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University of Alaska Fairbanks Assembly

Sands, June, interviewee

Steve Lay, host

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Steve Lay said not all freshman students are 18 years old and right out of high schools. Some freshman have children who have graduated from high school. About half of the student body are 25 years or older. While older non-traditional students are represented on campus not all of their student services have been adapted to meet their special needs. June Sands, the coordinator with the university's Career Planning and Placement Office heads a relatively new program designed to assist this kind of student. Sands said the non-traditional student is a student that has had some period of absence from school. They may have stayed home to raise a family or been out in the working world and is coming back for classes after being away from academics for a while. Their program is for anyone who would like to know about the university before returning to an academic setting. This could be a 21 or a 50 year old. They may just want to meet people who are in the same situation that they are. It is a little bit more of a risk for an older student to come back to the university more so than for the 18 year old who goes straight into college. It is more of a risk financially. It is a little scarier to go back to school thinking you will be competing with the 18 year old student right out of high school.

Lay said there is an orientation for older students at the beginning of each semester to introduce the student to the university and how it operates. Sands said at the orientation they want to tell the student about the university, the services on campus and to provide a format where they can meet other older students coming back to school. They want to tell them they will be successful. Older students generally have higher grade point averages. Sands said they are holding an orientation in January for the 1985 spring semester. She described the planned program. There will also be booths set up with representatives from various services on campus such as financial aid.