

Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy (2005). *Rethinking instruction and participation for adult basic education, Study Guide*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy.

The National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) funded the Goodling Institute to develop and pilot a Study Circle Guide—Rethinking Instruction and Participation for Adult Basic Education. This guide is one of a series of study circle guides that NCSALL has developed and made available on their website. The purpose is to help staff developers and practitioners organize and conduct Study Circles so that practitioners can read, discuss, and use research to improve their practice.

The Study Circle was designed for persons working in adult education programs: teachers, program directors, counselors, volunteers, or others. This Study Circle deals with topics that are broad enough to be of interest to ABE, GED, and ESOL practitioners in a variety of delivery settings: community-based organizations, local educational agencies, libraries, community colleges, correctional facilities, etc.

In Session One, Program Participation and Self-Directed Learning, participants share information about their interest and experience with program participation and self-directed learning and how the topic relates to their own work contexts. Participants examine research from NCSALL's Longitudinal Study and participate in an activity that begins to explore what it means to participate and engage in self-directed learning efforts.

Session Two, Delivery Systems and Learner Participation, gives participants the opportunity to engage with current research and identify its relevance to their own practice by – (1) exploring the notion of “delivery systems,” (2) making personal connections to research, and (3) discussing implications for curriculum and program design. The group reads a recent draft of the NCSALL Persistence Study results and examines ways it relates to larger program and learning issues.

During the final session, Diversity in Adult Learning and Education, participants focus on the idea that people learn in different configurations. Three different types of programs are examined – (1) On-line, (2) Distance, and (3) face-to-face. Participants are asked to apply the research they have read to different situations.

Administrators and teachers from programs located in both central and eastern Pennsylvania participated in the two pilots that met on three separate occasions (three hours each) during one month. Through these sessions it was determined that the readings and activities are appropriate for and relevant to both new and experienced practitioners, administrators and teachers, in a variety of adult education settings.