



Virginia Adult Educator Certification Program

The development of a certification program for adult educators is a new and exciting opportunity to help program managers, teachers, and support staff to build their knowledge and skills. Providing consistent and structured training for adult educators is a major step toward improving the adult education system statewide. The overarching goal for this initiative is increased student achievement in programs where management, teachers, and support staff work together to provide the best possible environments for adult learning to occur.

To focus attention on quality programs and to provide a rationale as well as a framework for the content of the certification program for program managers, we recommend the adaptation of *Standards for Adult Education ESL Programs* for use by all adult education programs. These standards were developed by Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) in 2003 and provide the best overall standards for adult program management and for instruction in ESOL. For instruction in ABE/GED®, we will use the standards recently adopted by the Maryland State Department of Education with some modification to suit Virginia programs.

The content for all certification training will be based upon the program standards. For program managers and teachers, there are three levels of training with a certificate at the conclusion of each level, as shown in the following pages. Level Three will consist of online courses for graduate credit that would be offered through Virginia Commonwealth University at a reduced tuition fee. Courses for program managers need to be developed, but some, if not all, could be based on courses currently offered in VCU's Adult Learning Masters of Education Program. For teachers in ABE/GED, Level Three will be the Online Adult Education Certification Program that leads to the endorsement in adult education. Level Three for ESOL instructors will be developed from a group of VCU courses designed for ESOL. For support staff, there will be a single level of training consisting of two workshops. Program managers are encouraged to continue to develop their support staff by sending them to courses especially designed for office staff and offered through local community colleges or other providers.

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Virginia Adult Educator Certification Program Program Managers

Level One

Both sessions of Level One are designed as institutes: one to be held in the fall and the other in summer at the VAILL. They will begin at 1:00 on the first day and conclude in the afternoon of the second day. There is an assignment to be completed and discussed on the morning of the second day.

Evaluation of the learning will consist of pre- and post-questionnaires wherein the participants will rate their knowledge and skill levels on the topics covered. In addition, follow-up assignments involving program self-assessment or other work as appropriate will be required of participants in order for them to receive their certification. Staff at the Resource Center will review this post-institute assignment, using a rubric for scoring. In addition to the institutes, program managers will be required to take at least one other workshop on a subject of their own choice, developing a self-assessed area of need.

Upon completion of both institutes and all of the follow-up reporting, participants will receive a certificate of Level One completion.

Planned rollout: Program Managers Meeting, Fall 2008:

I. *Managing Adult Education Programs: Administration*

- OAEL oversight of adult education programs
- Funding from OAEL: types, sources, and cycles
- Understanding WIA Title II
- Advisory and governing boards
- Importance of grant writing skills
- Data collection, submission, and analysis
- Data-based decision making
- Personnel management: effective staffing
- Professional development for all staff

Planned rollout: VAILLs, Summer 2009:

II. *Managing Adult Education Programs: Instruction*

- Components of adult education programs: Basic Literacy, ESOL, Adult Intermediate, Adult Secondary, GED, Family Literacy, Jail Programs, Workplace Programs, Technology-supported Learning, and Distance Learning
- Content standards
- Assessment
- Using data to inform instruction
- Curriculum and instruction in adult education
- Research-based practice
- Monitoring, evaluating, and coaching teachers
- Managed/open enrollment

Level Two

The Level Two sessions will be in a traditional workshop format of about six hours each. Participants will take an additional workshop on a self-assessed area they wish to strengthen. The evaluation process will be similar to the process described above. Upon completion of all three workshops and all follow-up reporting, participants will receive a certificate of Level Two completion.

Planned rollout: Regional Trainings, Fall 2010:

I. *Managing Adult Education Programs: Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention*

- Promoting adult education programs
- Working with community partners
- Approaches to student recruitment
- Keeping students in the program

II. *Managing Adult Education Programs: Developing Staff*

- Hiring and retaining staff
- Monitoring, evaluating, and coaching staff
- Professional development

Planned rollout: VAILLs, Summer 2011:

III. *Managing Adult Education Programs: Planning*

- Types of planning and how to use them
- Vision, mission, goals, and objectives
- Using data to strengthen the planning process
- Involving teachers and students in the planning process
- How to include community partners in planning

Level Three

Level Three training for program managers will be a series of graduate level courses to be developed through Virginia Commonwealth University and offered online statewide. They will be provided for a reduced tuition fee.

Virginia Adult Educator Certification Program For Instructors

Level One

While many adult education instructors have had considerable classroom experience, in many cases this comes from the K-12 program. Others have been corporate trainers, and while this gives them a good sense of the needs of the adult learner, they are probably less prepared to provide instruction to and employ instructional strategies appropriate for the lower educated adult. The first level of training for adult education instructors will comprise three, day-long (6-hour) workshops. The final activity in each of the workshops will be a self-assessment and plan for personal development. Each participant will be asked to develop a plan for implementing key content from each of the workshops. Six weeks later, a survey will follow up on this plan. Instructors will have further follow-up with peer instructors in their individual programs or with their program managers. In addition to the workshops outlined below, each instructor will attend an additional workshop of their own choice, to strengthen a self-identified area of need.

Upon completion of the workshops and the follow-up reporting, participants will receive a certificate of Level One completion. ABE/GED and ESOL strands will be separate but will, for the most part, cover the same categories, the specifics taking into account the differing strategies used in ABE/GED and ESOL classrooms.

ABE/GED Instructors

Planned rollout: VAILLs, Summer 2009:

I. *Instructing the Adult Education Student: The Field of Adult Education*

- The field of adult education: basic literacy, adult basic education, adult secondary education, ESOL
- The adult learner
- Content standards
- Curriculum frameworks Assessment

II. *Instructing the Adult Education Student: Resources*

- Curricula: resources, materials, building your own, other options
- Distance learning
- Other technology-supported learning

Planned rollout: Spring 2010:

III. *Instructing the Adult Education Student: Delivery of Instruction*

- Lesson plans/instructional design
- Multi-level classes
- Teaching methods
- NRS
- Retention
- Managed/open enrollment

ESOL Instructors

Planned rollout: VAILLs, Summer 2009:

I. *Instructing the Adult ELL: The Field of ESOL*

- The adult education system: federal, state, local, ABE, GED, ESOL
- The field of ESOL: TESOL, K-12, adult, higher ed, ESP, EFL
- The adult learner and cultural diversity
- Content standards
- Assessment, accountability, and NRS

II. *Instructing the Adult ELL: Resources*

- Curricula: types of curricula, textbooks, the REEP curriculum, eclectic curricula, and other curriculum options
- Resources specific to the four language skills
- Distance learning
- Other technology-supported learning

Planned rollout: Regional Trainings, Spring 2010:

III. *Instructing the Adult ELL: Delivery of Instruction*

Level Two

Level Two also consists of three, day-long workshops. These workshops will emphasize production or performance on the part of the instructors, where the workshops in Level One focused on building awareness. Even where topics look similar, the work expected of the participants at this level will be more advanced and more detailed than that in the first level. Strands will be separate for ABE/GED instructors and ESOL instructors. Participants will be expected to bring examples of their current work or develop materials that they will use in their classes. Follow up to these workshops will be similar to that for Level One. As with Level One, instructors will attend another workshop of their own choice to strengthen self-identified areas of need.

ABE/GED Instructors

Planned rollout: VAILLs, Summer 2010:

I. *Instructing the Adult Education Student: Methodology*

- Retention: student goals, assessment and student progress, distance learning, and technology support
- Program gaps (gap analysis in a case study)
- Respect and bias
- Assessment
- Counseling
- Goal setting

II. *Instructing the Adult Education Student: Curriculum*

- Curriculum development
- Importance of data in informing curriculum development
- Lesson Plans
- NRS: purposes and process

III. *Instructing the Adult Education Student: Enhancing Instruction*

- Developing instructional expertise
- Integrating technology to enhance instruction
- Solving instructional challenges
- Working with special populations: OSYs, adults with LD, adults with low-level literacy

ESOL Instructors

Planned rollout: VAILLs, Summer 2010:

I. *Instructing the Adult ELL: Methodology*

- Life skills lesson planning
- Integrating four language skills in a lesson
- Strategies for teaching multi-level classes
- Teaching with technology
- Integration of Virginia Adult ESOL Content Standards

II. *Instructing the Adult ELL: Curriculum*

- Placement and assessment (needs assessment, short- and long-term goal setting, standardized assessment for accountability)
- Course Design
- Curriculum development

III. *Instructing the Adult ELL: Enhancing Instruction*

- Current methodology in language teaching
- Second language acquisition research for adults
- Classroom management and grouping models
- Micro-teaching
- Observations

Level Three

Level Three for ABE/GED instructors will consist of the Online Adult Education Certification Program being offered through Virginia Commonwealth University. These courses lead to the endorsement in adult education. Level Three for ESOL instructors will be developed from a group of VCU courses designed for ESOL.

Virginia Adult Educator Certification Program For Adult Education Support Staff

The certification program for support staff will consist of two workshops over the course of one year. The first session will last six hours. The second will be a four hour workshop.

Planned rollout: Regional Trainings, Fall 2009:

I. *Adult Education*

- The adult learner
- Adult education system
- National Reporting System
- Assessment
- Grants, financial matters, and documentation

Planned rollout: Regional Trainings, Spring 2010:

II. *Customer Service*

- Customer service
- Program gaps (service gaps)
- Respect and bias
- Confidentiality
- Time management
- Vendor relations