

## **Mapping the Misunderstood Non-traditional Male College Students**

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**ABSTRACT** Life at institutions of higher education can be confusing and demanding for non-traditional male students. They non-traditional students have a different set of demands on their time and lifestyle that make them unique. The paper explores the experiences of non-traditional male undergraduate students. The study was conducted at an institution of higher education in Southern Africa. Eight non-traditional male students were purposively selected for the study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant. Data were analysed using thematic content analysis. The study revealed the students pursued their studies for diverse motives. The multiple roles are both beneficial and costly to their studies and families. There was no indication that they consulted their peers and use support services at the university to deal with their unique situations. The findings underscore the need for university counsellors to help non-traditional students adapt to the multiple roles of student, spouse and parent. Academic and non-academic units at the University should tailor their programmes to meet the unique academic, economic and psychosocial needs of non-traditional students.