

# RETURNING TO COLLEGE

# 10 Questions To Consider

Bridgewater State University  
College of Continuing Studies



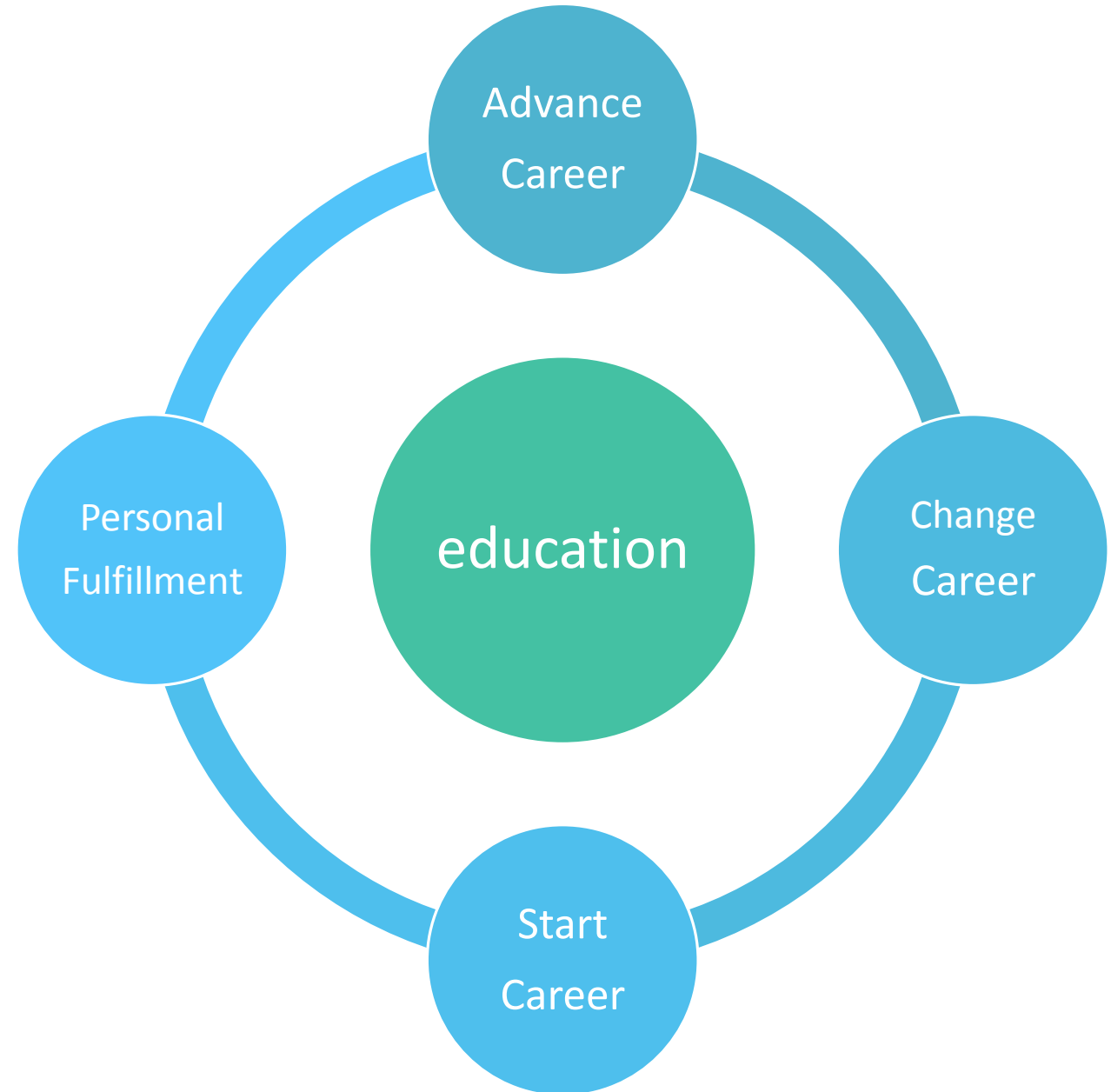


# You are not alone.

Millions of adult students have made the journey to complete a degree. Millions more will return to college to finish a degree over the next few years. So, you do not have to do this on your own. You will find others in a similar place sitting next to you in class.

# Why do you want to return to school?

Adult students are goal oriented and focused on their education because adults know what they want. Adults return to college to complete a degree to advance their career or embark on a new career path. Some adults are starting a career while others may be focused on the personal satisfaction that comes with earning a degree.





## Is it the right time?

You probably have a lot going on in your life. You may be working a full-time job, raising a family or both. Adult students are often busy with work, family commitments and life. Let's face it, there's never a perfect time. But, the investment in education often pays dividends in numerous ways.

## **Are you ready to make the financial and time commitment?**

Returning to college involves financial and time commitments. Most colleges offer financial aid opportunities. Some employers provide tuition assistance. The time commitment involves classroom work as well as studying.



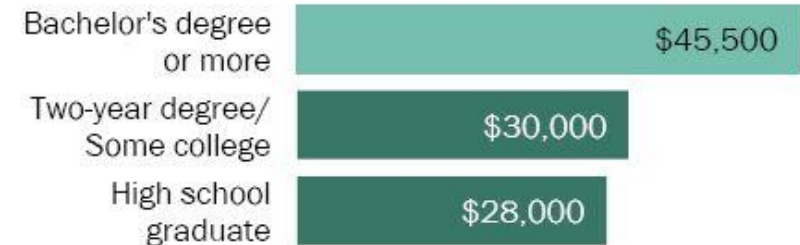
# What's the Return On Investment?

Research indicates that individuals with a bachelor's degree have a greater lifetime earning potential than those with only a high school diploma or a two-year degree. The non-profit PEW Foundation in 2014 used US Census data to conclude that Millennials with a bachelor's degree or more earned much more than those with a two-year degree or high school diploma.

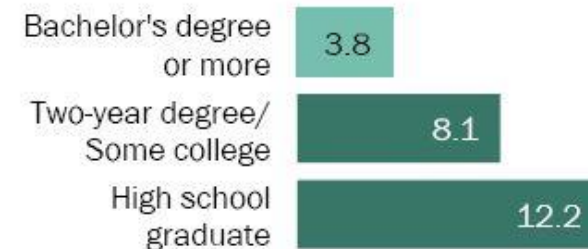
Graphic source: Pew Research Center, February, 2014, "The Rising Cost of *Not* Going to College"

## Disparity among Millennials Ages 25-32 By Education Level in Terms of Annual Earnings ...

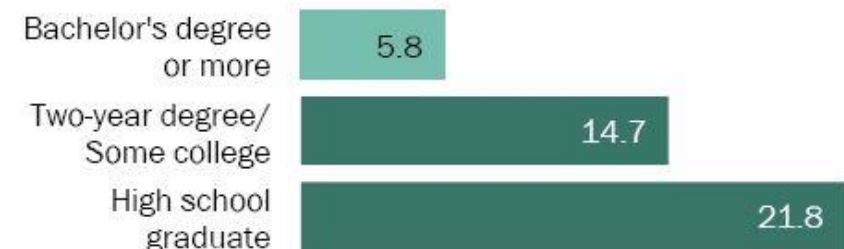
*(median among full-time workers, in 2012 dollars)*



## Unemployment Rate ...



## And Share Living in Poverty ...



## **Will you have a support network at home or at work?**

Studies show that it is helpful to have a support network that allows you to make the commitment to your educational goals. Both moral support and support in providing you time to study/attend classes is important.



# Is this the right fit?

How good a fit is a potential college or university in meeting your educational goals? You should be able to picture yourself at the university.

Consider the C&C at each college: Cost of attendance (tuition and fees) and the convenience factor in terms of whether the institution is flexible and provides what you need to be successful in your pursuit of a degree.

*‘How will a college or university help you attain your educational goals?’*



# What is the credit transfer policy?

Many adult students have earned college credit at a previous institution or institutions. Check the college credit transfer policy at the institutions you are researching. Some universities and colleges are very transfer-friendly while others may not accept all of your previous credits. The greater number of credits, the closer you are to reaching your degree.

**Credits =  
Time  
&  
Money**



## **How accessible is the campus?**

Is the campus in a convenient location from your work or home?

Is the campus easy to get to?

Is there plenty of parking on campus?

Are there places to eat or study on campus?

## Can you attend part-time?

Most adult students pursue a degree on their pace. A large percentage attend part-time. Life happens and situations change. Will your college change with you? Are there restrictions that prevent you from attending part-time or full-time? Can you take a day course at the institution, if your schedule changes?

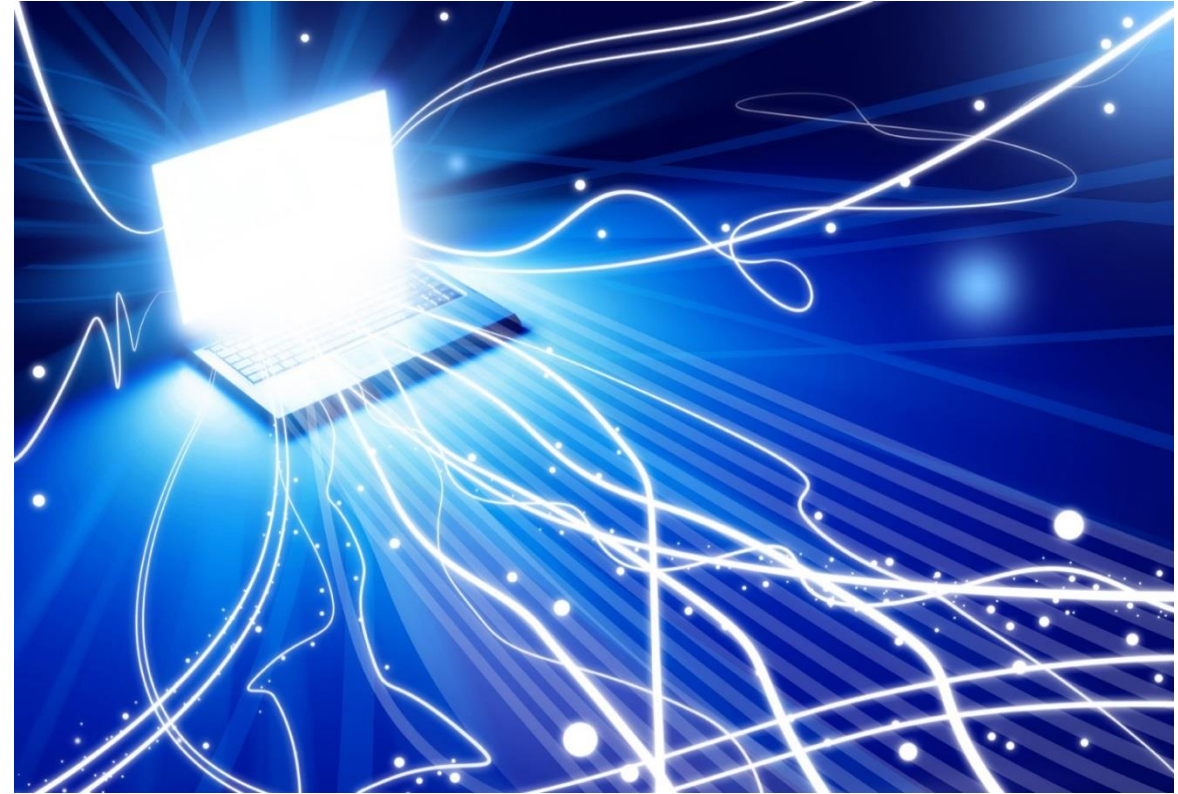
6,500,000

**\*Part-time undergraduate students in the US**

\*Source: US Dept. of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics (2014)

**Does the university or college offer flexible scheduling options? (online, hybrid, face-to-face)**

What type of learning options does the institution provide? Can you study on campus, online and through hybrid or blended classes (hybrid or blended classes mix classroom and online learning in a single course)?



# **‘The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.’**

(Lao Tzu,  
a wicked long time ago as we say in Massachusetts)

There’s a lot to consider. Take some time to think about these questions. Remember, without the first step there is no journey.

We can help answer some of these questions. Please feel free to contact us.  
BSU College of Continuing Studies  
508-531-2788 ● [www.bridgew.edu/ccs](http://www.bridgew.edu/ccs)

