

Personas for Course Design

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Paloma Foster

GRADUATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 29
- Pronouns: she, her
- Lives more than 50 miles from campus

Quote

"While I really enjoy my classes, I hope that my instructor is willing to work with me if I need some flexibility because of medical and family needs."

Work History & Workload

- Worked full time until recent move
- Now parenting at home full time while taking classes full time

Education

- BS degree - engineering
- Going back for a master's degree

Goals

- Accept a leadership position in her field
- Balance maintaining professional skills, classes, and family

Personal Details

- Currently expecting second child, due in 5 months

Financial Information

- Paloma and her husband employed full time, but Paloma quite her job for most recent move
- Helps support her parents financially

Family Background

- Married
- Husband is in the military
- Has 1 child and 1 on the way
- First-generation college graduate

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Has a "growth mindset" which she was introduced to in high school
- Feels pressure to stay on top of her credentials and earning potential

Social Support Structure

- Lives off campus with husband and child
- She and her family move frequently because husband is in military



Richard Sanchez

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 31
- Pronouns: he, him
- Lives less than 50 miles from campus

Quote

"I worry about revealing my veteran status to other students. I often feel judged for my past work and feel the need to defend myself or explain things."

Work History & Workload

- Works full time
- Retired Army Veteran

Education

- AA degree - communication
- Returning to finish bachelor's degree

Goals

- Earn a bachelor's degree
- Form a running group in community

Personal Details

- Training for a marathon

Financial Information

- GI Bill covers much of education costs

Family Background

- First-generation college student

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Does not like to do group projects because he feels like he always does more than his group members
- Believes he is a lifelong learner

Social Support Structure

- Lives off campus with non-students
- Looking forward to expanding his social circle and finding a community to settle in after retiring from the army



Sam Nyugen

COLLEGE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 25
- Pronouns: she, her
- Lives less than 50 miles from campus

Quote

"I'm excited and super anxious about navigating the university and paying for my education."

Work History & Workload

- Works full time

Education

- AS degree - general studies
- Currently completing BS degree

Goals

- Personal experience with immigrant parents who arrived in 1992 drives her to succeed
- Wants to run for office after completing her degree in political science
- Willing to explore law school options to satisfy parental expectations

Personal Details

- Gets about 6 hours of sleep per night

Financial Information

- Cost is a major factor in her choice of school and program
- She has taken time out to work and save money to finish her degree

Family Background

- Parents are supportive of her getting a bachelor's degree but are not supportive of career aspirations
- First-generation college student

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Has a hard time navigating the resources available and some of the expectations, such as "office hours"

Social Support Structure

- Lives off campus with family
- Struggles to feel a sense of belonging in college



Julie Nichols

GRADUATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 40
- Pronouns: she, her
- Lives more than 50 miles from campus

Quote

"I'm excited about switching careers, but I feel anxious about navigating a fully online program."

Work History & Workload

- Works in a temporary job
- Transitioning into a new career

Education

- BA degree, MS degree - social work
- Going back for a master's degree in counseling

Goals

- Wants to become a licensed therapist
- Wants to make a difference in her community

Personal Details

- Uses a wheelchair for mobility

Financial Information

- Cost is a major factor in this student's choice of school and program
- She was laid off from her job and is taking this chance to switch careers

Family Background

- Spouse is supportive of her career transition
- No children

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Feels nervous about a fully online program, but she likes the flexibility it will afford
- Likes to interact with people in person and is afraid the online experience will be isolating

Social Support Structure

- Lives off campus with spouse
- Has close friendships in the area



Carol Thompson

GRADUATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 51
- Pronouns: she, her
- Lives more than 50 miles from campus

Quote

"I wasn't ready to retire when my company downsized. I'm excited about switching careers, but I feel anxious about a fully online program. As a graphic designer, I am really comfortable with technology. It's the personal connections I'm afraid I won't have. "

Work History & Workload

- Works in a temporary job
- Transitioning into a new career

Education

- BA degree - graphic design

Goals

- Wants to become a licensed therapist
- Wants to start her own private practice when she graduates

Personal Details

- Technically savvy
- Anxious about where she is in life



Financial Information

- Cost is a major factor in this student's choice of school and program
- She was laid off from her job and is taking this chance to switch careers
- Feels she hasn't saved enough for retirement & is sensitive about that

Family Background

- Single
- Two grown children

Attitudes & Beliefs

- She is concerned about age discrimination in hiring, so she will do private practice
- Likes to interact with people in person and is afraid the online experience will be isolating

Social Support Structure

- Lives alone off campus
- Has close friendships in the area

Ryan Anderson

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 32
- Pronouns: he, him
- Lives more than 100 miles from campus

Quote

"I've attempted this before, but now I'm committed to finishing. I want to make a better life for myself and my daughter. I'm trying to finish as quickly as possible."

Work History & Workload

- Works full time
- Corporate partnership with work and tuition discount

Education

- AS degree - general studies
- Going back for a bachelor's degree

Goals

- Earn a 3.5 GPA this term
- Take 9 credits each term

Personal Details

- Is sober after past alcohol use disorder
- Lacks time management skills

Financial Information

- Paying discounted tuition
- Paying on student loans from AS degree
- Paying for day care for daughter

Family Background

- Single father
- Parents, grandparents in another state
- Ex-wife in drug and alcohol treatment program

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Struggles with realistic expectations about workload and time

Social Support Structure

- Social structure mainly consists of co-workers and AA group



Daniel Lewis

CERTIFICATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 28
- Pronouns: he, him
- Lives less than 50 miles from campus

Quote

"I lost my hearing at age 6, but my hearing loss doesn't define me. I'm passionate about my field of study, and I can't wait to add to my professional skills. I am fluent in American Sign Language, so I like to have the option to use ASL with others in class who might use it."

Work History & Workload

- Works full time

Education

- AS degree
- Going back for a professional certificate

Goals

- Find a community or club tied to his major

Personal Details

- Hearing loss

Financial Information

- Has a stable salary
- Has medical bills from his child's doctor appointments

Family Background

- Married with one child.
- Spouse works part time
- Child has special medical needs

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Feels pressure to "be the voice or face" of his degree major for his ethnic group
- Disappointed that he doesn't see more professors who look like him

Social Support Structure

- Lives off campus with non-students
- Trying to expand his community of professional contacts



Richard Sanchez

GRADUATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 26
- Pronouns: he, him
- Lives less than 50 miles from campus

Quote

"My mom has done so much for me after my dad died. I want to make her proud. I also want to get a high salary to deal with my student loans."

Work History & Workload

- Works full time

Education

- BS degree - Sociology
- Going back for an MBA

Goals

- Connect with an industry in the area for an internship or networking
- Improve time management skills

Personal Details

- Gets about 6 hours of sleep per night

Financial Information

- Supports parent financially
- Has undergraduate debt
- Taking out student loans for graduate school but doesn't want to

Family Background

- Mother dealing with health problems and can't work
- He has moved back home to help out with that
- First-generation college graduate
- Grew up in a large, close-knit family

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Often thinks about setting the bar for his younger siblings
- Doesn't always realize the support resources available

Social Support Structure

- Has to turn down invitations from family who mean well, but don't understand the pressure he's under to study



Jason Chang

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 19
- Pronouns: he, him
- Lives less than 50 miles from campus

Quote

"I'm usually a pretty good student, but I have a hard time keeping up with my online courses. I thought they would be more flexible."

Work History & Workload

- Works part time

Education

- Undecided
- Taking mostly on-campus courses with some online courses

Goals

- Get internship
- Grow social network
- Pledge for fraternity

Personal Details

- Has deuteranopia (red-green color blindness)
- Experiences anxiety in multiple areas of life



Financial Information

- Relies on parents for support
- Feels pressure to satisfy parental expectations in order to receive financial support

Family Background

- Parents were born in China and immigrated to the U.S. when Jason was a teenager
- Parents have graduate degrees from the U.S.
- Has older siblings

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Does not like to do group projects because he feels like he always does more than his group members
- Trying to figure out where he fits in

Social Support Structure

- Lives with other students off campus

Jamie Mine

POST BACC STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 30
- Pronouns: they, them
- Lives more than 50 miles from campus

Quote

"I like that I can show up authentically by not including personal photos or videos. I have the choice."

Work History & Workload

- Works full time but is not happy with work environment

Education

- BA degree - history
- Studying for a post-bacc in computer science

Goals

- Improve communication skills
- Gain competitive job skills

Personal Details

- Has frequent doctor appointments this year

Financial Information

- Lives in an expensive city (Seattle)
- Potentially expensive medical bills

Family Background

- Born in Oregon
- Some family members are supportive of their goals and plans

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Likes the option to go by the "name in use" policy
- Appreciates that they have the choices about the pace at which they reveal personal details

Social Support Structure

- Has a hard time finding support and finding a community where they feel accepted



Marina Solar

GRADUATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 31
- Pronouns: she, her
- Lives more than 50 miles from campus

Quote

"I don't like to be the center of attention or speak up in class in person. Online classes take the pressure off because I can contribute when I'm ready."

Work History & Workload

- Works full time but is not happy with work environment

Education

- BA degree - history
- Studying for an MFA in creative writing

Goals

- Improve communication skills
- Connect with other Native American students

Personal Details

- Type 1 diabetes
- On the autism spectrum

Financial Information

- Lives in an expensive city (Seattle)
- Expensive medical bills and health insurance

Family Background

- Born in Oregon
- Family members are supportive of her goals and plans

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Feels like she gets a lot of questions about her ethnicity
- Appreciates that she can show up authentically by not including personal photos or videos unless she feels comfortable in doing so

Social Support Structure

- Has a hard time finding support and finding a community where she feels a sense of belonging



Sonja Egri

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 59
- Pronouns: she, her
- Lives more than 100 miles from campus

Quote

"This has always been a dream of mine. I appreciate the opportunity to finally complete my bachelor's degree online. It just wouldn't happen unless it was online."

Work History & Workload

- Works full time

Education

- AS degree - accounting
- Completing BS degree

Goals

- Earn a bachelor's degree
- Increase salary at work by becoming eligible for positions that require a BS

Personal Details

- Cancer survivor
- Partial hearing loss

Financial Information

- Supporting elderly parents financially
- Paying for one child in college
- Saving aggressively for retirement

Family Background

- Has three grown children, one of whom is currently in college
- Caring for elderly parents

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Loves to learn new things

Social Support Structure

- Lives alone
- Has a few close friends nearby



Denise Smith

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 42
- Pronouns: she, her
- Lives more than 100 miles from campus

Quote

"This has always been a dream of mine. I appreciate the opportunity to finally complete my bachelor's degree online. It just wouldn't happen unless it was online."

Work History & Workload

- Works full time

Education

- AS degree - accounting
- Completing BS degree

Goals

- Earn a bachelor's degree
- Increase salary at work by becoming eligible for positions that require a BS

Personal Details

- Traumatic brain injury
- PTSD

Financial Information

- Supporting elderly parents financially
- Paying for one child in college
- Saving aggressively for retirement

Family Background

- Has two children, one of whom is currently in college.
- Caring for elderly parents
- Widow

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Loves to learn new things

Social Support Structure

- Lives with one child
- Has a few close friends nearby



Ben Harris

CERTIFICATE STUDENT



Personal Profile

- Age: 48
- Pronouns: he, him
- Lives less than 50 miles from campus

Quote

"I want to gain credentials that will allow me to increase my salary. I also want to be a good example to my children so that they see they can reach their dreams at any age."

Work History & Workload

- Works full time
- Work pays for part of his tuition

Education

- BA in Journalism
- Going back for a professional certificate

Goals

- Apply for a senior position at his current job when one opens up

Personal Details

- Takes medication for depression and anxiety

Financial Information

- Saving for children's college education
- Did not have college debt from undergrad degree

Family Background

- Married and has two children who are about to finish high school and go on to college

Attitudes & Beliefs

- Feels afraid that his instructors will not respect the experience that he brings to the course from his professional background

Social Support Structure

- Lives off campus with spouse and two children

