matane
cégep Montmorency

cégep de l'Outaouais
cégep de la Région de l'Amiante
cégep de Rimouski
cégep de Rivière-du-Loup
cégep de Rosemont
cégep de Saint-Hyacinthe
cégep Saint-Jean sur-Richelieu
cégep de Saint-Jérôme
cégep de Saint-Laurent
cégep de Shawingan
cégep de Sherbrooke
cégep de Sorel-Tracy
cégep de Trois-Rivières
cégep de Valleyfield
Vanier College
cégep de Victoriaville
collège Bat
collège d'Affaires Ellis Inc
collège de l'Assomption
collège de Secrétariat Notre-Dame
collège Lasalle
collège Moderne de Secrét
Trois-Rivières
collège O'Sullivan de Montréal, Inc
collège O'Sullivan de Québec Inc
École commerciale du Cap

**CONDITIONS PARTICULIÈRES D'ADMISSION ÉTABLIES
PAR LE MINISTRE**

- Posséder une expérience minimum de travail en secrétariat de deux ans.
- Posséder une bonne maîtrise du clavier
- Avoir atteint les objectifs du cours 103 (débutant 1) en anglais

OBJECTIFS

Ce programme vise à permettre à l'employé de secrétariat, d'assumer les fonctions d'aide à la gestion dans un bureau traditionnel, automatisé informatisé ou interactif. Il vise aussi à donner à cette personne, les connaissances nécessaires afin de la rendre apte à maîtriser et à implanter les nouvelles techniques de bureau dans une unité administrative.

CONTENU DU PROGRAMME

201-113-86	ÉLÉMENTS DE MATHÉMATIQUES APPLIQUÉE	2-2-2	2
350-906-77	INTERRELATIONS DANS LE MONDE PROFESSIONNEL	1-2-3	2
401-916-76	DROIT DES AFFAIRES	3-0-3	2
410-146-85	COMPTABILITÉ DES OPÉRATIONS FINANCIÈRES	3-2-4	3
412-101-87	SAISIE DE L'INFORMATION TEXTUELLE	2-2-2	2
412-111-85	BUREAUTIQUE, SYSTÈME ET TECHNOLOGIES	2-2-2	2
412-201-87	TRAITEMENT DE L'INFORMATION TEXTUELLE	2-2-3	2½
412-301-87	TRANSFORMATION DE L'INFORMATION TEXTUELLE	2-2-2	2
412-305-85	RÉDACTION D'AFFAIRES (LANGUE MATERNELLE)	2-2-3	2½
412-401-87	EXPLOITATION, TRANSMISSION DE L'INFORMATION TEXTUELLE ET AUDIO	2-2-2	2
412-415-85	MÉTHODOLOGIE DE PRISE DE NOTES (LANGUE MATERNELLE)	2-2-2	2
412-505-85	RECHERCHE D'INFORMATION ET RÉDACTION DE RAPPORTS	2-2-3	2½
412-525-85	TRAITEMENT DES DONNÉES	2-2-2	2
412-605-85	SYSTÈMES D'ARCHIVAGE	2-1-2	1¾
420-927-84	INITIATION À L'INFORMATIQUE ET ÉLÉMENTS DE PROGRAMMATION	2-2-2	2
601-911-76	FRANÇAIS ÉCRIT	3-0-3	2
604-104-82	ANGLAIS ÉLÉMENTAIRE IV	2-1-3	2
604-301-82	ANGLAIS INTERMÉDIAIRE I	2-1-3	2
604-308-83	ANGLAIS DES AFFAIRES A	3-0-3	2

plus un cours au choix du collège parmi les disciplines 401 et 412

* Ce cours est remplacé par le cours 602 908 74 "LE FRANÇAIS DES AFFAIRES" (3-0-3) pour la clientèle anglophone

APPENDIX C

SCHOOL: _____

RETURNING TO SCHOOL ON A FULL-TIME BASIS
FOR ADULT STUDENTS IN MANPOWER COURSES

PART I: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. AGE

21 TO 29 30 TO 39 40 TO 49 50 TO 59 60+

2. SEX

MALE FEMALE

3. MARITAL STATUS:

SINGLE MARRIED DIVORCED WIDOW/ER

4. CHILDREN:

IF YES, HOW MANY: ..
YES NO

5. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

PRIMARY HIGH CEGEP UNIVERSITY UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL SCHOOL (B.A., B.Sc.) (M.A., Ph.D.)

6. LAST YEAR YOU ATTENDED SCHOOL FULL-TIME : _____

7. HAD YOU BEEN THINKING ABOUT RETURNING TO SCHOOL
FULL-TIME BEFORE YOU ENROLLED IN THIS PROGRAMME?

YES NO

8. WERE YOUR PAST EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE? ELABORATE

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

9. WHAT ARE YOUR EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS?

ART

SCIENCE

MATH

ACCOUNTING

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS

TRAVEL/TOURISM

MANAGEMENT

OTHER: PLEASE SPECIFY: _____

10. WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES?

11. PRIOR TO ENTERING THIS PROGRAMME, DID YOU WORK?

IF YES, WHAT WAS YOUR JOB

YES

NO

12. HOW LONG HAD YOU BEEN WORKING PRIOR TO ENTERING THE PROGRAMME ?

LESS THAN 1 YR

1-5 YRS.

5-10 YRS

10-15 YRS.

15 YRS+

13. WAS THIS WORK FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME?

PART-TIME

FULL-TIME

14. HOW LONG HAD YOU BEEN UNEMPLOYED BEFORE YOU REGISTERED IN THIS PROGRAMME? _____

15. IF YOU HAD A CHOICE OF JOBS, WHAT WOULD BE YOUR IDEA OF THE IDEAL JOB? _____

16. WHICH OF YOUR PREVIOUS JOBS DID YOU LIKE MOST? WHY?

WHICH OF YOUR PREVIOUS JOBS DID YOU LIKE LEAST? WHY?

17. FOR YOU, RE-ENTRY INTO THE WORKFORCE WILL INVOLVE

LEARNING
COMPLETELY
NEW SKILLS

UPDATING ALREADY
EXISTING
SKILLS

18. IN WHICH PROFESSION DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE THE BEST CHANCE OF FINDING A JOB NOW?

SECRETARY RECEPTION

WORD
PROCESSOR

OFFICE
MANAGER

ADMIN
SECRETARY

OTHER PROFESSION? _____

19. WHEN YOU BEGAN THE PROGRAMME, WHICH SKILLS DID YOU THINK YOU MOST NEEDED TO DEVELOP?

20. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING FEELINGS DID BEING ON UNEMPLOYMENT /WELFARE EVOKE IN YOU? (ANSWER AS MANY AS YOU LIKE)

LOW SELF-ESTEEM

LOW SELF-CONFIDENCE

BOREDOM

NEED FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT

STAY MENTALLY HEALTHY

NEED TO TAKE MIND OFF TROUBLES

NEED TO UPGRADE SKILLS

NEED TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW

OTHER: PLEASE SPECIFY: _____

21. HOW DID YOU FEEL ON YOUR FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL?

22. WHAT WERE SOME OF YOUR FEARS/ANXIETIES PRIOR TO RETURNING TO SCHOOL FULL-TIME?

- FAILURE
- AFRAID OF INABILITY TO COPE WITH SCHOOL WORK
- THOUGHT YOU WERE TOO OLD TO LEARN NEW THINGS
- THOUGHT YOU WOULD NOT MAKE NEW FRIENDS
- DID NOT THINK YOU COULD GET BACK INTO THE ROUTINE
- FEARED INABILITY TO BALANCE HOMEWORK & HOUSEWORK
- OTHER: PLEASE SPECIFY _____

23. WHAT WERE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO MOST WHEN YOU STARTED THE PROGRAMME?

24. DO YOU THINK ADULT STUDENTS HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS WHICH ARE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF REGULAR DAY STUDENTS IN CEGEP (17 TO 20 YEAR OLDS)?

YES

NO

IF YES, WHAT ARE THESE SPECIAL NEEDS? HAVE THEY BEEN MET BY THE PROGRAMME?

25. WHICH DO YOU FIND MORE TIRING? SCHOOL WORK OR A JOB WHEN YOU WERE WORKING? WHY?

PART II: YOUR VIEWS ON THE PROGRAMME

1. HOW DID YOU LEARN ABOUT THIS PROGRAMME?

2. WHY DID YOU ENROL IN THIS PROGRAMME?

3. HOW IS THIS PROGRAMME BEING FINANCED?

UIC

WELFARE

**STUDENT
LOAN**

**SELF
FINANCED**

OTHER

4. IF THIS PROGRAMME WERE NOT FINANCED BY UIC OR WELFARE, WOULD YOU STILL HAVE ENROLED?

YES

NO

5. WHEN YOU ENTERED THE PROGRAMME, WHAT DID YOU EXPECT IN TERMS OF THE AMOUNT OF WORK AND TYPES OF COURSES?

HAVE THOSE EXPECTATIONS BEEN MET? WHY? WHY NOT?

6. DID YOU HAVE ORIENTATION BEFORE THE PROGRAMME BEGAN?

YES

NO

7. WHICH COURSES IN THE PROGRAMME DO YOU CONSIDER MOST IMPORTANT?

8. WHICH COURSES IN THE PROGRAMME DO YOU CONSIDER LEAST IMPORTANT?

9. WHICH COURSES NOT CURRENTLY OFFERED DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAMME?

10. IS THE COURSE LOAD

TOO HEAVY
COMMENTS:

JUST RIGHT

EASY

11. APPROXIMATELY HOW MUCH TIME PER EVENING DO YOU SPEND ON HOMEWORK?

1 HR

1-2 HRS.

2-4 HRS

4HRS. +

12. ON WHICH SUBJECT(S) HAVE YOU SPENT THE MOST TIME DOING HOMEWORK?

13. IN YOUR OPINION, HAS THE AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK ASSIGNED PER COURSE BEEN FAIR?

14. IF A FULL-TIME JOB WERE OFFERED TO YOU NOW, WOULD YOU QUIT THE PROGRAMME? WHY? WHY NOT?

15. SINCE ENTERING THE PROGRAMME, HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT OTHER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WHICH YOU DID NOT KNOW ABOUT BEFORE?

YES

NO

IF YES, PLEASE SPECIFY:

16. WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THIS PROGRAMME TO OTHERS?

YES

NO

17. IS THE INSTRUCTION IN THE PROGRAMME GEARED TOWARD ADULTS?

YES

NO

WHY? WHY NOT? _____

18. DO YOU THINK THE PROGRAMME PREPARES YOU FOR MORE THAN SECRETARIAL WORK?

YES

NO

IF YES, WHAT OTHER JOB(S) DOES IT PREPARE YOU FOR?

19. DO YOU THINK THIS PROGRAMME PREPARES YOU FOR RE-ENTRY INTO THE WORKFORCE?

YES

NO

WHY? WHY NOT? _____

20. DO YOU THINK THE COURSES OFFERED ARE PRACTICAL?

YES

NO

WHY? WHY NOT? _____

21. WHO WOULD YOU CLASSIFY YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF COMPUTERS PRIOR TO THE PROGRAMME?

ABOVE
AVERAGE

AVERAGE

BELOW
AVERAGE

22. HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF COMPUTERS NOW?

ABOVE
AVERAGE

AVERAGE

BELOW
AVERAGE

23. WERE YOU AFRAID OF WORKING WITH COMPUTERS PRIOR TO ENTERING THIS PROGRAMME?

YES

NO

24. DO YOU FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE WITH COMPUTERS NOW?

YES

NO

25. IN GENERAL, WHAT WOULD YOU IMPROVE IF YOU WERE GIVEN THE TASK OF RE-DESIGNING THIS PROGRAMME?

PART III

RETURNING TO SCHOOL FULL-TIME

1. HAS RETURNING TO SCHOOL FULL-TIME CHANGED YOUR LIFESTYLE?

YES

NO

IF YES, HOW HAS YOUR LIFESTYLE CHANGED?

**HAS THIS CHANGE AFFECTED RELATIONSHIPS WITH SPOUSE/
CHILDREN/BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND/FAMILY?**

YES

NO

IF YES, HOW?

MORE SUPPORTIVE EMOTIONALLY

LESS SUPPORTIVE EMOTIONALLY

MORE SUPPORTIVE FINANCIALLY

LESS SUPPORTIVE FINANCIALLY

HELP WITH HOUSEWORK MORE

HELP WITH HOUSEWORK LESS

OTHER: PLEASE SPECIFY _____

2. WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST DIFFICULT ASPECT OF RETURNING TO SCHOOL FULL-TIME?

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE BEST ASPECTS?

3. IN GENERAL, HOW HAVE YOU BENEFITTED FROM BEING IN THE PROGRAMME? (ANSWER AS MANY AS YOU LIKE)

- ACQUIRED COMPUTER SKILLS
- MADE NEW FRIENDS
- BECAME AWARE OF DIFFERENT SKILLS
- TOOK MIND OFF PERSONAL PROBLEMS
- INCREASED SELF-ESTEEM
- LEARNED/IMPROVED ACCOUNTING SKILLS
- MET NEW PEOPLE
- BECAME AWARE OF DIFFERENT CAREERS
- MADE YOU FEEL MORE SELF-CONFIDENT
- DECREASED BOREDOM
- OTHER: PLEASE SPECIFY _____

4. WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS AFTER GRADUATION?

5. DO YOU FEEL MORE CONFIDENT NOW ABOUT RE-ENTERING THE WORKFORCE?

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS BEING USED FOR A RESEARCH PROJECT.
ALL INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.