

Evaluating the Provision of Adult Education on Nantucket



Nantucket Community School

ENGAGING, STRENGTHENING & CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY



WPI



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Evaluating the Provision of Adult Education on Nantucket

An Interactive Qualifying Project submitted to the Faculty of
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Abstract:

The Nantucket Community School (NCS) is an organization with the goal to “engage strengthen and connect the community [of Nantucket]”. The NCS continually strives to improve its adult education program to better serve the community, via new courses or delivery methods. The goal of our project was to find course offerings that encompass both the desires and professional needs of NCS students, but also employers, businesses, and the community at large. Based on our background research and the findings from our surveys and interviews, we recommend that the NCS add courses in finance and QuickBooks, technology and computer skills, and professional-level foreign language, as well as continue to offer classes in CPR and First Aid, ESOL, GED, and Real Estate.

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The adult education coordinators at the Nantucket Community School offered vital information to our project. Their experience in the adult education industry has allowed them to provide advice on most aspects of our project, whether that be contributing to our survey or interviews. They were always available for any questions we had and gave us a great list of contacts for our surveys and interviews.

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The Nantucket Community School

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We would like to thank Young's Bicycle Shop for providing us with our bicycles and services for transportation around the island.

ReMain Nantucket

We would like to thank ReMain Nantucket for welcoming us to the island with a scavenger hunt and giving us gift cards at local restaurants on the island.

Executive Summary:

The Nantucket Community School (NCS) is an organization that offers a multitude of programs, including early childhood programs, youth programs, and adult education. The Nantucket Community School recognizes that the needs of employers, employees, and the larger community have changed dramatically in recent years and that this change has been hastened and partially shaped by the COVID pandemic. Information technologies keep advancing, offering both new challenges and new opportunities as demonstrated by the moves toward remote learning and working. Faced with these changes, the Nantucket Community School is exploring how it must adapt. As the Nantucket Community School's adult education coordinators, Brian Lenane and Lindsay Pykosz have detailed, Nantucket and similar communities endeavor to retain year-round residents to provide stability and bolster their economies.

The goal of our project was to recommend how NCS can enhance its adult education program to better meet the needs of the community, whether doing so involves a shift in delivery methods or new course offerings. The project had four objectives:

1. Identify recent trends in the provision of adult education in the US;
2. Assess lessons learned from the provision of adult education in communities similar to Nantucket;
3. Evaluate the adult education courses offered by NCS currently and in the past; and,
4. Determine collaborator preferences regarding the future provision of adult education on Nantucket.

To accomplish these objectives, we conducted background research regarding the trends in adult education and spoke with representatives from educational institutions in communities similar to Nantucket, such as Martha's Vineyard and Cape Cod. We surveyed approximately 130 current, former, and prospective NCS students to gauge interest in course offerings and delivery modes. We conducted interviews with educational professionals, local business owners, NCS staff and instructors, and current and past students to glean additional perspectives.

Based on our background research and findings, we have developed the following conclusions and recommendations for our sponsors at the Nantucket Community School:

Conclusion #1: The most popular subjects desired by past NCS students include finance and QuickBooks, technology and computer skills, and foreign languages.

Through our survey responses, we were able to gauge past and prospective students' interest in certain subject areas that are not currently offered by NCS. For past students, this included finance and QuickBooks, technology and computer skills, and foreign language. These three courses were also the same courses desired by prospective students, with the switch between foreign language being the most sought and finance and QuickBooks being the third.

Recommendation 1.1: We recommend that the Nantucket Community School add courses in finance and QuickBooks.

The category of Finance/QuickBooks includes a wide spectrum of skills that could cover anything from personal finance to corporate accounting. We were unable to take this broad idea and narrow it to an appropriate singular curriculum. We therefore recommend that the NCS solicit more input from potential students for such a course. In particular, NCS would benefit from information regarding the following aspects of such a course offering or offerings:

- What is the primary goal of potential students, such as personal finance, starting a business, or advancing in their present positions by understanding more about finance?
- What is potential students' current understanding of basic financial tools, such as balance sheets, profit and loss statements, and cash flow projections?
- What experience do potential students currently have about the software used for financial analysis and management, such as Excel and QuickBooks?
- If a prospective student is interested in QuickBooks, are they interested in a specific part of the package (e.g. cashflow analysis, payroll, strategy)?
- Do prospective QuickBooks students hope to achieve one of the certification levels in QuickBooks (see: <https://quickbooks.intuit.com/accountants/training-certification/certification/>)?
- What length of course would the students envision?

Once NCS gets more information about the demand profile of prospective students, they will be able to begin developing an appropriate curriculum and recruiting a suitable instructor, either on- or off-island, to teach the course. Recruitment of appropriate instructors remains a challenge for NCS, particularly for courses that require very specific levels of expertise. When offering courses, the NCS will have to balance the desires of prospective students with the feasibility of finding an instructor.

Recommendation 1.2: We recommend NCS develop and offer foreign language classes at the professional as well as medical levels.

Professional foreign language classes would be designed for English-speaking individuals who would like to learn another language. Spanish would be the obvious first choice as it is the largest non-English language spoken on the island, but there was also interest in Portuguese and Chinese. These professional language courses would include business terms and other professional vocabulary to provide improved opportunities to communicate with non-native English speakers on the island. Businesses might also be willing to pay for professional language courses for their employees since it would promote better relations with the Spanish-speaking community on the island and expand business opportunities. Several employers interviewed were willing to pay for classes such as electrician courses, CPR, and ESOL, if it would benefit their businesses. Professional Spanish would be a great investment for hospitals specifically as it would make communication between employees and patients more efficient. The hospital itself could also provide funding for these courses and use them as part of its professional development requirements for employees. However, NCS would need to conduct further research into the exact needs of the community to develop curricula for such a broad subject area as a foreign language, such as which discourse community languages are most desired.

Recommendation 1.3: We recommend NCS offer technology and computer skills classes

Technology and computer skills are encompassed across many different topics, similar to finance courses. Our surveys and interviews indicate that there is substantial interest in classes on technology and computer skills. This may reflect that many immigrants and older citizens in particular lack familiarity and experience with new technologies and computers, but we were

unable to narrow down the idea into particular topics. To provide these classes, NCS may need to gather some more information from prospective students, such as:

- What are the reasons for wanting technology courses, such as basic user training for devices, or computer skills for business management?
- Is there specific software or certain skills that potential students would like to learn?
- What experience would potential students have before starting such a course?
- Would prospective students hope to earn certification(s) for certain skills, such as Microsoft Office?

Conclusion #2: Adult education has become more centered around courses that offer credentials since that is something desired by both employers and students.

Based on our review of relevant literature, we determined that many adult education programs shifted to vocational and trade-based programs that offer certifications. Both employers and students desire certifications as a way for them to advance either their businesses or individual careers. It was also evident through our survey responses that one of the main motivations for both past and prospective students to take courses at NCS would be the acquisition of a certification degree. Several businesses seem willing to pay for these certificates making them even more desirable for students.

Recommendation 2.1: We recommend that the Nantucket Community School design its courses so that applicable courses, especially those which are relevant to a trade or vocation, allow students to obtain a certification degree.

Based upon survey responses and interviews, one of the main reasons that prospective students would be more likely to take courses is if they can gain a certification degree after the course. Furthermore, at least half of the employers we interviewed stated that they would be willing to subsidize the costs of certification courses as well as give their employees time off to take these classes. This has the potential to attract more students to NCS and lead to higher enrollment numbers.

Conclusion #3: Based on our review of current and past enrollment data from NCS, we found that the most popular courses in past years were CPR and First Aid and ESOL, followed by Real Estate and GED courses.

CPR and First Aid and ESOL courses were the most popular courses in past years and these courses continue to have the highest enrollment numbers. While Covid-19 lowered the enrollment numbers for 2021, they have bounced back subsequently and many classes for 2022-23 now are fully enrolled. In addition to the CPR and First Aid and the ESOL courses, Real Estate and GED have also been found to be extremely popular at NCS. While the Real Estate courses typically have smaller enrollment numbers, according to the coordinators, this course has still been classified as being full over the past three years. It can be concluded that Real Estate is a course that consistently meets enrollment capacity, meaning it is reliable and should continue to be offered. A similar trend was found with the GED courses, and the enrollment data indicates that while GED courses have smaller class sizes, the numbers continue to be consistent year after year, demonstrating the importance of this course.

Recommendation 3.1: We recommend that the Nantucket Community School should continue offering the CPR and First Aid courses, as well as the ESOL, Real Estate, and GED courses.

These CPR and First Aid, ESOL, Real Estate, and GED were the most reliable courses and reached nearly full enrollment over the past three years, and the survey responses confirm that these courses were the most useful and important courses the past students have taken at NCS. Because these courses have consistently reached the maximum capacity of students, it would be probable that this trend would continue in the future. Additionally, NCS already has instructors for these courses, so they do not need to recruit new employees for these positions. Now that the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic are lessening, the enrollment numbers are likely to increase even more.

Recommendation 3.2: Because the very popular ESOL course has courses at multiple levels that allow students to enroll in a class with peers of similar abilities and skill levels, we recommend that NCS consider breaking other courses into different levels if applicable.

Breaking the courses down into different levels will allow for more specialized education. After speaking with students in the ESOL course, we found that students will also be

more likely to take courses if they feel like their needs will be supported and that they have similar skill levels as their peers. The level structure has seemed to work out extremely well for the ESOL classes, so we suggest trying it out with other subjects. For example, a computer skills class could have a lower level for introductory computer skills and a higher level for more advanced learners. This also may help students not feel as overwhelmed, as everyone may start with differing levels of experience. Various leveling of classes could also be done by offering single-day workshops aimed at different skill levels for applicable courses and evaluating which have the biggest draw.

Conclusion #4: Several of our interviewees were not aware of the range of the courses offered by NCS and the opportunities that the community school can provide.

Recommendation 4.1: We recommend that the NCS continue to improve and build upon its marketing methods so that the community is more aware of the opportunities provided by the school.

To combat this the NCS should focus on advertising the course offerings to reach the entire island. This can be done by bringing back the paper brochures to distribute in public places as not everyone on the island uses computers or cell phones daily. These brochures could also be printed in Spanish and Portuguese to help advertise to other popular ethnic groups on the island. Furthermore, to provide an incentive, NCS could provide their students with a discount on their next class if they bring a friend, which would increase enrollment and reward the current students. By explaining how the community school can help members of the community, enrollment in the NCS course offerings would be expected to increase.

The NCS should focus not just on marketing to prospective students directly but also on businesses. If a business needs a certain certificate to be offered, it can go through the NCS instead of having to go off the island. This would allow a direct link between businesses and the school and would make it much clearer what classes are important.

There are many challenges associated with marketing, especially because it is difficult to reach some of the communities that NCS would like to. For example, Adult Education coordinators Brian and Lindsay highlighted that reaching people who work in the trades is

notoriously difficult, whether this is reaching out to potential students, or even instructors for classes.

Word of mouth is a big factor in how the community school grows, and attending more events with hard-to-reach communities can start a chain reaction which can result in more interest in the NCS and their programs. Reaching out to organizations such as the Nantucket Builders' Association or religious groups is a potential option, as well as attending public events such as athletics events. Mary Burke from Upper Cape Tech mentioned their organization also uses word of mouth, although recently they received a grant to use for marketing. They have hired personnel specifically to assist with marketing. If the NCS has the resources to devote to this, we recommend they do the same.

Conclusion #5: NCS must continually analyze and update its course offering to best fit the needs of the community, causing them to change year after year.

Recommendation 5.1: We recommend the NCS have a course evaluation system that allows for anonymous feedback from students to facilitate continuous improvement of the course offerings.

While the rest of our analysis and recommendations may be what the island needs now, things are constantly changing. We recommend a feedback system to continuously improve these courses. This could be done by administering anonymous paper surveys at the end of classes as well as digital options. These surveys are for students to rate their course experience after it concludes, this data can subsequently be used for current and prospective students to see how their peers felt about their experiences. These surveys would be put into a system that is only available to the NCS staff. This data would allow the NCS to constantly monitor what the students want and need.

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Recommendations and Conclusions	Hannah Peloquin	Caroline Major	Tim Loosigian	Akhi Yarlagadda
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INTRODUCTION

The UNESCO handbook *Making Lifelong Learning a Reality* asserts, “...the global community is waking up to the fact that investing in learning throughout life - for everyone - fosters active citizenship, improves employability, promotes people’s health and wellbeing, and makes communities more cohesive” (UNESCO, 2022, p.8). Furthermore, “[adult] learning and education is a core component of lifelong learning... It denotes the entire body of learning processes, formal, non-formal, and informal, whereby [adults] develop and enrich their capabilities for living and working” (UNESCO, 2015, p.6). While adult education covers a spectrum of learning from life enrichment to life skills, job training is an essential and growing component (Boeren, 2016). This apparent need and desire for adult education reflect the changing nature of the workplace and demands from employers and employees alike. A 2016 survey by the Pew Research Center found that 87% of workers in the U.S. believe they will need training in new skills to keep up in the workplace (Pew, 2016). This pattern is playing out in communities across the country. For example, a survey commissioned by ReMain Nantucket found that 60% of respondents faced job challenges due to limitations in their education and skills, and 66% of employers had trouble filling job openings (Economic Development Group & Mt. Auburn Associates, 2015).

The Nantucket Community School (NCS) is an organization that offers a multitude of programs, including early childhood programs, youth programs, and adult education. The Nantucket Community School recognizes that the needs of employers, employees, and the larger community have changed in recent years and that this change has been hastened and partially shaped by the COVID pandemic. Information technologies keep advancing, offering both new challenges and new opportunities as demonstrated by the shift toward remote learning and working. Faced with these changes, the Nantucket Community School is exploring how it should adapt to serve the community in the best way possible.

The goal of our project was to recommend how NCS can enhance its adult education program to better meet the needs of the community which might involve a shift in delivery methods, a modification of pricing, or new course offerings. The project had four objectives:

1. Identify recent trends in the provision of adult education in the US;

2. Assess lessons learned from the provision of adult education in communities similar to Nantucket;
3. Evaluate the adult education courses offered by NCS currently and in the past; and,
4. Determine collaborator preferences regarding the future provision of adult education on Nantucket.

To accomplish these objectives, we conducted background research on the trends in adult education and spoke with representatives from educational institutions in communities like Nantucket. We surveyed approximately 130 current, former, and prospective NCS students to gauge interest in course offerings and delivery modes. We conducted interviews with educational professionals, local business owners, NCS staff and instructors, and current and past students to glean additional perspectives. To conclude our project, we will present and propose our findings to the Nantucket Community School, with a list of courses that are most desired by students and employers. In addition, we will make recommendations regarding trends, structures of courses, and any other relevant suggestions based on our conclusions.

BACKGROUND

Introduction

Adult education in the United States is an ever-changing facet of the education system; it is constantly evolving to meet the needs of each community. Adult education must keep up with current technological and economic trends in the United States to remain relevant to the individuals and communities served. In this section, we will discuss what adult education is, and some of the common misconceptions, overall trends, and history of adult education.

Definitions and Concepts of Adult Education

Adult education is the practice of adults engaging in activities to gain new knowledge or skills. Adult education is driven by the needs of the students, and studies have shown that people will participate only if they are interested and find the new knowledge and skills valuable to other aspects of their life (Kalenda & Kočvarová, 2022). There are three prominent types of adult education: formal, non-formal, and informal (Figure 1). Formal education culminates in a degree or certificate: the educational courses taken in college are one example of this. Non-formal education is typically “...structured, organized, and intentional learning (Commission of the European Communities, 2000). It can occur within or alongside an educational institution, but it does not lead to any recognized credentials” (Punksungka et al., 2021, p.636). An example of non-formal education would be a work-based training session or an informational lecture. Informal education is unstructured and can occur in many situations, unlike NCS courses which are considered formal education. Examples include learning in a museum, reading a book, and listening to the radio (Punksungka et al., 2021).

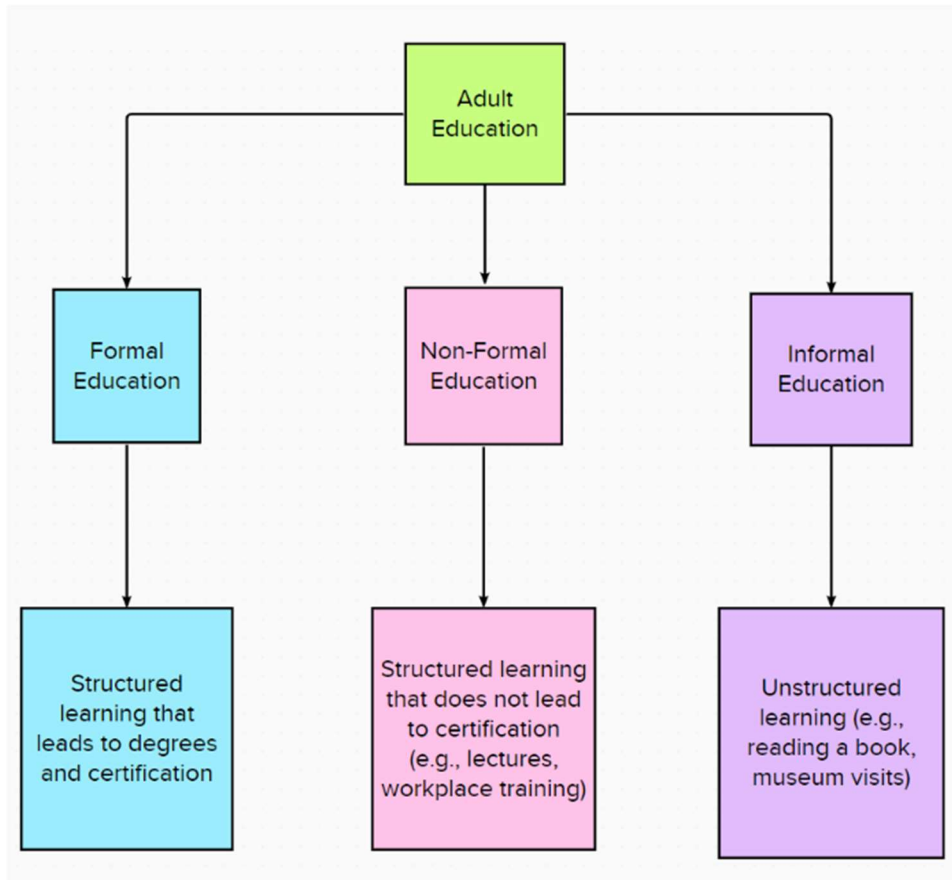


Figure 1: Types of Adult Education

As stated on page 22 of UNESCO’s handbook, *Making lifelong learning a reality*, “... a number of countries have already put [lifelong learning] at the heart of national policies for economic and social transformation as they strive to become learning societies.” Lifelong learning (LLL) is any policy that is used to implement learning opportunities for people of *any age*, context, and modality (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2022). Adult education and training (AET) are a subset of the larger enterprise to encourage LLL: “Adult education and training (AET), which has been used interchangeably with the term lifelong learning (LLL), is regarded as any form of learning throughout an adult’s life course (Boeren, 2017; Desjardins, 2010; Rubenson, 2011)” (Pungsungka et al. 2021, p.2). AET is an opportunity for adults to gain knowledge and learn new skills that can benefit their lifestyles and enhance their contributions to society (UNESCO, 2015). Analyzing data from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), Richard Desjardins asserts that “adults who attain higher levels of qualifications in mid and later life are associated with an increased probability of being

employed, and of participating in employer supported adult education, when they are older” (Desjardins, 2020). The PIAAC data suggests that certification tends to be a popular motivator for adult education participants since it often leads to greater success in their careers.

Current Trends

Adult self-improvement and education have a long history, but adult education became more formalized in the post-WWII period. Approaches to adult education have shifted in response to changes in community needs and pedagogy. In the early to mid-20th century, adult education focused on anti-poverty movements and social justice (especially programs offered by public libraries and women's colleges) (Chang, 2020). There are three main categories of adult education today: general (or basic) adult education, English as a second language, and developmental education or college readiness programs (Chang, 2020). Adult education is typically seen as a part-time commitment for adults with full-time jobs.

Adult education in the US currently focuses on providing adults with a way to get new and better jobs, to both help the individual, and to stimulate the economy. Boeren (2016, p.300) says “During the past decades, it has been argued by a range of scholars, including Biesta (2006) and Milana (2012), that policy has been changed from adopting a rather humanistic perspective of learning to a stronger economic one, driven by capitalism and globalization.” By completing adult education and training, an employee may earn higher wages, while the company uses the worker’s skills to create products and provide services that will be economically beneficial to the community (Chisholm and Hasan, 2010). “A 2016 Pew Research Center survey, ‘The State of American Jobs,’ found that 87% of workers believe it will be essential for them to get training and develop new job skills throughout their work life in order to keep up with changes in the workplace” (Rainie & Anderson, 2017). These statistics are also confirmed by data from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies which demonstrated that most adult education programs are career related.

Economic hardships have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic since many Americans lost their jobs and continue to struggle to find new work. As reported by the International Labour Organization (ILO), about 80% of workers have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In an article detailing the effects of the pandemic on adult education, the authors state, “...just as COVID-19 is heavily affecting communities of color, so too will it

disproportionately affect densely populated and low-income neighborhoods, elder-care living facilities, and regions with poor public health and medical infrastructure—the same populations that often suffer from limited education and training resources that are most needed during a recovery.” (Boeren, Roumell, & Roessger, 2020). This trend will add to the need for adult education within these marginalized groups. Many of these adults are struggling to find work that provides a steady income that can support the rising housing and living costs. Adult education can provide them with opportunities to either refine their professional skills or gain knowledge about new subject areas to increase take-home pay. In addition, “Adult education should be at the forefront of providing everyone with a fair chance to develop their abilities and to put them to valuable use. This can be done both in the community and in the workplace” (Boeren, Roumell, & Roessger, 2020, p.203). Certifications and skills obtained from adult education courses may allow these to find better-paid or more satisfying work (Boeren, Roumell, & Roessger, 2020).

Technology in Adult Education

Not only is adult education changing to become more vocationally oriented and focused on practical skills and applied knowledge, but the way adult education courses are taught has also drastically changed. Technology has become increasingly important for education and has changed the entire structure of adult education. Education, excluding hands-on training, can now be done from the comfort of one’s own home and one’s own time because of online asynchronous classes. The COVID-19 pandemic has ushered in a huge increase in the number of online educational courses, and experts expect this trend to continue even after the pandemic (Boeren, Roumell, & Roessger, 2020).

In addition to these changing delivery methods, technology has also created a shift in which skills are most desired by employers. A study by Pew Research Center includes a quote from Simon Gottschalk, professor of sociology at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas: “The skills necessary at the higher echelons will include especially the ability to efficiently network, manage public relations, display intercultural sensitivity, marketing, and generally what author Dan Goleman would call ‘social’ and ‘emotional’ intelligence. [This also includes] creativity, and just enough critical thinking to move outside the box.” (Rainie & Anderson, 2017). As artificial intelligence and automation change the nature of work, people will need to develop

skills that are unique to living, breathing beings. For example, skills that promote socialization, teamwork, and complexity of thought have become more important for humans to develop in their lifelong learning (Rainie & Anderson, 2017). These capabilities will allow adults to be more competent in the eyes of employers, even with the rise of computers and other technological advancements. Goleman, one of the pioneers of emotional intelligence, also writes that there is “..qualitative data suggesting that basing the selection of high-level executives solely on their academic intelligence and business expertise and ignoring their emotional intelligence often leads to poor choices that can be disastrous for an organization” (Goleman, 2001, p.8)

The Pew Research Center Study also confirms that employees need to develop modern-day skills that go along with the growing technological systems. With these new demands, there will be a need for updated certifications and training for laborers, so the role of adult education becomes increasingly important.

Adult Participation in Education

Several studies also examine why adults participate in adult education. Adults often participate in adult education courses to fulfill a specific need in their life, whether that motivation is financial, professional, or personal (Punksungka et al., 2021). According to a study done by Johnstone and Rivera in 1965 (Moustakas, 2018), the main reasons people participate in adult education programs are to improve their promotion and employment prospects, to develop home-centered occupations, to pursue recreation and leisure activities, to cope better with daily routines, to make new acquaintances, and to escape from the routine of everyday life (Moustakas, 2018). Highly educated, employed, and younger adults are more likely to participate in adult education (Cincinnati, et al, 2014). Figure 2 shows the main motivations for participation by “professional learners” in another more recent study. Professional learners are defined in the context of this study conducted by Pew Research Center as someone who has “...taken a course or gotten additional training in the past 12 months to improve their job skills or expertise connected to career advancement” (Horrigan, 2020, p.2).

PROFESSIONAL LEARNERS: 63% of workers (36% of all adults)

*Percent of those who work full time or part time who say in the past 12 months they have **taken a class or gotten extra training** ...*

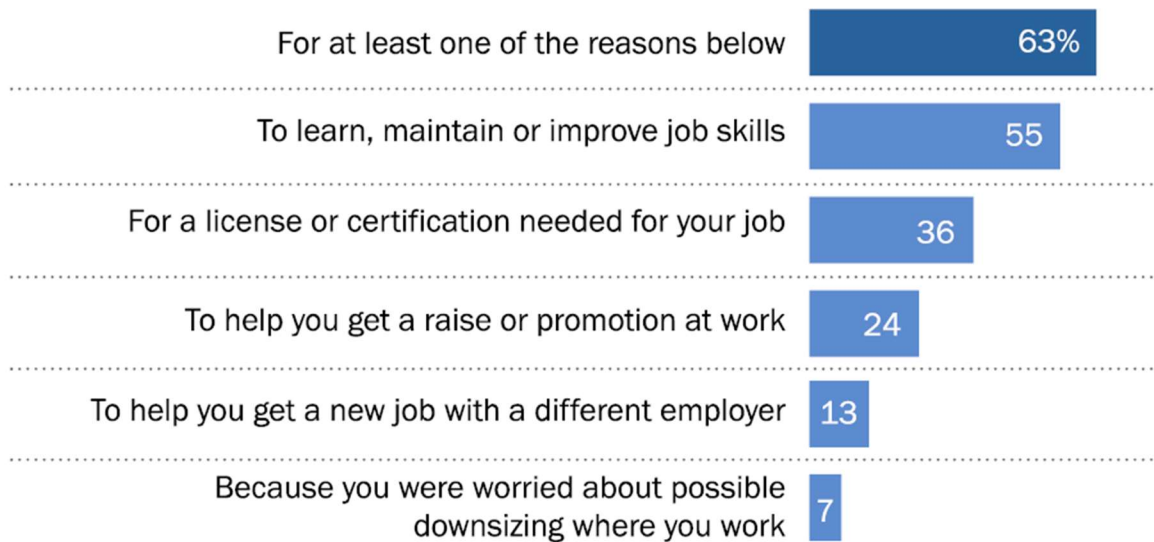


Figure 2: Motivations for Participating in Adult Education (taken from Horrigan, 2020)
(Respondents could choose more than one category so the percentages add to >100)

Despite the diverse adult education opportunities in many communities, most people do not participate. There are two types of motivation for adults to participate, namely intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is inner satisfaction and self-confidence while extrinsic motivation is the fulfillment of professional goals. Both motivations are found to decrease with an increase in age (Kalenda & Kočvarová, 2022). Non-participants face many barriers that lead them to be less likely to participate. Some of these barriers include lack of English, lack of time and/or money, or lack of transportation and/or childcare. These barriers tend to be more severe for some sociodemographic groups, including women, minorities, and the less affluent. Many adults do not see education as an activity that fulfills personal goals or solves problems in their daily lives, therefore they lack extrinsic motivation and tend not to participate (Punksungka et al., 2021).

One study examined 5,450 adults aged 25 to 65 to see why they do or do not participate in adult education. This study found that the opportunities for adult education are unequal across subgroups based on socioeconomic factors. Not surprisingly the study found that adults with limited reading abilities were less likely to participate in adult education classes. The role of race was less clear, however, since age and income were confounding factors (Punksungka et al., 2021).

There are many other reasons that adults may choose not to participate in adult education. One example could be a lack of time, either because their full-time job takes up too much time or because they have other commitments such as childcare. Lack of transportation could also be a significant barrier as many adult education centers are located far away from people's homes (Moustakas, 2018). These studies emphasize the need to study why people do and do not participate in adult education (Punksungka et al., 2021).

Profile of Nantucket and the Nantucket Community School (NCS)

The Nantucket Community School was founded in 1989 as a part of the Nantucket Public School system. The NCS was initially set up “to utilize the public-school facilities ‘outside of school time’ to offer adult education courses and a community pool program” (Nantucket Community School, 2022). The mission of the Nantucket Community School has evolved since its beginning in 1989 to be broader and more encompassing. Currently, the NCS mission is to “engage, strengthen, and connect our community” (Nantucket Community School, 2022) by offering a multitude of programs, including early childhood programs, youth programs, and adult education. Meeting the diverse needs of the community, however, is not easy. As of 2021, the population of Nantucket is about 84% white, 11.8% African American, 2% Asian, and 15.5% Hispanic or Latino (Nantucket County, Massachusetts, 2021). However, the census data likely underestimates the true diversity of the island (Bushard, 2021). For example, Figure 3 shows that the proportion of minority ethnic groups, especially Hispanics, in the Nantucket public school system has been growing steadily since 2000. This trend has continued since 2019, and the school system is now a majority-minority population.

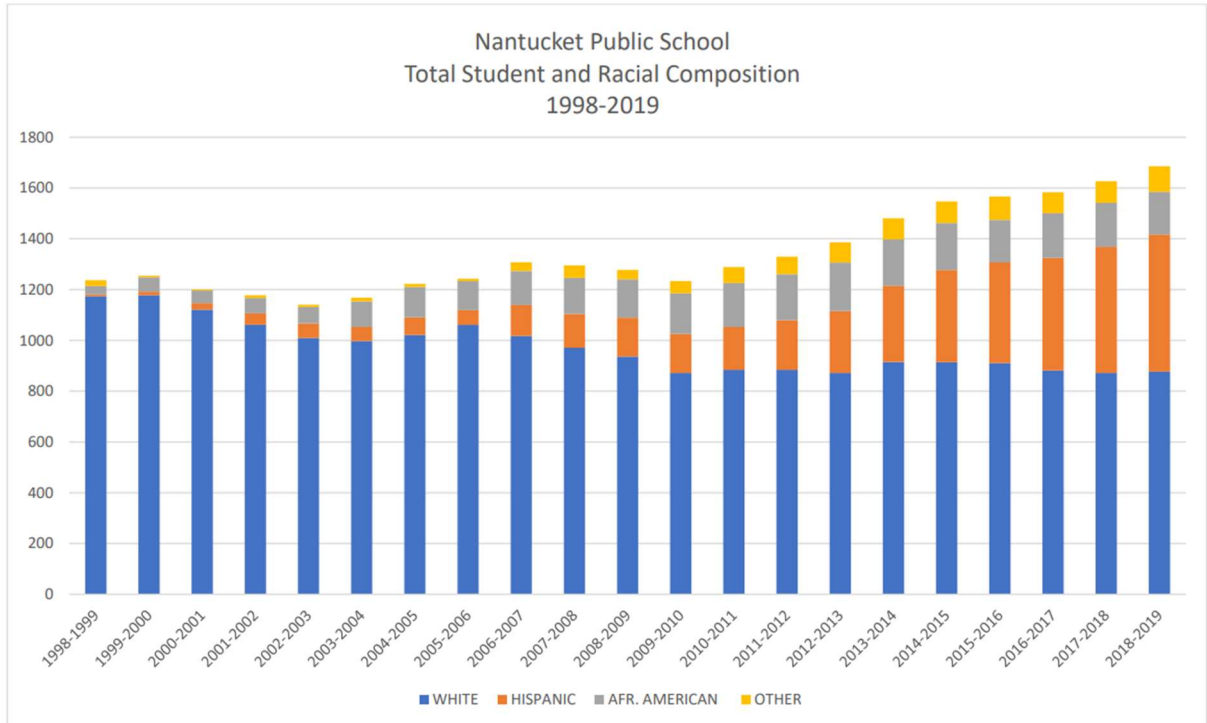


Figure 3: Ethnic Composition of the Nantucket Public Schools
 (Document Center • Nantucket, MA • CivicEngage, n.d.,
<https://www.nantucket-ma.gov/DocumentCenter>)

Spanish and Portuguese are the most prominent non-English languages on the island. To achieve its mission, the NCS provides “a diverse level of high-quality, affordable programs, [encourages] life-long personal growth, and reaching out to all community members; spanning every age and stage”. As the desires of prospective employers have shifted, NCS turned its focus towards certification and professional education courses, rather than more general enrichment classes for adults. For this reason, the NCS offers a wide variety of certification programs for adults to become professionals in careers of their choosing.

Currently, NCS offers courses and programs in driver’s education, real estate, general education, English for speakers of other languages, swimming, gymnastics, dance, and childcare, among others (Nantucket Community School, 2022). As a result of increased donations (its main source of funding), the school has been able to add programs in a diverse range of subjects. For example, NCS now has courses in business, hospitality, computer science, writing, art and design, and computer applications. Courses are offered both in-person and online, as well as

during the day and at night for those who work other jobs or cannot attend at traditional times (Nantucket Community School, 2022).

The “Learn without Leaving” report commissioned by ReMain Nantucket provides a snapshot profile of adult education on Nantucket from the perspectives of employers and students (Economic Development Group & Mt. Auburn Associates, 2015). Although this report is from 2015, it is still useful as a baseline for comparison with current conditions. The report highlighted how drastically different the employment numbers are during the on and off seasons. Figure 4 shows that, not surprisingly, tourism-based industries are more seasonal and hire additional staff in the summer whereas employment in the vocation and trade industries remain constant year-round. This implies that vocation and trade-based courses at the Nantucket Community School might be most beneficial to many of the year-round residents on the island.

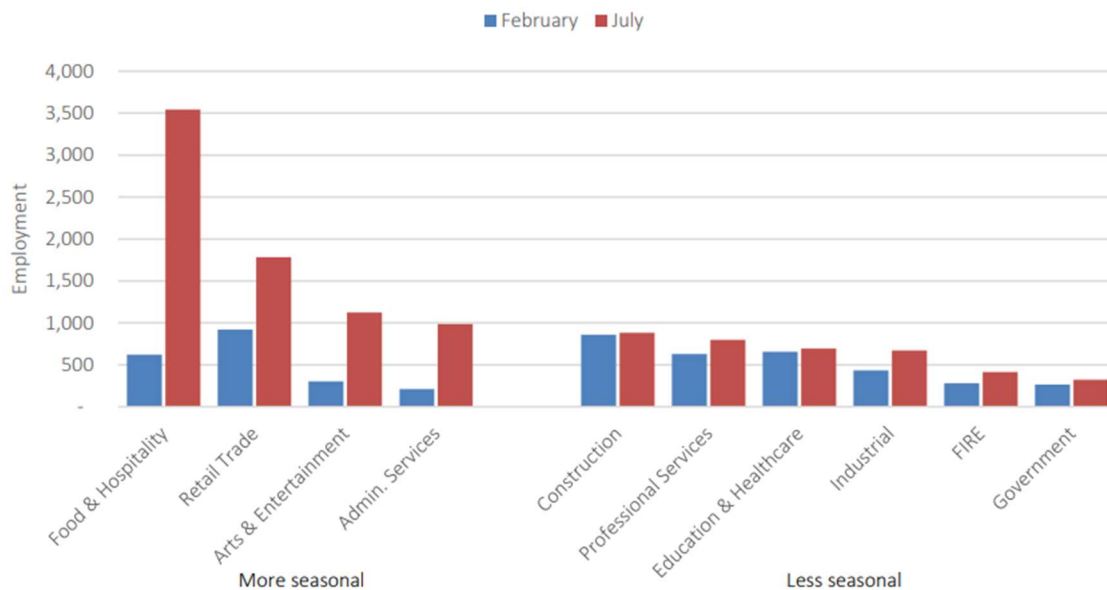


Figure 4: Estimated Employment by Industry in Nantucket based on Seasonality (Economic Development Group & Mt. Auburn Associates, 2015)

The Learn Without Leaving report also states that “It takes an average of 6.6 weeks for surveyed employers to fill job openings - two weeks longer than the US average... Two-thirds of the surveyed employers have difficulty filling job openings...” (Economic Development Group & Mt. Auburn Associates, 2015, p.1). However, these data were obtained before the Covid-19 pandemic, so the situation may have changed. While there is a lack of data to claim the pandemic caused changes to employers’ abilities to fill job openings, based on our preliminary research on

the island we can determine that for many employers this led to more offshore hiring and virtual education. Recruiting off-island makes it easier for employers to find qualified candidates because of the larger applicant pool but recruiting off-island often ends with the hired employee leaving the company after about a year or so. Figure 5 below shows that employers believe many prospective employees would benefit by obtaining more skills, experience, and education.

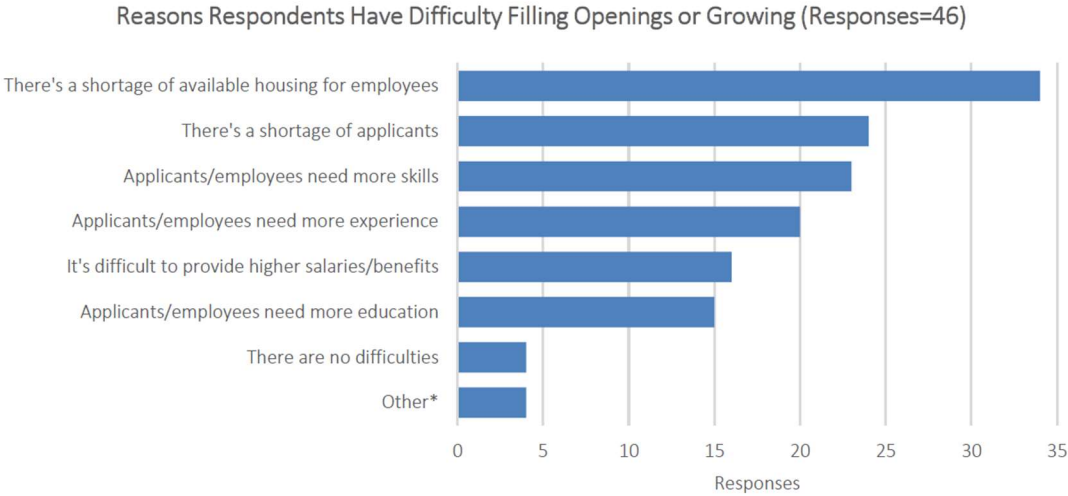


Figure 5: Reasons Employers Have Difficulty Filling Job Openings (Economic Development Group & Mt. Auburn Associates, 2015)

The Learn without Leaving survey found that respondents preferred single-course workshops and certificate and licensing programs and that the classes be held during the evening on weekdays. Half of the employers were even willing to offer employees training through an educational institution. Figure 6 shows that classes in computing, business, and education were among the most important from the perspectives of both employers and residents.

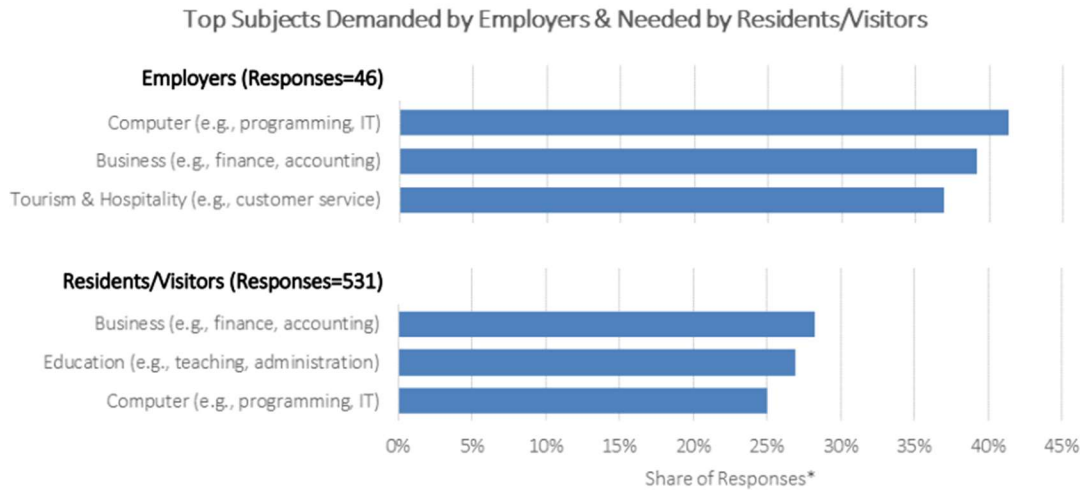


Figure 6: Top Subjects Demanded by Employers & Needed by Residents/Visitors (Economic Development Group & Mt. Auburn Associates, 2015)

Adult education is changing in response to changes and technology and the workplace. There has been a general shift towards vocational classes with certifications and away from general interest and enrichment classes for adults. Many of these changes have been accelerated due to the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically technological changes like using Zoom and Microsoft Teams for meetings. The NCS would like to modify its course offerings and delivery methods to better meet the changing needs of the Nantucket community. In the next chapter, we explain how we evaluated these changing needs and explored the implications for the NCS.

METHODOLOGY

The goal of our project was to recommend how NCS could enhance its adult education program to better meet the needs of the community, whether this was a shift in delivery modes, pricing, or new course offerings. The project had four objectives:

1. Identify recent trends in the provision of adult education in the U.S.
2. Assess lessons learned from the provision of adult education in communities comparable to Nantucket
3. Evaluate the adult education courses offered by NCS both currently and in the past
4. Determine collaborator opinions regarding the future provision of adult education in Nantucket

These collaborators included current, past, and prospective NCS students as well as employers. Figure 7 outlines the data collection methods we used to complete our objectives. Achieving the objectives required a mixed-method approach consisting of background research, the analysis of pre-existing information, and data collected from interviews and surveys.

Objectives #1 and #2: Identify Recent Trends and Lessons Learned in Adult Education

Building on our background research, we conducted interviews with representatives of adult education institutions in communities that face the same issues as Nantucket. These interviewees provided insight into communities such as Martha's Vineyard and Cape Cod, which share cultural and geographic similarities. These interviews were designed to clarify some of the dominant trends in the field, regarding the types of courses offered, pricing structures, and delivery modes (such as in-person, online, or hybrid). We also attempted to identify some of the main forces behind these trends, such as employers and student needs.

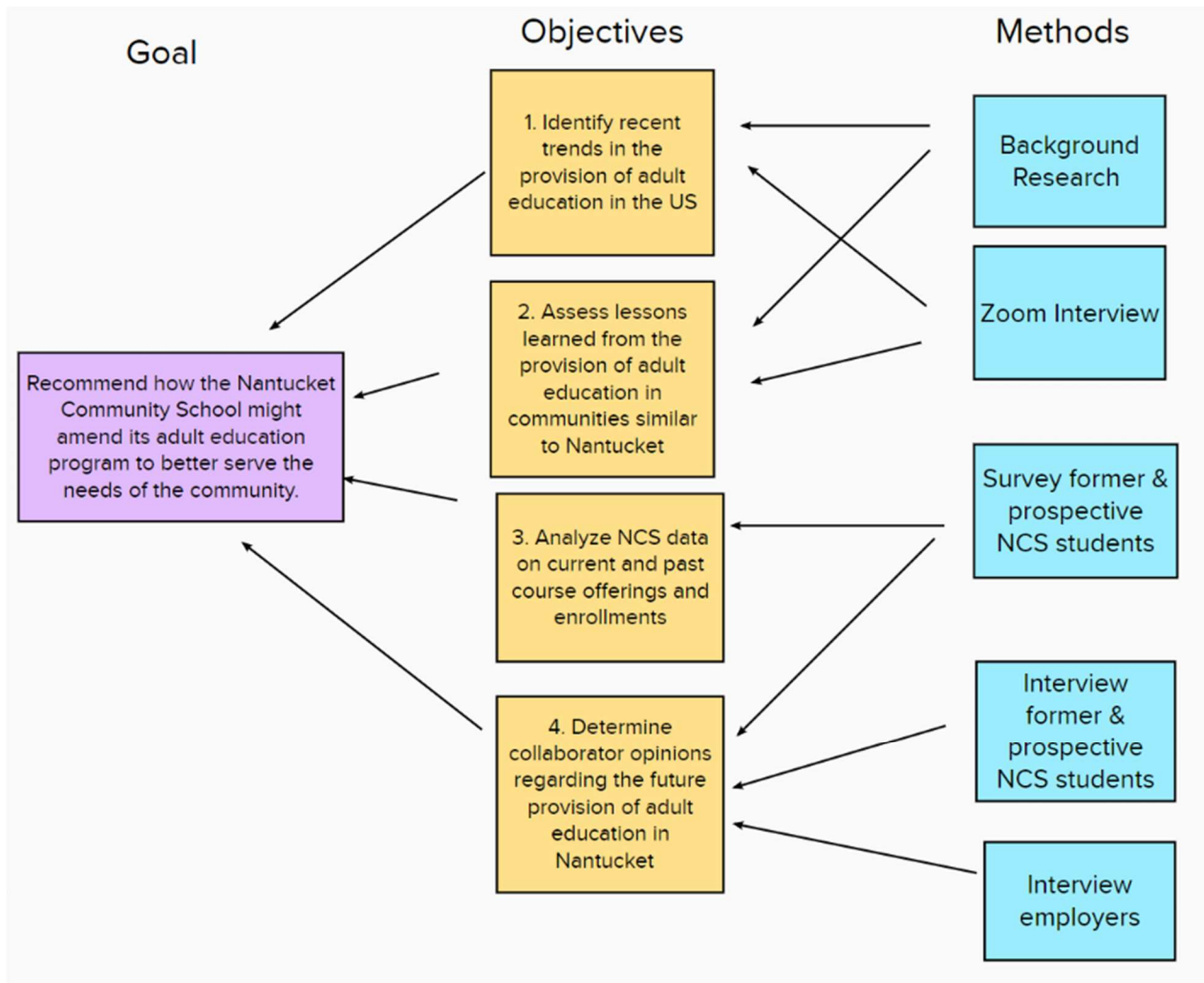


Figure 7: Data Collection Methods and Objectives

We developed a set of questions for the interviews (presented in Appendix A) based on our review of the literature. The main questions focused on how these communities have determined what courses are needed, how the trends in adult education have changed over time, what challenges they have overcome, and what challenges remain.

We used the interview questions as a checklist of topics rather than a strict script. We recognize that we did not ask all the questions of all interviewees, and we added questions as the interview continued based on the expertise of the interviewee and the direction of the conversation. The goal was to keep the interview as an open conversation led by the interviewee.

We identified potential interviewees from our background research and by identifying representatives from the community organizations that offer adult education programs in the

chosen communities. Table 2 below provides a list of the interviewees and their affiliations. We contacted potential interviewees initially by email with follow-up emails and phone calls as necessary. Because the interviewees were not located in Nantucket, we conducted the interviews over Zoom.

Table 2: List of Interviews with Adult Education Leaders

Name	Position/Affiliation	Date of Interview	Time of Interview
Holly Bellebuono	Executive Director, MVCET	11/14/2022	10:00 AM
Dianne Tattersall	President, Academy for Long Learning (Cape Cod)	11/4/2022	10:45 AM
Tracy Nichols	Executive Director of Nantucket Resource Partnership, Previous NCS Director	11/4/2022	2:00 PM
Amanda Bardsley	Director of STEM, Nantucket Public Schools	11/3/2022	8:30 AM
David Harris	Exit Cape Realty, Real Estate Instructor	11/3/2022	11:00 AM
John Mynttinen	GED Instructor, NCS	11/2/2022	5:00 PM
Mary Burke	Director of Adult and Continuing Education, Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School	10/31/2022	1:00 PM

We began each interview by reading the preamble given in Appendix B, which explains the nature of the research and the ground rules for conducting the interview. The interviews lasted 15-30 minutes.

Objective #3: Evaluate Current and Previous NCS Course Offerings

We reviewed NCS data on current and past course offerings, specifically their enrollment numbers, prices, and delivery methods, among other vital statistics. We used these data to determine the trends in the types of course offerings, popularity, and delivery modes. The data were in the form of Excel spreadsheets by year and included all courses offered by the NCS, not

just adult education. We extracted the adult education data from the past three years to create a spreadsheet.

We supplemented our analysis of these quantitative data, with interviews with NCS staff. The interviews were informal and informational meetings with the staff, so they did not follow strict consent protocols like those of Objectives 1 and 2. These meetings instead were structured as open conversations and done primarily in person. Topics addressed in these meetings included clarifying any discrepancies found after the data analysis, as well as identifying the effects that the Covid-19 pandemic may have had on course offerings, prices, or enrollment numbers. We spoke to two teachers who gave us insight into how the NCS courses function and shared firsthand experience from the teachers' point of view. Furthermore, we learned how the NCS shifted its offerings based on the Learn Without Leaving report (Economic Development Group & Mt. Auburn Associates, 2015) and we obtained feedback from members of the community about how they envision further change. We also explored how their thinking is shaped by experiences and approaches in similar communities and at the national level.

Additionally, we were allowed to sit in on two adult education classes, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Real Estate Pre-Licensure. These observations gave us firsthand experience of how they operated and how these NCS courses were delivered. We were also able to talk to the students and get their opinions on the courses. We were also able to hand out our survey to the students in the ESOL classes.

Objective #4: Soliciting Collaborator Opinions

Through surveys, we obtained the opinions of current, former, and prospective NCS students, and through interviews, we obtained the opinions of local employers. Figure 8 shows the flowchart of the interviews. We supplemented the survey results by conducting interviews with a subset of willing respondents.

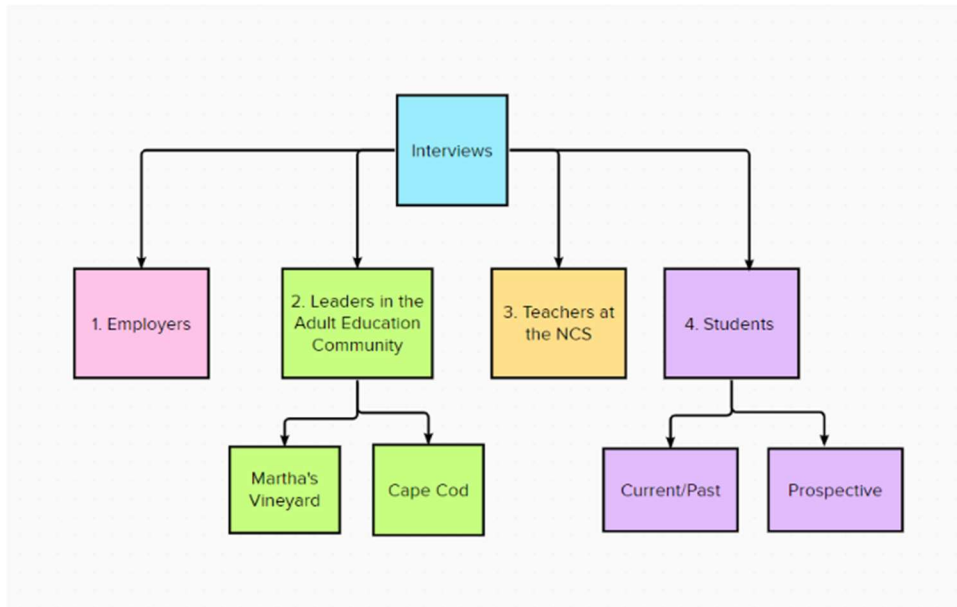


Figure 8: Flowchart for Interviews

4.1 Student Surveys: We surveyed current, former, and prospective students, using the survey instrument in Appendix C. The survey had three branches. Screening questions directed current and former students down one branch, and those who expressed an interest in adult education courses but have not previously taken NCS courses down another branch. Those who have not taken NCS courses previously and are not interested in taking such courses were directed to the third branch. Figure 9 outlines the branch structure of these surveys.

The first branch included questions designed to help in the evaluation of current and former NCS courses as well as future courses that might be offered (i.e., Objective #3). The second branch omitted questions on prior courses and focused only on future course subjects and delivery options. Questions in the third branch were designed to elicit opinions about the barriers that some adults may face in taking adult education courses and what efforts can be made to overcome them.

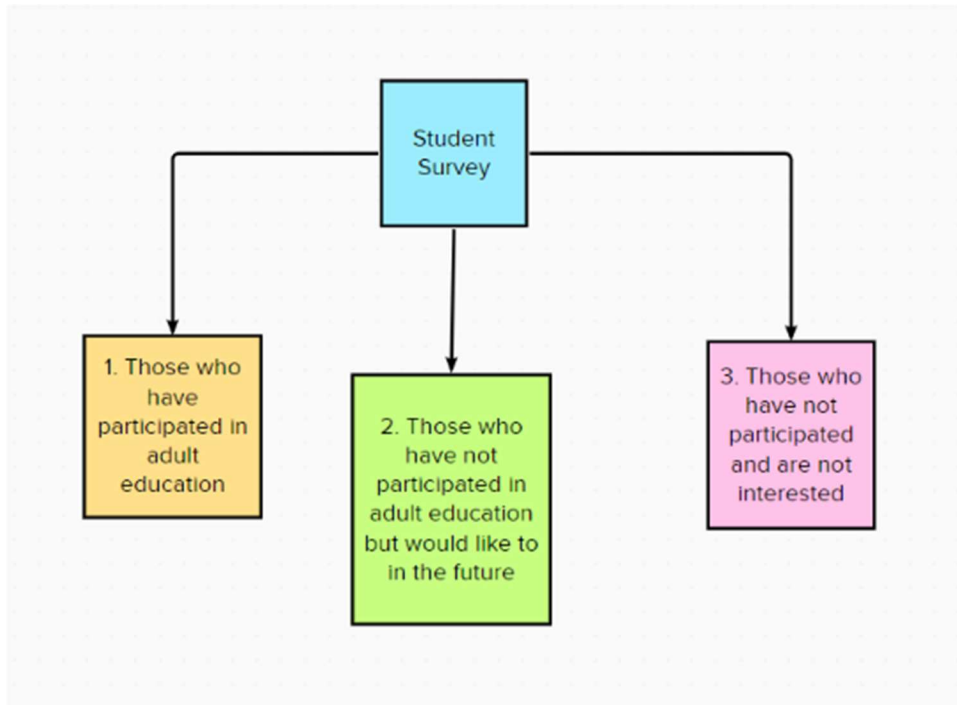


Figure 9: Branch Survey Structure

To enhance accessibility and improve response rates and diversity of the survey sample, we translated the instrument into the most popular non-English languages young adults speak on Nantucket. School data indicates that 43% of the 2020-21 school population did not speak English as a first language. The Nantucket Public Schools are now a majority-minority population, with Hispanics as the largest single ethnic group (*Document Center • Nantucket, MA • CivicEngage*, n.d.). NCS staff indicated that Spanish and Portuguese were the most common non-English spoken by NCS students. One member of the team who speaks Spanish and Portuguese translated the survey. These translations helped us reach a broader audience.

We pretested the survey with NCS staff to ensure the instructions, questions, and response categories were clear, understandable, and appropriate. Because NCS maintains email addresses for current and former students, we distributed an email explaining the nature of our research that included a URL link to the online survey, including all three languages. To increase the proportion of prospective students in the survey sample we distributed paper copies and a QR code at several locations, including the dump/Take It or Leave It store and another event hosted at the Nantucket High School. We also asked survey participants to share the link with friends and family to promote the survey more widely. We posted the survey link on the Nantucket

Community School Facebook page and in a press release. Finally, we also had the opportunity to sit in for an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course at NCS and were able to distribute paper copies of the survey to the students in the class to boost the representation of minority groups in the survey sample.

4.2 Student Interviews: We conducted virtual and in-person interviews with current and former NCS students to solicit more in-depth, qualitative feedback. We were only able to sit down with two people individually for a formal interview, but we managed to speak with many students in the various classes we attended informally. We identified these interviewees through referrals from our sponsors and survey respondents. These interviews were conducted in person when possible, or by Zoom or phone. The script for the former and current student interviews is in Appendix D. These questions focused on their experience at the NCS and how courses might be improved in the future.

4.3 Interview for employers: For the employer interviews, we followed the same process as in Objectives 1 and 2 but the interviews were held in person if possible. We developed questions in Appendix F to gain a sense of what they are looking for in prospective employees, as well as their thoughts on NCS and its programs. The focus of these interviews was to determine what employers want in applicants in further detail than a survey could provide. We obtained a list of employers through our sponsors. Table 3 below displays a list of the employers we interviewed.

Table 3: List of Interviews with Employers

Name	Position/Affiliation	Date of Interview	Time of interview
Rob Lucchini	Journeyman Instructor at NCS, Master Electrician	11/16/2022	12:00 PM
Ivana Stoyanov	Director of Strategic Growth, Chamber of Commerce	11/10/2022	11:00 AM
Brooke Mohr	Treasurer of Nantucket Resource Partnership, Bookkeeper	11/07/2022	10:30 AM
Amanda Perry	Town of Nantucket, Human Resources Director	11/04/2022	8:30 AM
Peter McEachern	General Manager, Nantucket Yacht Club	11/3/2022	1:00 PM
Annie-Kay Rose	Nurse	11/2/2022	10:40 AM
Sunny Daily	Doula/Midwife	10/31/2022	10:00 AM

The overall trends and information gathered from the surveys and interviews will be discussed in the following section. Overall, many of the trends in the interviews and surveys were similar among the different demographics surveyed.

FINDINGS

This section describes the most prominent information obtained from our background research, surveys, and interviews. Most of the survey responses confirmed the trends seen in other adult education institutions as well as the insight given to us in interviews. In the subsections that follow, we will discuss the trends in adult education in similar communities, the employer and student perspectives, an analysis of NCS enrollment data, and an evaluation of certain NCS courses.

Trends in Adult Education Programs in Other Cape and Island Communities

As resort communities, Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, and Cape Cod face similar problems associated with the large influx of summer residents and tourists. Property prices have risen dramatically in the past 40 years, which has driven up the cost of living and made it increasingly difficult for year-round residents to find jobs and affordable housing. The situation on Nantucket is exacerbated by its small size and reputation as an upscale destination. Nantucket businesses often hire temporary workers for the busy summer season; however, these groups are challenged to find the housing and employment that would allow them to sustain the high cost of living. In addition to the challenge of housing for the businesses on Nantucket, it is also challenging for NCS to find and keep instructors since it is difficult to find a place to stay on the island. Furthermore, even if they can find housing, the cost of living and prices of houses continue to rise, making it nearly impossible for people to support themselves off of a single job. Adult education and skill development allow these populations opportunities to improve their livelihoods, by helping them to gain skills and certifications to improve job prospects. Yet, even with the rising cost of living, the population of Nantucket has significantly increased. Even though this population has increased, our interviews depict a lack of employees or job applicants for certain careers, highlighting the need to expand adult education opportunities. For example, Rob Lucchini mentioned in his 11/16/22 interview with us, that as a master electrician at Ellis & Schneider Electric Inc., it is difficult to find employees with previous knowledge and experience, and most new employees are first-time apprentices. As the Nantucket Community School's adult education coordinators, Brian Lenane and Lindsay Pykosz have explained, Nantucket and similar communities want to limit the loss of young residents by developing skills and expertise that enable them to stay on the island. These opportunities include certifications for nursing

assistance, electricians, plumbing, real estate, and many more vocations that offer professional advancement through certificate programs.

Martha's Vineyard is also an island and summer resort community, so we compared trends in the provision of adult education with those on Nantucket. Martha's Vineyard is geographically larger than Nantucket at 96 mi², comprises six towns, and has a year-round population of 17,000 that grows to 200,000 in the summer (Voeglein, 2022). Marthas Vineyard is only 5 miles from the mainland, which allows easier commuting for work and education.

The Vineyard's provider of adult education is Martha's Vineyard Center for Education and Training (MVCET). The MVCET offers core college courses by partnering with Bristol Community College and Cape Cod Community College. We spoke to Holly Bellebuono, the executive director at the MVCET (11/14/22). Bellebuono stated that the program has made a significant shift from enrichment to credential courses in recent years because of the needs of the island's communities. Although the enrichment courses provided 40% of their revenue and much of their enrollment before 2015, the community pressed the Center to offer more classes with career certifications and licensures. Currently, three of the Center's most popular programs are Brazilian language courses, early childhood education classes, and offshore wind technician training. In addition, they offer various smaller programs such as food handler certification, fertilizer licensing, and a myriad of business and software courses. All these courses offer residents the opportunity to build their skills and give back to the community by opening businesses and fulfilling needs on the island. The Martha's Vineyard Adult Learning Program (MVALP) focuses on teaching English as a Second Language to immigrants on the island so they too can find jobs and participate in the economic development of the community.

Cape Cod comprises numerous summer resort communities that are similar to Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard in many ways, such as the seasonality of employment. Given the size of the population and the wider diversity of employment opportunities, however, the Cape has more resources and opportunities to address the problems associated with summer resort economies. The Cape Cod Community College, the Academy for Lifelong Learning of Cape Cod, and the Upper Cape Regional Technical School are the three leading adult education resources on Cape Cod, but each offers a different type of curriculum to address different audience needs. Cape Cod Community College provides learning opportunities to advance education such as High School Equivalency (GED) or ESOL which can help residents in their day-to-day lives. Because they

are a community college, they also offer associate degrees in a variety of subjects. They focus on career advancement with certificate and degree programs. The Academy for Lifelong Learning of Cape Cod partners with the community college but offers more courses for enrichment and hobbies, such as poetry, bead weaving, and origami, as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: (2022)Academy for Lifelong Learning of Cape Cod, [Course Schedule](#)

Academy for Lifelong Learning of Cape Cod					Fall Semester 2022		
Course Schedule							
Day	Block Time	Session	Starting	ALL #	Course Title	Location	Coordinator(s)
Monday	9:00AM - 10:20AM	First 6 Weeks	12-Sep	ALL1255	Three Comic Gems by Rossini	Grossman 106	Steve Piontek
Monday	9:00AM - 10:20AM	First 6 Weeks	12-Sep	ALL1105	Introduction to Origami	Zoom	Andrea Plate
Monday	9:00AM - 10:20AM	Second 6 Weeks	31-Oct	ALL1281	Origami Containers	Zoom	Andrea Plate
Monday	10:30AM - 11:50AM	12 Weeks	12-Sep	ALL1210	Memoirs - Lest We Forget	Zoom	Dianne Tattersall
Monday	10:30AM - 11:50AM	First 6 Weeks	12-Sep	ALL1090	The Third Reich	Grossman 106	Stephen Pastore
Monday	10:30AM - 11:50AM	Second 6 Weeks	31-Oct	ALL867	Being Mortal	Grossman 106	Marilyn Nouri
Monday	10:30AM - 11:50AM	Second 6 Weeks	31-Oct	ALL1196	Genetic Genealogy: DNA Testing for Growing Your Family Tree	Zoom	Susan Feinberg
Monday	10:30AM - 11:50AM	Second 6 Weeks	31-Oct	ALL1279	A Survey of Art Herstory: Did Michelangelo Have a Sister?	Grossman 115	Lois Karfunkel
Monday	12:00PM - 1:20PM	12 Weeks	12-Sep	ALL1173	12 Directors/12 Masterpieces - New Edition	Zoom	Joseph Gonzalez
Monday	12:00PM - 1:20PM	First 6 Weeks	12-Sep	ALL216	Introducing Mr. Sherlock Holmes	Grossman 106	John Kennedy
Monday	12:00PM - 1:20PM	Second 6 Weeks	31-Oct	ALL256	The "Offspring" of Sherlock Holmes	Grossman 106	John Kennedy
Monday	1:30PM - 2:50PM	First 6 Weeks	12-Sep	ALL1277	Beadweaving: Beginner and Intermediate - Section A	Grossman 115	Kathleen Taylor
Monday	1:30PM - 2:50PM	Second 6 Weeks	31-Oct	ALL1246	Native American Chronicle	Grossman 106	Frank Cuphone, John Kennedy
Monday	1:30PM - 2:50PM	Second 6 Weeks	31-Oct	ALL1267	Discussing the Essay	Zoom	Marilyn Nouri
Monday	1:30PM - 2:50PM	Second 6 Weeks	31-Oct	ALL1278	Beadweaving: Beginner and Intermediate - Section B	Grossman 115	Kathleen Taylor
Monday	3:00PM - 4:20PM	First 6 Weeks	12-Sep	ALL1263	Carpe Diem; Seize the Day! (For iPhone, iPad, or Mac users)	Grossman 106	Don Ellicott
Monday	3:00PM - 4:20PM	First 6 Weeks	12-Sep	ALL932	Beadweaving: Beyond the Basics - Section A	Grossman 115	Kathleen Taylor
Monday	3:00PM - 4:20PM	Second 6 Weeks	31-Oct	ALL1198	Massachusetts History, Pride and Prejudice? Part 2	Grossman 106	Stephen Anderson
Monday	3:00PM - 4:20PM	Second 6 Weeks	31-Oct	ALL1280	Beadweaving: Beyond the Basics - Section B	Grossman 115	Kathleen Taylor

Certainly, these courses differ from those offered in Martha's Vineyard because the needs of the community are different. It is important to determine which programs will be most valuable to the collective community, so it becomes clearer where resources should be allocated. For example, the wind technician certification is in demand on Martha's Vineyard, where they have many offshore wind turbines, but would be less relevant and presumably lower demand on Nantucket, which does not have as many.

We were able to speak to two representatives from these Cape Cod schools. Mary Burke from the Upper Cape Regional Technical School noted that their school is focusing on more vocational/trade courses with electrician and plumbing courses being the most popular. There has been a 34% increase in the last year for the trade programs at this institution, showing just how the demand is growing for these courses.

We also spoke to Dianne Tattersall, the President of the Academy of Lifelong Learning on Cape Cod. Unlike the Upper Cape Regional Technical School and the Cape Cod Community College, the Academy of Lifelong Learning is geared more towards individuals who may be retired or no longer looking for work. Consequently, they offer courses centered around enrichment rather than career advancement. History and literature are popular topic areas and hundreds of people enroll every year, as well as poetry, bead weaving, and origami, as previously mentioned. A common concern at each of these adult education institutions is marketing and advertising, which the NCS has also struggled with in the past. Our interviewees indicated that their institutions typically use word of mouth to advertise their programs, although some have hired people with marketing experience to help them promote their programs.

Employer Perspectives on Nantucket

In addition to getting the perspective of adult education in similar communities, we also wanted to gain insight from employers on Nantucket. We interviewed seven employers in the community ranging from electricians to government workers to nurses. During these interviews, several themes emerged. Each of the employers we interviewed was primarily interested in adult education that would benefit their own business. For example, Annie-kay, a nurse at a nursing home on the island was interviewed on 11/2/22 and said more healthcare courses, including phlebotomy and X-ray technician training, would benefit the community. Of course, our interviewees are likely to express interest in those skills that may be more directly related to their businesses. but it also shows the possibility that these jobs need more skilled employees. The employers we interviewed already have experience and connections with the NCS which was useful since they were often aware of the programs offered at NCS. Most of the employers we interviewed indicated their companies would be willing to pay for or give time off to an employee to take classes that would further their career. For example, Rob Lucchini, a master electrician, said his company, Ellis and Schneider Inc., would hire someone as an apprentice without certifications and would be willing to pay for them to take the classes necessary to become a licensed electrician.

Although all the employers we interviewed were in different fields, specifically hospitality, government, trades, and medical, many had similar ideas for potential courses that could be offered. Interviewees consistently agreed that foreign language courses, such as

professional and medical Spanish would be beneficial. Spanish speakers are always being asked to learn English but having courses to teach Spanish to native English speakers could be very important to open doors for more effective communication. Finance and business courses such as a course on using QuickBooks were also discussed in the interviews as many people on the island own small businesses or nonprofits and could benefit from these skills. Three interviewees emphasized the need for leadership and business management courses. They indicated it was easy to hire for introductory-level positions where no experience was necessary, but it was difficult to fill upper-level positions that required greater financial and business knowledge. Providing leadership courses on the island might alleviate the need to leave to get appropriate certifications, and employers will be less likely to have to recruit off-island to fill positions. Lastly, computer courses were seen as important, both introduction to technology courses for people that may not have much experience with computers as well as courses for the more computer literate. Amanda Perry, the Human Resources Director for the Town of Nantucket, said that the Microsoft Office Suite course could be useful for the development of technology skills since many different careers use this software. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the workplace has shifted to more online functions rather than in-person and face-to-face interactions, so learning how to operate online software such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc. effectively is important.

The employers we interviewed were also able to give us insight into some of the problems Nantucket faces as an island community. Given the lack of suitable employees and limited opportunities for training, many employers must either recruit off the island or send employees off the island for training. These actions are costly and force residents to go off-island to obtain training and certifications needed for their jobs. Brooke Mohr, the Treasurer of the Nantucket Resource Partnership, said, “grow people here”, meaning that the focus should be training people on the island to do specific jobs as opposed to recruiting off-island. The expense of housing is a huge issue and many people are working multiple jobs just to pay the mortgage or rent, which in turn pushes more people off the island. To get people to stay on the island, the NCS needs to add courses that provide skills and training to help individuals to get better jobs and more stable sources of income year-round.

Student Perspective on Nantucket

We also interviewed several past students to get their opinion on the courses at the NCS, including two thorough interviewees and students from ESOL along with 8 Real Estate students. We informally interviewed a group of students in the real estate class. All 8 real estate students specified that they took the course to advance their career prospects and that they preferred the class to be in person rather than online. They also stated that they would like more finance courses as well as foreign language courses like Chinese. We also spoke to one student who took a driving course at the NCS. He is a local small business owner of a sushi restaurant. He was interested in taking courses in the future to develop his English and further his business, such as finance, economics, and management courses.

While the interviews were helpful for more in-depth questions the main bulk of our analysis comes from our survey. We sent out the survey to approximately 600 people and had a total of 132 respondents, including 94 English speakers, 31 Spanish speakers, and 7 Portuguese speakers. This was about a 20% response rate, which was higher than anticipated. As shown in Table 6, the majority of survey respondents identified as females, making up about 75% of the English participants, about 60% of the Spanish participants, and about 71% of the Portuguese participants. However, the levels of education varied between the different translated versions. Approximately 70% of participants for the English version had obtained either a Bachelor's or Graduate degree, while about 70% of the participants for the Spanish and Portuguese versions had not obtained a college degree. Below is Table 5 showing some of the demographics for the survey for English speakers.

Table 5: Demographic Composition of Survey Respondents

Language	Experience with NCS		Gender			Employment Status				
	Previously Taken Courses at NCS	Never Taken Courses at NCS	Female	Male	Prefer Not to Say	Part-Time Off Season	Full-Time Off Season	Part-Time Year-Round	Full-Time Year-Round	Prefer Not to Say
English	63	30	66	20	7	5	6	15	48	19
Spanish	21	11	18	10	4	5	3	4	10	10
Portuguese	4	3	5	2	0	0	2	1	4	0

The majority of the English survey participants had taken NCS classes previously and were more likely to have full-time year-round positions. The same demographics were noticed in responses from the Spanish survey participants, except there being a slightly lower percentage (39%) being employed full-time year-round.

The responses were similar across all three language groups, which helped in the analysis of data but there were some significant distinctions. Overall, across the three different language versions of the survey, the majority of respondents answered that they would be most interested in taking courses in finance/QuickBooks, computer skills, and foreign languages. For the Spanish version, participants also expressed their interest in English literature/writing and construction. The Portuguese version showed similar trends to the Spanish version and had a very small sample size, so the graph is not included here.

One major difference is that speakers of other languages rated the ESOL course as most helpful, whereas native English speakers rated the CPR course as most helpful. This distinction is logical since the ESOL course does not apply to native English speakers. Figures 10 and 11 below display the data for the courses that past NCS students would be most interested in taking in the future if NCS were to offer courses in these new subjects.

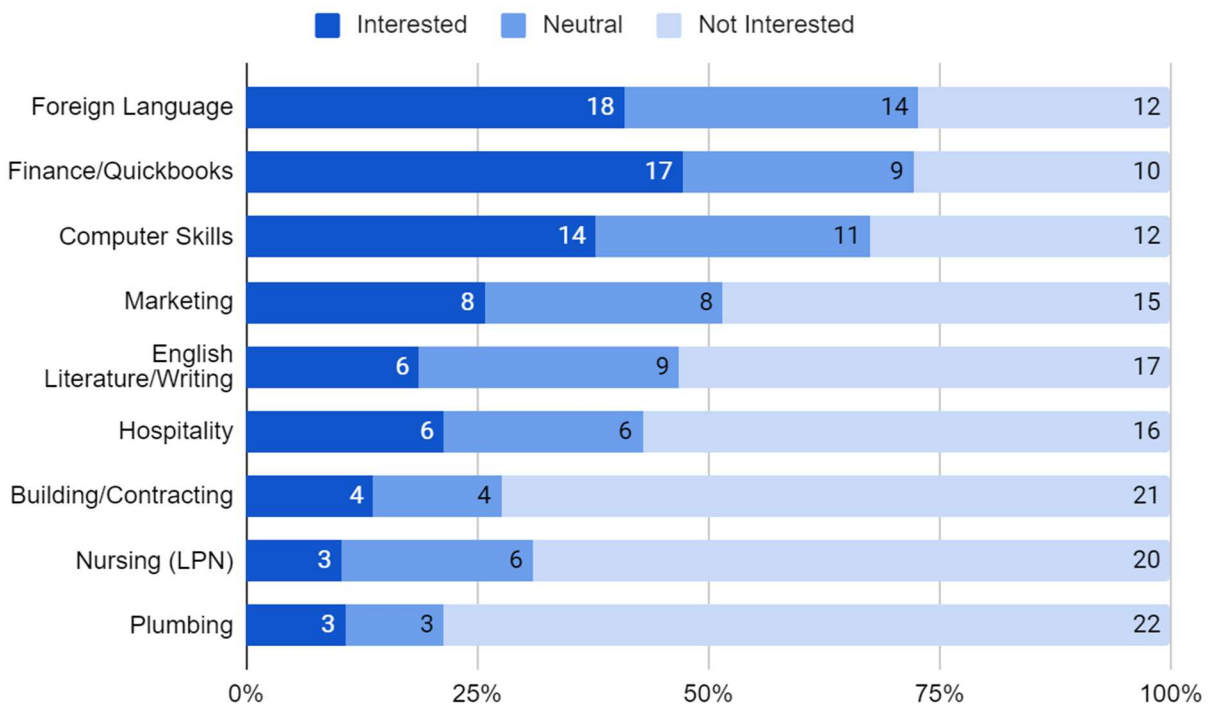


Figure 10: Past NCS Students' Interest in Future Subject Areas (English Survey, n=63)

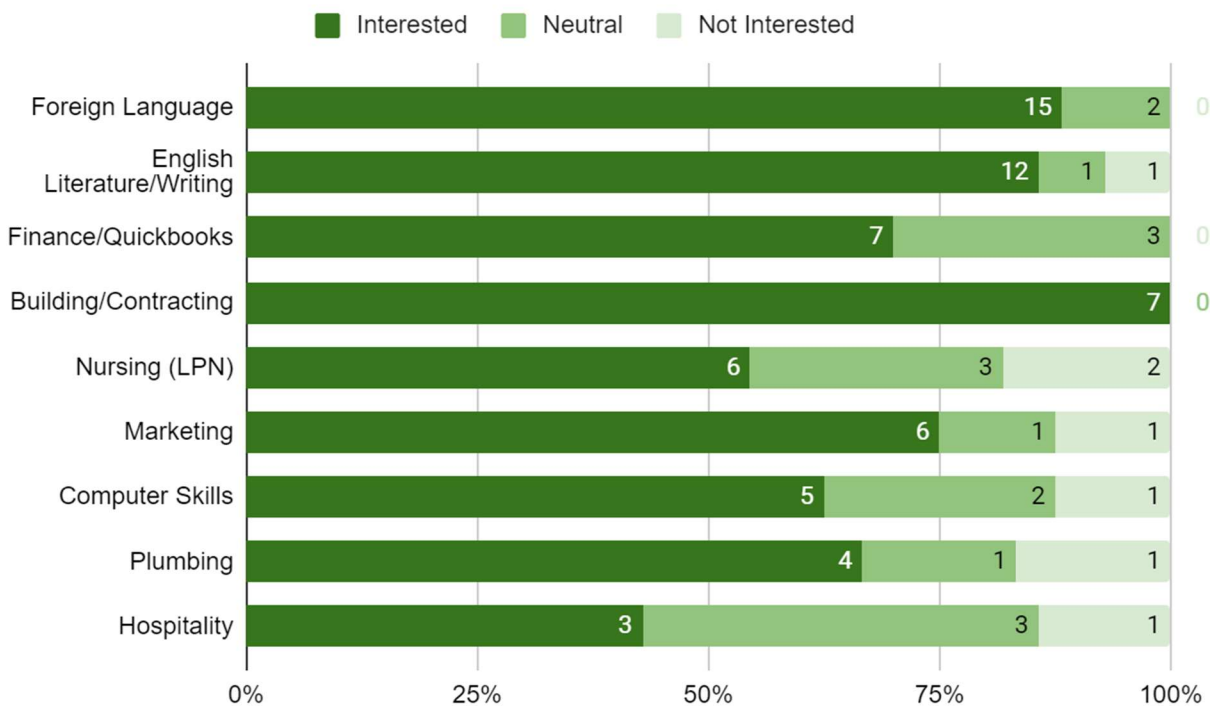


Figure 11: Past NCS Students' Interest in Future Subject Areas (Spanish Survey, n= 31)

Figures 12 and 13 below depict bar graphs of the past NCS students' motivations for taking courses. Overall, obtaining certifications was a popular motivation across all three survey versions. In the English version, most participants also responded that they took courses to improve their technical skills and to help them start a business. In contrast, respondents in the Spanish and Portuguese versions were more likely to take courses to improve their language skills and help them find a job. The responses to the Portuguese version were similar to those of the Spanish version and the sample size was quite small (7 responses), so the graph is not included.

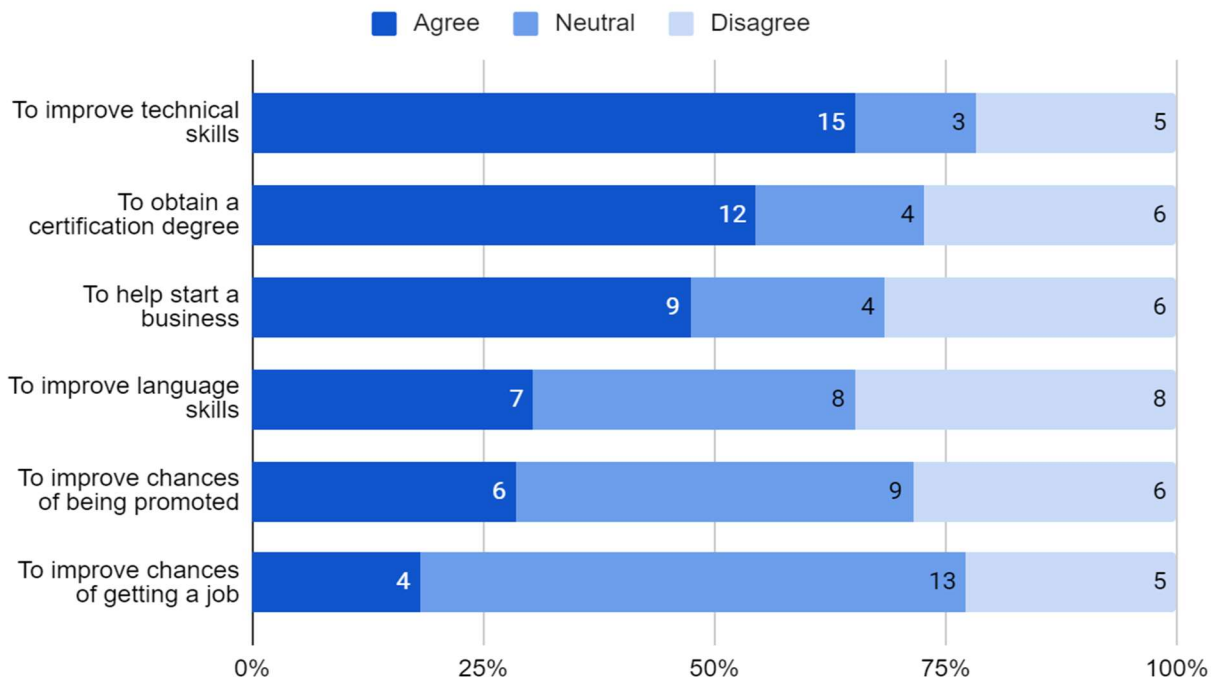


Figure 12: Past Students' Motivations for Taking Courses at NCS (English Version, n=63)

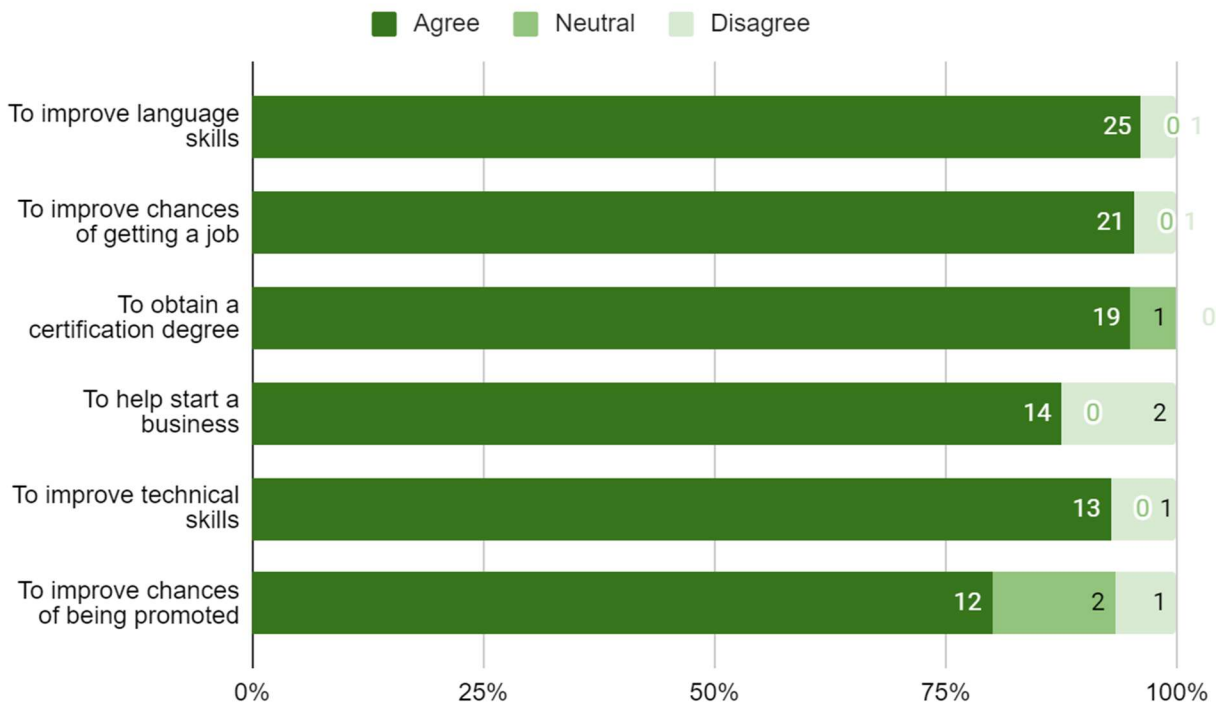


Figure 13: Past Students' Motivations for Taking Courses at NCS (Spanish Version, n=31)

As seen in Figures 14 and 15 below, the three most desired subject areas by prospective students in all versions of the survey were finance and QuickBooks, technology and computer skills, and foreign language. In addition, many respondents of the Spanish and Portuguese versions were interested in English literature and writing as well. Furthermore, the least desired course across all of the surveys was nursing, which was unexpected but likely due to costs and time.

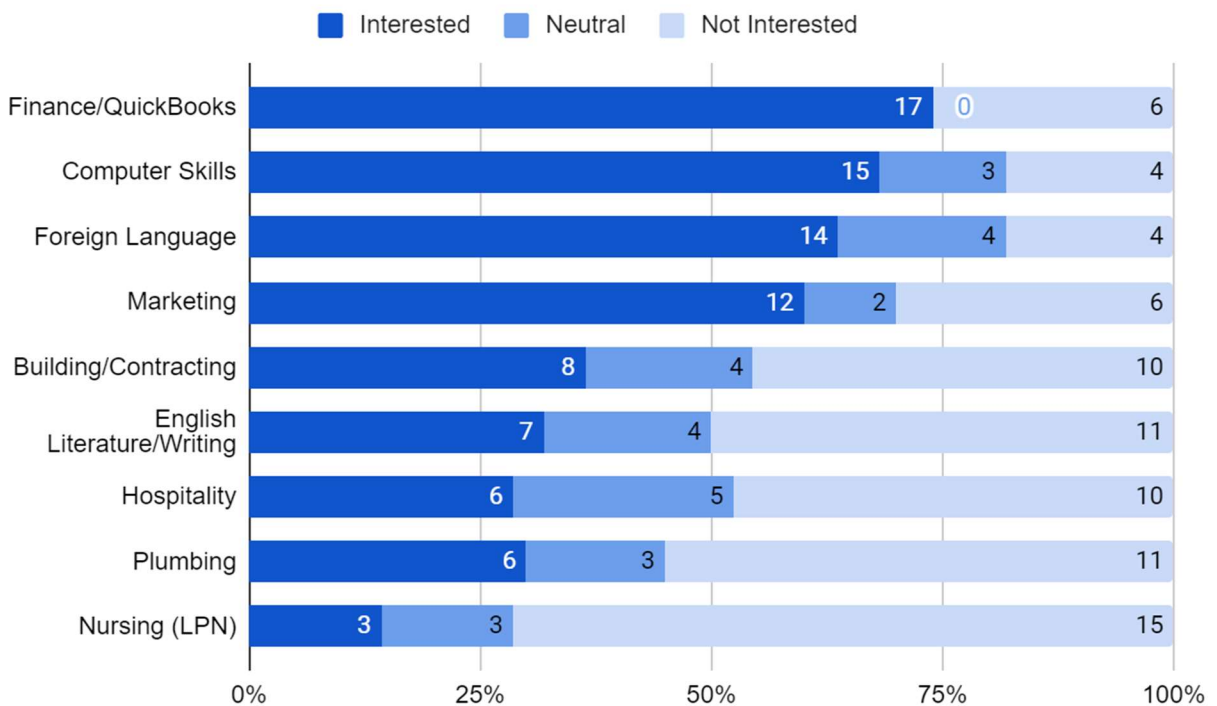


Figure 14: Prospective NCS Students' Interest in Future Subject Areas (English Version, n=30)

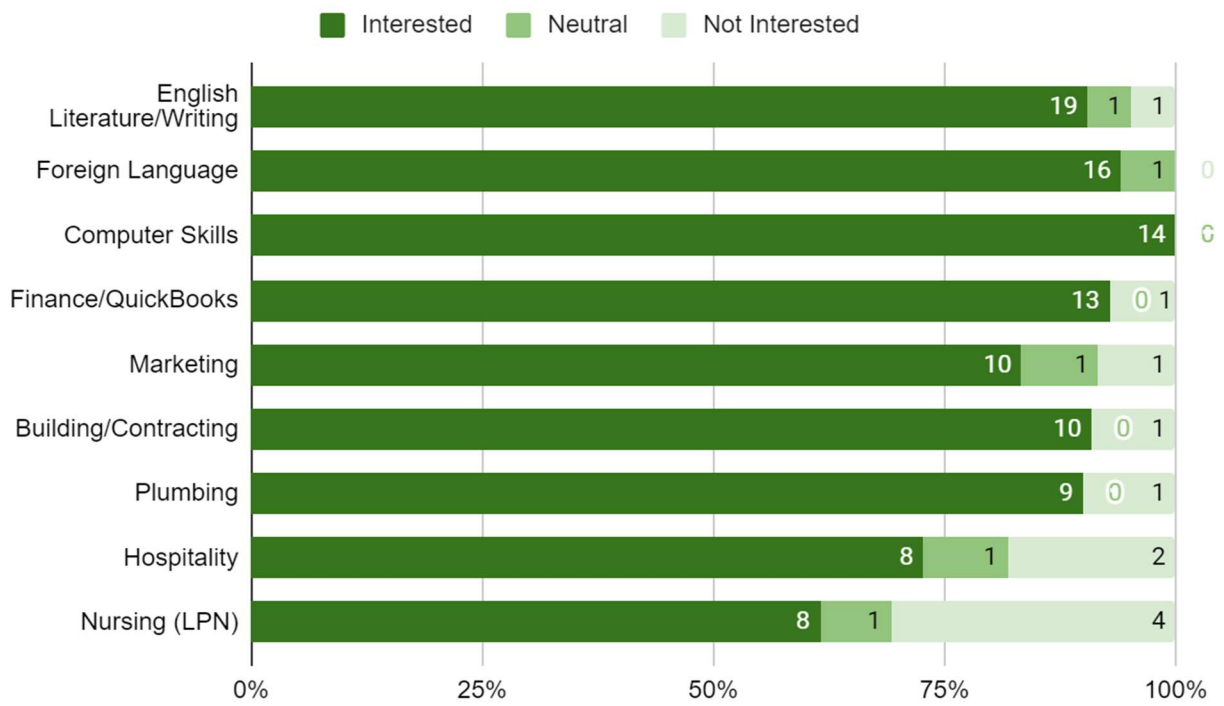


Figure 15: Prospective NCS Students' Interest in Future Subject Areas (Spanish Version, n=31)

We also asked a question regarding factors that may influence prospective students' decisions to take a course at NCS. Figures 16 and 17 below show the responses to these questions for the English and Spanish versions.

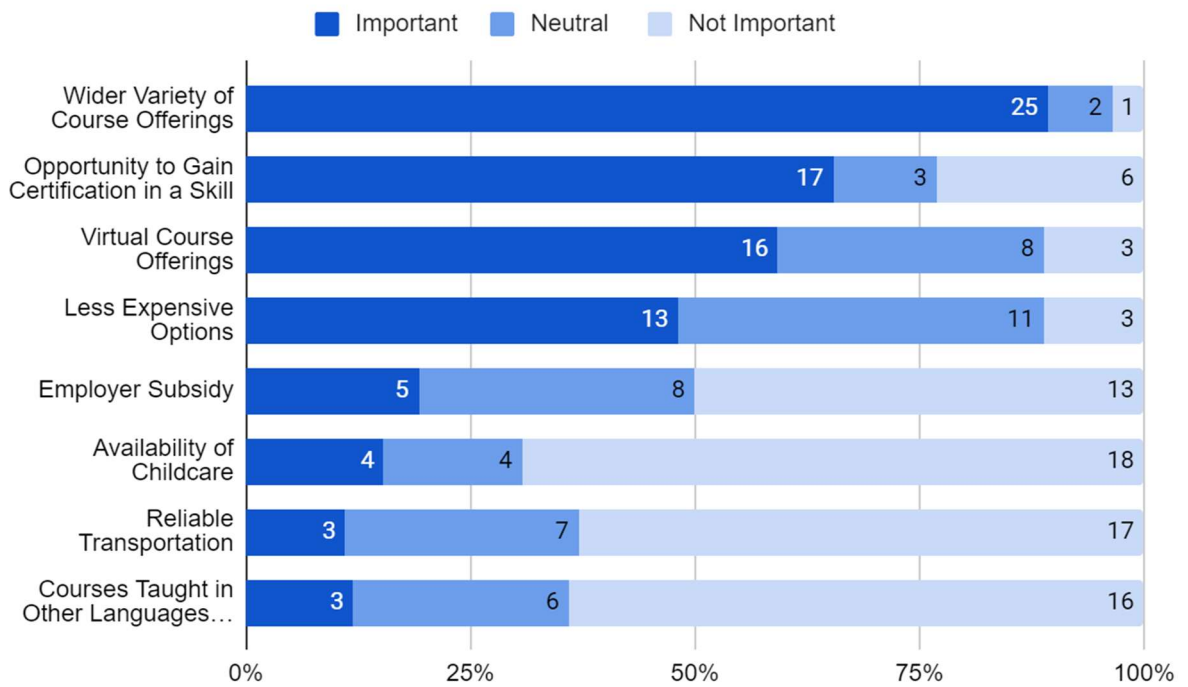


Figure 16: Factors Influencing Prospective Students' Decision to Take Another Course (English Version, n=63)

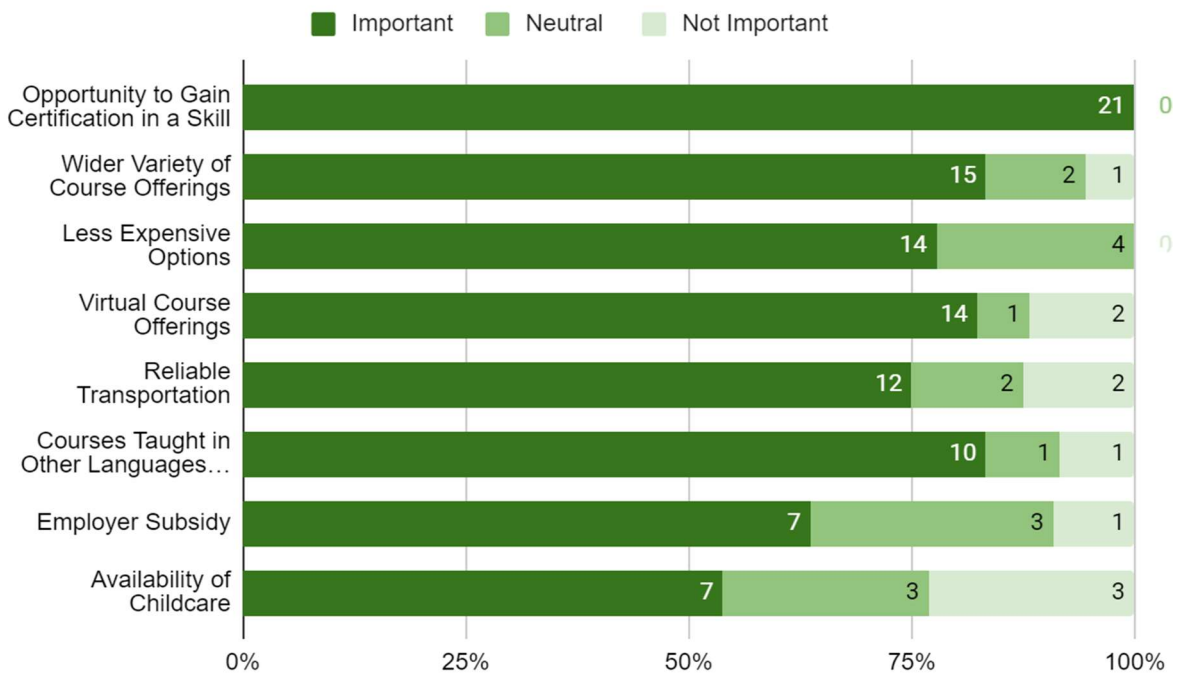


Figure 17: Factors Influencing Prospective Students' Decision to Take Another Course (Spanish Version, n=31)

Finally, we added a question to gain an understanding of why prospective students would be interested in taking courses at NCS. Figure 18 displays the responses to this question in the English version of the survey. The same question on the Spanish and Portuguese translations received virtually the same trends in responses so it was not necessary to include those data.

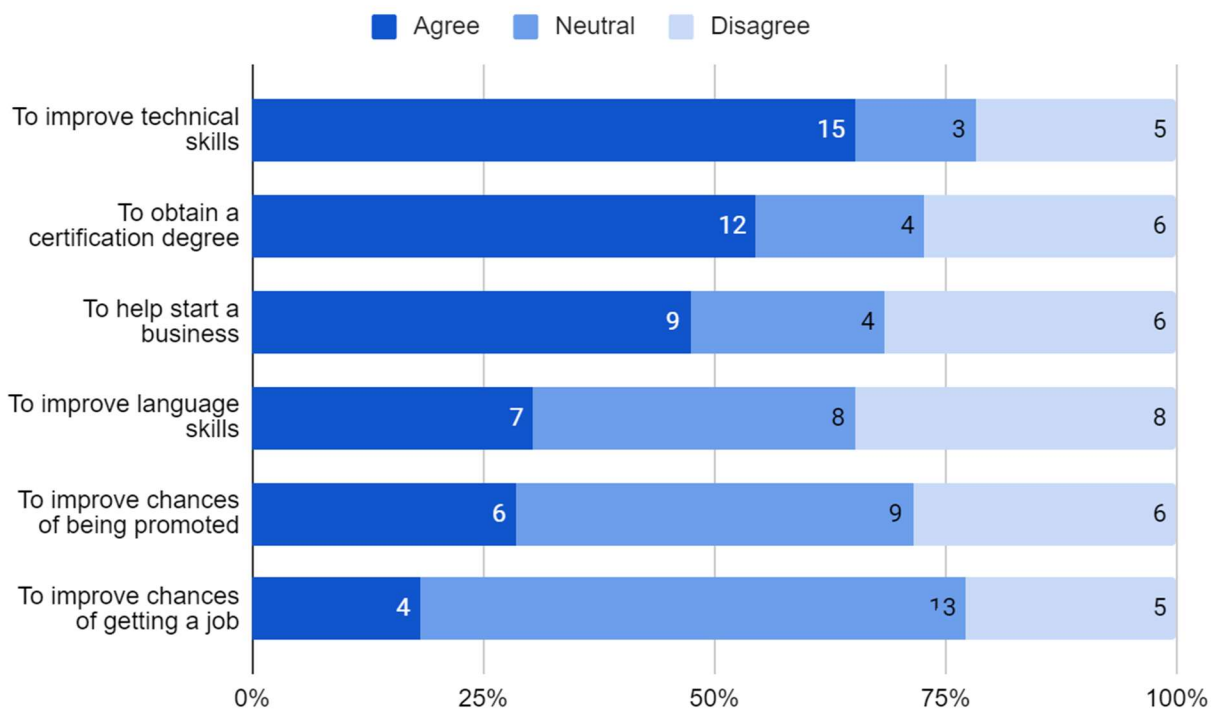


Figure 18: Prospective NCS Students’ Motivations for Wanting to Take Courses at NCS (n=30)

Based on the chart above, the most common reasons for the participants’ interest in adult education are to improve their technical skills, obtain a certification degree, and start a business. These are all the same as the motivations given by past NCS students for taking adult education courses.

Overall, the trends of the survey were relatively consistent between the three languages, as well as with both the past and prospective students. This made it simple to analyze and code the data and gain an understanding of the desires of the participants. To conclude, the most common courses that the participants were interested in include finance and QuickBooks, technology and computer skills, and foreign language. It is also interesting to note that these

subject areas were similar to those desired in the Learn Without Leaving survey conducted by ReMain Nantucket, with finance and computer skills at the top of their list as well (Economic Development Group & Mt. Auburn Associates, 2015).

NCS Data

Our group was given access to enrollment data for all the courses offered for the last three years, shown in Figure 19 below, which we analyzed to isolate enrollments for adult education courses.

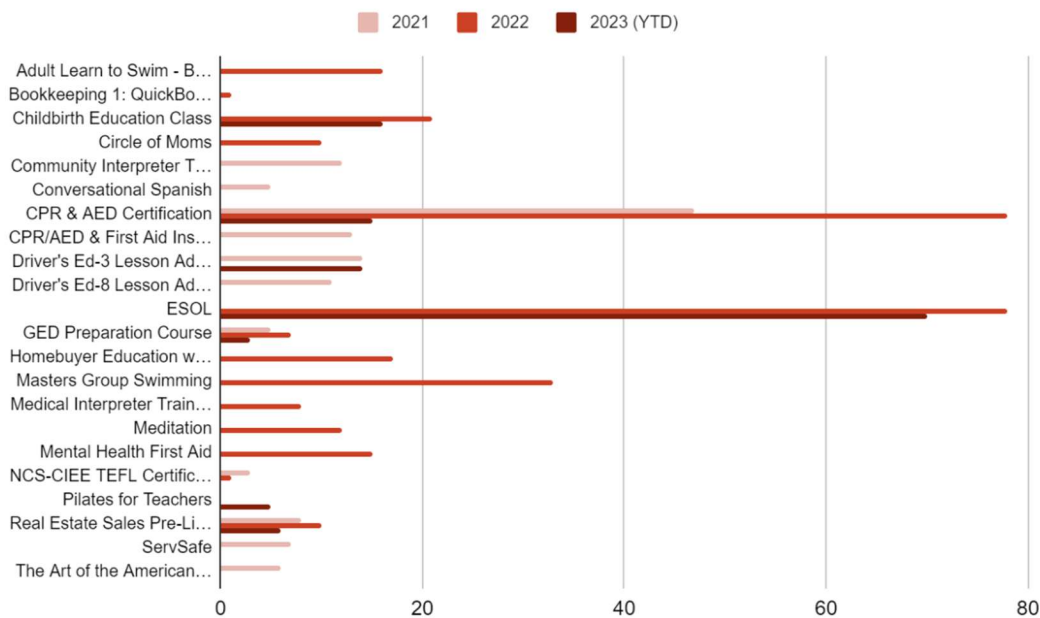


Figure 19: Enrollments for Adult Education courses from 2021-2023

We determined that the most popular courses, via enrollment numbers for the last three years, were CPR and ESOL, having 140 and 148 enrollments over the last three years respectively. This can be seen in Figure 19. This is consistent with the responses we received from the surveys regarding past classes taken at the NCS, with 31 respondents having taken ESOL and 23 having taken CPR. We also noticed that enrollment for most courses was generally similar from year to year, but the CPR and ESOL enrollments were much higher than for other courses. For example, in 2022, the GED prep course had 7 students and Real Estate Pre-Licensure had 10. In the same year, CPR and ESOL each had 78 participants.

CPR provides certification and is a skill that is beneficial to have in many careers. Given that the course is a single-day workshop, it becomes easier for many individuals to enroll and commit. ESOL is also popular because English speaking skills become necessary for job advancement for people from other cultures, which is the main driver for people to take courses.

The data also show an impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, as 2021 course enrollments were lower than in previous years, with only 131 enrollments in adult education. There has been a significant bounce back, however, as 2022 had more than double the number of participants with 307.

As the figure shows, some courses were not offered in all years, such as ServSafe or Driver's Ed. After speaking with our sponsors, Brian Lenane and Lindsay Pykosz, the adult education coordinators at NCS, we learned that instructor availability can affect course offerings. Sometimes courses can have a sufficient amount of interest or enrolled students, yet cannot be run due to a lack of instructors.

NCS Classes Evaluation

We were able to sit in on some of the courses offered at the NCS with permission from the instructors. Doing so allowed us to speak to some of the instructors and students and gain insight into their experiences with the NCS. On November 3, 2022, we sat in on a real estate class taught by Dave Harris who also teaches similar classes on Cape Cod, where he resides year-round. Harris makes the trip to Nantucket twice a year during the shoulder seasons to teach this class over four ten-hour days. Classes on Cape Cod are large (approximately 20 people) but in Nantucket, a class size of 8 is considered full, which was the size of the class we attended. We spoke informally with a few of the students in the class and solicited their opinions on adult education and the real estate class, especially at the NCS. This class was composed of seven women and one man, which reflects the gender balance in this sector – 67% of real estate agents in the greater Boston area are female (Kelsey-Rogers, 2022). Most students indicated they took the class to become licensed real estate agents and to make more money. This class was fully in-person but there is also an online option to get a real estate license, although this is not affiliated with the NCS. The students all knew the online version existed but vastly preferred the in-person option due to the human interactions. The class involved extended discussion of topics and the students indicated this helped them retain the pertinent information. The students also indicated

they would also like NCS to offer personal finance classes as well as foreign language classes like Chinese, presumably to help them further their real estate careers.

Even though we did not sit in on the GED class, we were able to talk to the teacher John Mynttinen at NCS. Mynttinen mentioned that it can be hard to obtain work on the island without having a high school diploma or GED. While a GED itself will not provide a job, it opens many doors to opportunities they would not have without a degree. He also mentioned ESOL being very important because many of the people in his class speak multiple languages. The GED class does have a Spanish-speaking co-instructor and also uses the only online course booklet that is offered in both English and Spanish. This is an attempt to make the class accessible to as many people as possible, as the GED is offered in both English and Spanish and consists of both reading and math sections. Mynttinen also mentioned that the biggest struggle in the class is the mathematics section, as that is the hardest thing for a GED student to learn in such a short amount of time. He also suggested more English classes, trade certificate/license classes, healthcare, and teaching. Overall, these classes provided valuable insights into the inner working of the NCS.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Similar to other adult education organizations, NCS uses enrollment data to adjust its course offerings, but recently the school has been finding it challenging to gauge the future needs of the community. Moreover, while NCS recognizes a growing demand for trade courses such as plumbing and electrical work, it has been quite difficult to find qualified plumbers and electricians to teach these courses with their busy schedules. It is also evident that childcare is a significant issue for adults on the island, which severely impacts some students' abilities to find time and opportunities to take classes. NCS has worked to offer some childcare options, but there is no clear solution to this problem, as it is more complicated than vacancies in other job positions. Our sponsors have detailed the challenges of providing such a program because it must cater to ages ranging from infants to pre-teens and finding qualified caretakers for these different age groups is difficult. There is also simply not enough space at the community school to account for all their adult education students' children. Another major issue that arises with childcare is a liability, as there can be significant consequences when dealing with minors.

Based on our background research and findings, we have developed the following conclusions and recommendations for our sponsors at the Nantucket Community School:

Conclusion #1: The most popular subjects desired by past NCS students include finance and QuickBooks, technology and computer skills, and foreign languages.

Through our survey responses, we were able to gauge past and prospective students' interest in certain subject areas that are not currently offered by NCS. For past students, this included finance and QuickBooks, technology and computer skills, and foreign language. These three courses were also the same courses desired by prospective students, with the switch between foreign language being the most wanted and finance and QuickBooks being the third.

Recommendation 1.1: We recommend that the Nantucket Community School add courses in finance and QuickBooks.

The category of Finance/QuickBooks includes a wide spectrum of skills that could cover anything from personal finance to corporate accounting. We were unable to take this broad idea and narrow it to an appropriate singular curriculum. We, therefore, recommend that the NCS

solicit more input from potential students for such a course. In particular, NCS would benefit from information regarding the following aspects of such a course offering or offerings:

- What is the primary goal of potential students, such as personal finance, starting a business, or advancing in their present positions by understanding more about finance?
- What is potential students' current understanding of basic financial tools, such as balance sheets, profit and loss statements, and cash flow projections?
- What experience do potential students currently have about the software used for financial analysis and management, such as Excel and QuickBooks?
- If a prospective student is interested in QuickBooks, are they interested in a specific part of the package (e.g. cashflow analysis, payroll, strategy)?
- Do prospective QuickBooks students hope to achieve one of the certification levels in QuickBooks? (see: <https://quickbooks.intuit.com/accountants/training-certification/certification/>)
- What length of course would the students envision?

Once NCS gets more information about the demand profile of prospective students, they will be able to begin the process of developing an appropriate curriculum and recruiting a suitable instructor, either on- or off-island, to teach the course. Recruitment of appropriate instructors remains a challenge for NCS, particularly for courses that require very specific levels of expertise. When offering courses, the NCS will have to balance the desires of prospective students with the feasibility of finding an instructor.

Recommendation 1.2: We recommend NCS develop and offer foreign language classes at the professional as well as medical levels.

Professional foreign language classes would be designed for English-speaking individuals who would like to learn another language. Spanish would be the obvious first choice as it is the largest non-English language spoken on the island, but there was also interest in Portuguese and Chinese. These professional language courses would include business terms and other professional vocabulary to provide improved opportunities to communicate with non-native English speakers on the island. Businesses might also be willing to pay for professional

language courses for their employees since it would promote better relations with the Spanish-speaking community on the island and expand business opportunities. Several employers interviewed were willing to pay for classes such as electrician courses, CPR, and ESOL, if it would benefit their businesses. Professional Spanish would be a great investment for hospitals specifically as it would make communication between employees and patients more efficient. The hospital itself could also provide funding for these courses and use them as part of its professional development requirements for employees. However, NCS would need to conduct further research into the exact needs of the community to develop curricula for such a broad subject area as a foreign language.

Recommendation 1.3: We recommend NCS offer technology and computer skills classes at the introductory level

Technology and computer skills are encompassed across many different topics, similar to finance courses. Our surveys and interviews indicate that there is substantial interest in classes on technology and computer skills. This may reflect that many immigrants and older citizens in particular lack familiarity and experience with new technologies and computers, but we were unable to narrow down the idea into particular topics. To provide these classes, NCS may need to gather some more information from prospective students, such as:

- What are the reasons for wanting technology courses, such as basic user training for devices, or computer skills for business management?
- Is there specific software or certain skills that potential students would like to learn?
- What experience would potential students have before starting such a course?
- Would prospective students hope to earn certification(s) for certain skills, such as Microsoft Office?

Conclusion #2: Adult education has become more centered around courses that offer credentials since that is something desired by both employers and students.

Based on our review of relevant literature, we determined that many adult education programs shifted to vocational and trade-based programs that offer certifications. Both employers and students desire certifications as a way for them to advance either their businesses

or individual careers. It was also evident through our survey responses that one of the main motivations for both past and prospective students to take courses at NCS would be the acquisition of a certification degree. Several businesses seem willing to pay for these certificates making them even more desirable for students.

Recommendation 2.1: We recommend that the Nantucket Community School design its courses so that applicable courses, especially those which are relevant to a trade or vocation, allow students to obtain a certification degree.

Based upon survey responses and interviews, one of the main reasons that prospective students would be more likely to take courses is if they can gain a certification degree after the course. Furthermore, at least half of the employers we interviewed stated that they would be willing to subsidize the costs of certification courses as well as give their employees time off to take these classes. This has the potential to attract more students to NCS and lead to higher enrollment numbers. Based upon survey responses and interviews, one of the main reasons that prospective students would be more likely to take courses is if they are able to gain a certification degree at the conclusion of the course. Furthermore, at least half of the employers we interviewed stated that they would be willing to subsidize the costs of certification courses as well as give their employees time off to take these classes. This has the potential to attract more students to NCS and lead to higher enrollment numbers.

Conclusion #3: Based on our review of current and past enrollment data from NCS, we found that the most popular courses in past years were CPR and First Aid and ESOL, followed by Real Estate and GED courses.

CPR and First Aid and ESOL courses were the most popular courses in past years and these courses continue to have the highest enrollment numbers. While Covid-19 lowered the enrollment numbers for 2021, they have bounced back subsequently and many classes for 2022-23 now are fully enrolled. In addition to the CPR and First Aid and the ESOL courses, Real Estate and GED have also been found to be extremely popular at NCS. While the Real Estate courses typically have smaller enrollment numbers, according to the coordinators, this course has still been classified as being full over the past three years. It can be concluded that Real Estate is a course that consistently meets enrollment capacity, meaning it is reliable and should continue

to be offered. A similar trend was found with the GED courses, and the enrollment data indicates that while GED courses have smaller class sizes, the numbers continue to be consistent year after year, demonstrating the importance of this course.

Recommendation 3.1: We recommend that the Nantucket Community School should continue offering the CPR and First Aid courses, as well as the ESOL, Real Estate, and GED courses.

These CPR and First Aid, ESOL, Real Estate, and GED were the most reliable courses and reached nearly full enrollment over the past three years, and the survey responses confirm that these courses were the most useful and important courses the past students have taken at NCS. Because these courses have consistently reached the maximum capacity of students, it would be probable that this trend would continue in the future. Additionally, NCS already has instructors for these courses, so they do not need to recruit new employees for these positions. Now that the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic are lessening, the enrollment numbers are likely to increase even more. students have taken at NCS. Because these courses have consistently reached the maximum capacity of students, it would be probable that this trend would continue in the future. Additionally, NCS already has instructors for these courses, so they do not need to recruit new employees for these positions. Now that the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic are lessening, the enrollment numbers are likely to increase even more.

Recommendation 3.2: Because the very popular ESOL course has courses at multiple levels that allow students to enroll in a class with peers of similar abilities and skill levels, we recommend that NCS consider breaking other courses into different levels if applicable.

Breaking the courses down into different levels will allow for more specialized education. After speaking with students in the ESOL course, we found that students will also be more likely to take courses if they feel like their needs will be supported and that they have similar skill levels as their peers. The level structure has seemed to work out extremely well for the ESOL classes, so we suggest trying it out with other subjects. For example, a computer skills class could have a lower level for introductory computer skills and a higher level for more advanced learners. This also may help students not feel as overwhelmed, as everyone may start with differing levels of experience. Various leveling of classes could also be done by offering

single-day workshops aimed at different skill levels for applicable courses and evaluating which have the biggest draw.

Conclusion #4: Several of our interviewees were not aware of the range of the courses offered by NCS and the opportunities that the community school can provide.

Recommendation 4.1: We recommend that the NCS continue to improve and build upon its marketing methods so that the community is more aware of the opportunities provided by the school.

To combat this the NCS should focus on advertising the course offerings to reach the entire island. This can be done by bringing back the paper brochures to distribute in public places as not everyone on the island uses computers or cell phones daily. These brochures could also be printed in Spanish and Portuguese to help advertise to other popular ethnic groups on the island. Furthermore, to provide an incentive, NCS could provide their students with a discount on their next class if they bring a friend, which would increase enrollment and reward the current students. By explaining how the community school can help members of the community, enrollment in the NCS course offerings would be expected to increase.

The NCS should focus not just on marketing to prospective students directly but also on businesses. If a business needs a certain certificate to be offered, it can go through the NCS instead of having to go off the island. This would allow a direct link between businesses and the school and would make it much clearer what classes are important.

There are many challenges associated with marketing, especially because it is difficult to reach some of the communities that NCS would like to. For example, Adult Education coordinators Brian and Lindsay highlighted that reaching people who work in the trades is notoriously difficult, whether this is reaching out to potential students, or even instructors for classes.

Word of mouth is a big factor in how the community school grows, and attending more events with hard-to-reach communities can start a chain reaction which can result in more interest in the NCS and their programs. Reaching out to organizations such as the Nantucket Builders' Association or religious groups is a potential option, as well as attending public events

such as athletics events. Mary Burke from Upper Cape Tech mentioned their organization also uses word of mouth, although recently they received a grant to use for marketing. They have hired personnel specifically to assist with marketing. If the NCS has the resources to devote to this, we recommend they do the same.

Conclusion #5: NCS must continually analyze and update its course offering to best fit the needs of the community, causing them to change year after year.

Recommendation 5.1: We recommend the NCS have a course evaluation system that allows for anonymous feedback from students to facilitate continuous improvement of the course offerings.

While these recommendations may be what the island needs now things are constantly changing. We recommend a feedback system to continuously improve these courses. This could be done by administering anonymous paper surveys at the end of classes as well as digital options. These surveys are for students to rate their course experience after it concludes, this data can subsequently be used for current and prospective students to see how their peers felt about their experiences. These surveys would be put into a system that is only available to the NCS staff. This data would allow the NCS to constantly monitor what the students want and need.

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Interview questions for leaders in adult education

1. How have the trends in adult education changed in the last 20 years?
2. How have the trends changed in the last 5 years?
 - a. Did the pandemic play a role in these changes?
3. Are more or fewer people participating now in adult education?
4. What kind of adult education is the most popular?
5. What courses seem to be the most important to adults?
6. What are the biggest challenges in getting people to participate?
7. How do you handle adults that may not speak English?
8. Any final comments? Or people we should reach out to?

Preamble for Surveys and Interviews

Survey: We are a group of students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute conducting research in collaboration with the Nantucket Community School to identify future needs for adult education courses in the community.

This survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time and your participation is completely voluntary. You can skip questions and feel free to stop answering them at any time. Your responses will be anonymous and will be used to determine the opinions surrounding adult education in Nantucket.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at gr-ack22-education@wpi.edu or our advisors, Dominic Golding (golding@wpi.edu) or Bruce Bursten (bbursten@wpi.edu)

Interview: We are a group of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. This interview will be used to make improvements to the adult education courses offered at the Nantucket Community School. Our research will be published after our time on the island, and recommendations will be made to the coordinators at NCS.

This interview should take approximately 15-30 minutes of your time and your participation is completely voluntary. You can skip questions and feel free to stop talking at any time. Your responses will be used to determine the opinions surrounding adult education in Nantucket.

Do we have consent to record this interview? We will be sure to contact you with what we plan to use in our report before publishing it so you can look it over beforehand. Do we have consent to use your name and responses in our report? (If not ask if we can use it anonymously).

APPENDIX C

Survey Draft for past, current, and prospective NCS students:

11/20/22, 7:44 PM

Adult Education in Nantucket

Adult Education in Nantucket

We are a group of four college students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute conducting research in collaboration with the Nantucket Community School to identify future needs for adult education classes in the community.

This survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes. Your participation is voluntary and your responses will remain anonymous. You can skip questions you prefer not to answer or end the survey at any time.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the four of us at gr-ack22-education@wpi.edu or our advisors, Dominic Golding (golding@wpi.edu) or Bruce Bursten (bbursten@wpi.edu)

* Required

1. Do you consent to participate in this survey? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No Skip to section 9 (Thank you!)

Adult
Education
Background

First we would like to ask some questions about adult education classes you may have taken in the past. For our purposes, adult education includes any courses taken either for educational purposes or for enrichment by someone 18 or older.

2. Have you taken or wanted to take adult education class(es) at the Nantucket Community School previously? *

Mark only one oval.

- I have taken one or more adult education class at the Nantucket Community School
Skip to question 3
 I have not taken adult education courses at the Nantucket Community School but I might be interested in taking some in the future Skip to question 9
 I would not be interested in taking adult education classes in the future
Skip to question 13

You have participated in adult education before

Now we would like to ask you some questions about the adult education classes you have taken.

3. Please indicate which subject areas you took class(es) in

Check all that apply.

- English for Speakers of Other Languages
- Business
- Computer Science/Applications
- Electrician/Journeyman
- Writing
- Hospitality
- Real Estate
- CPR and First Aid
- Learning a new language such as Spanish or French
- Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
- Early Childhood Education
- I do not remember
- Other: _____

4. If you can remember, please list the specific class(es) taken

5. Please indicate how strongly the subjects you took improved your skills using the scale below

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not Important At All	Somewhat Unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Extremely Important
English for Speakers of Other Languages	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Computer Science/Applications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Electrician/Journeym an	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hospitality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Real Estate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CPR and First Aid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning a new language such as spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Early Childhood Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. How likely would you be to take another Nantucket Community School class in the next five years? (1 being extremely unlikely and 5 being extremely likely)

Mark only one oval.

Extremely unlikely

1

2

3

4

5

Extremely likely

7. Below is a list of subject areas in which the NCS might offer courses in the future. For each of the subject areas, would you be interested in taking a course in the next 5 years?

Mark only one oval per row.

	Yes	No	Maybe
Nursing (LPN)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
English Literature/Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hospitality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plumbing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Building/Contracting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finance/Quickbooks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Computer skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Foreign language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Do you and your friends/relatives have any other suggestions of subject areas in which you would be interested in taking courses at NCS?

Skip to question 17

You have not participated in adult education before but would like to

Please answer this short set of questions, as a reminder you can always leave a question blank if you do not wish to answer. This survey is completely voluntary.

9. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements. "I would take classes at the NCS in order..."

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
To enable me to improve my language skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To enable me to improve my technical skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To improve my chances of getting a job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To improve my chances of getting promoted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To help me start a new business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To obtain a certification degree.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Please indicate how strongly the following factors would influence your decision to take NCS classes in the future

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not At All Important	Somewhat Unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Extremely Important
Less Expensive Options	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wider Variety of Course Offerings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Virtual Course Offerings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of Childcare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employer Subsidy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reliable Transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Courses Taught in Other Languages such as Spanish or Portuguese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunity to Gain Certification in a Skill	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Please indicate your interest in each of the following subject areas that are currently NOT offered by NCS.

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not At All Interested	Somewhat Uninterested	Neutral	Somewhat Interested	Very Interested
Nursing (LPN)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
English Literature/Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hospitality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plumbing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Building/Contracting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finance/Quickbooks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Computer skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Foreign language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. Do you or your friends/relatives have any other suggestions for classes you would be interested in taking at NCS?

Skip to question 17

You have not participated before and don't intend to

We would like to ask you some questions to better understand why you have not taken adult education classes previously and why you do not feel you wish to take classes in the future.

13. Please indicate the three most important reasons why you would not be interested in taking any Nantucket Community School adult education classes now or in the future.

Check all that apply.

- Cost
- No course options interested me
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of time
- Lack of childcare
- Unaware of Nantucket Community School
- Lack of employer support
- Other: _____

14. Would the following factors encourage you to take classes at NCS?

Mark only one oval per row.

	Yes	No	Maybe
Less expensive options	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wider variety of course offerings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Virtual course offerings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accessible childcare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employer subsidy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reliable Transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Courses Taught in Other Languages such as Spanish or Portuguese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Are there any other suggestions you have that would encourage you to take NCS classes in the future?

16. Please indicate what types of adult education classes would be most attractive to you in the future.

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not At All Interested	Somewhat Uninterested	Neutral	Somewhat Interested	Very Interested
Nursing (LPN)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
English Literature/Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hospitality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plumbing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Building/Contracting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finance/Quickbooks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Computer skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Foreign language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Personal Background

We would like to ask some questions about your background.

17. Please indicate your preferred gender identity.

Mark only one oval.

- Male
- Female
- Nonbinary
- Prefer not to say
- Other: _____

18. Please indicate which of the following best describes your current circumstances.

Mark only one oval.

- I am a year-round resident of Nantucket
- I am a seasonal resident of Nantucket (6 months or less)
- I make regular visits to Nantucket (non-resident)
- I make occasional visits to Nantucket (non-resident)
- I travel from the main land to Nantucket regularly (3+ times a week)
- Prefer not to say
- Other: _____

19. Please indicate your current status.

Check all that apply.

- High School Student
- College Student
- Employed
- Retired
- Looking for work
- Prefer not to say
- Other: _____

20. What is your highest level of education?

Mark only one oval.

- Did not complete high school/GED or in process of completing
- High School Diploma or GED
- Some college, no degree
- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Graduate or Professional Degree
- Prefer not to say
- Other: _____

21. If you are currently employed, please indicate which option best applies to you.

Mark only one oval.

- I work part-time seasonally
- I work full-time seasonally
- I work part-time year-round
- I work full-time year-round
- Prefer not to say
- Other: _____

Additional Comments

22. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions for the Nantucket Community School as it plans classes for the future?

Skip to section 8 (Would you or anyone you know be interested in an interview to further discuss adult education on Nantucket?)

Would you or anyone you know be interested in an interview to further discuss adult education on Nantucket?

If yes, please email gr-ack22-education@wpi.edu. We have no way of connecting your email to this survey so your results of the survey will remain completely anonymous.

We thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your responses will be invaluable in the evaluation of future courses that NCS will offer.

Thank you!

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Google Forms

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions for Past NCS Students

1. Have you taken our survey about the current NCS courses?
1. If they say yes, ask them to give some insight into their answers if they are comfortable
 - a. If they say no, ask if they would take some time to take the survey
 - i. If yes, give them the link to take on their device or allow them to use a device if they do not have one and after they are done ask question 1 and then continue to the next set of questions
 - ii. If no, continue to the next set of questions
2. How did you find out about the adult education programs at the NCS?
3. What made you enroll and take a course that the NCS offered
4. What course(s), if any, have been the most beneficial to your professional life?
5. What course(s), if any, have been the most beneficial to your personal life?
6. Have you had a favorite course you have taken at the NCS?
7. What traits do you believe employers are looking for?
 - a. Do you believe that the NCS offers any courses that could teach these traits?
 - b. If not, do you have any ideas as to what course(s) could be added?
8. Do you have any final thoughts on the adult education program at the NCS?

APPENDIX E

Interview Questions for Potential Employers

1. Are you aware of the courses offered by NCS?
 - a. If so, which current courses that the NCS offers do you find to be the most beneficial to prospective employees
2. Are there any potential courses that the NCS should offer that they do not currently offer?
3. Have you had trouble finding employees with appropriate skills for the job?
 - a. Which skills are the hardest to find in an employee?
4. What kinds of skills are missing among prospective employees?
5. What changes, if any, have you noticed in the skills of potential employees in recent years?
 - a. If any recent changes, have they been beneficial?
6. Have you had to recruit off-island to find employees with the skills you need?
 - a. If so, where do you typically recruit from?
7. Do you encourage your employees to take adult education courses to improve their skills?
 - a. If so, which courses do you encourage your employees to take?
8. What kinds of adult education courses might be most useful in improving your employee skill set?
9. Would you be willing to give an employee time off to attend such courses?
10. Would you be willing to underwrite the cost of employees attending adult education courses?
11. Do you require your employees to have any certifications? If so, what ones?
 - a. Which certifications are important for your business?
12. What other types of courses do you think they should offer to improve the skillset and employability of potential employees?
13. Do you have any final thoughts on the adult education program at the NCS? Is there anyone else we should talk to regarding our project?