Course 9: Developing and Reviewing Programs
Developing and Reviewing Programs

Skill Standard: C. Develop and Review Programs

Key Activities:

C1. Develop, review, and update program/course plan.
C2. Recruit and work with advisory committee and employers to meet changing needs for the program and industry.
C3. Identify, evaluate, and modify program outcomes and assessments.
C4. Identify and develop core and support courses.
C5. Maintain (or obtain) program accreditation
See separate course, Program Accreditation.
C6. Research, identify, evaluate, and implement current industry standards and trends.
C7. Coordinate program development with other college programs and institutions.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Defining and developing a program plan in collaboration with the program advisory committee, faculty members, and under program accreditation guidelines, ensures that program coursework will support student learning, adhere to legal requirements and meet workforce needs. In this course, instructor-learners work with the program advisory committee to create, review and/or modify program plans and approve core and support program coursework and assessments while considering multiple student learning styles, individual student needs, work-based learning strategies and accreditation standards. In addition, instructor-learners identify other college programs and institutions for collaborative work. Instructor-learners research and implement current industry standards and trends.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: The Instructor-Learner will:
• Apply industry standards in the development of program goals and objectives, core and support courses, and assessments.
• Develop a program plan using SCANS skills, a DACUM and/or other processes as applicable in accordance with program advisory committee guidelines.
• Integrate curriculum across disciplines within their learning institution.
• Communicate with a variety of state-wide community and technical colleges and four-year institutions with similar programs.
• Maintain and recruit an active and diverse advisory committee to meet changing needs of industry and support on-going program development.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT:
• Prepare a chart outlining current industry skill standards, SCANS skills and their inclusion in the program coursework.
• Produce written learning outcomes, competencies and program assessment tools that accommodate multiple learning styles and measure industry-required program outcomes, including SCANS skills.
Develop program coursework that integrates a variety of disciplines within the institution.
Partner with faculty at other community learning institutions.
Secure advisory committee approval of program plan.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:
• Course sequence supports student success at achieving outcomes.
• Program aligns with accrediting bodies and college mission and advisory committee recommendations.
• Program meets workforce needs.
• Proper prerequisites are established, if necessary.
• Program plan includes learning outcomes, competencies, and program assessment tools in both core and support courses.
• Program and courses are regularly reviewed by advisory committee and/or accrediting bodies as required.
• Flexibility is built in to the program to address multiple learning styles and individual student needs.
• Program assessment criteria are established and regularly modified per industry standards and accrediting bodies and accurately measure performance of specified outcomes.
• Outcomes are continuously evaluated and modified based on advisory committee recommendations, community needs, government and/or transfer requirements and changing industry standards.
• Cross-discipline team-teaching is implemented when possible.
• Instructional resources are shared across departmental and institutional areas.
• Knowledge of related course content and outcomes in similar institutions is shared.
• New advisory committee members are regularly recruited and membership accurately reflects industry diversity.
• Committee member participation is actively encouraged and acknowledged, and meetings are held on a regular basis.
• Instructors attend advisory committee meetings on a regular basis.
• Advisory committee recommendations are solicited and recorded in the minutes which are filed and maintained in accordance with college policies and procedures.

SKILLS: The Instructor-Learner will:
• Identify instructional strategies to accommodate multiple learning styles and SCANS skills.
• Align program objectives with college mission, program accreditation requirements, and advisory committee approval procedures.
• Demonstrate knowledge of outcomes and assessment activities and criteria and relevant industry and accrediting body standards.
• Integrate technical and SCANS skills into program and course outcomes and assessments.
• Develop on-going procedures for developing program outcomes/competencies.
• Collaborate with college faculty, and industry members.
• Articulate roles and responsibilities of advisory committee members.
• Identify and demonstrate successful recruitment strategies.
• Develop meeting agendas.
• Organize and distribute meeting minutes.
• Demonstrate successful facilitation skills.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Content</th>
<th>Developing a Program Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Program plan      | - Goals and student learning outcomes  
|                   | - Facilities and equipment  
|                   | - Course sequences  
|                   | - Admission requirements  
|                   | - Faculty qualifications  
|                   | - DACUM (Designing a Curriculum)  
|                   | - SCANS (Secretary’s Commission on Necessary Skills)  
|                   | - Program Advisory Committee approval  
|                   | - Alignment with institutional mission  
| Identify core and support courses | - Curriculum alignment with industry requirements and skill standards  
|                   | - Collaborate with program advisory committee  
| DACUM             | - Developing a Curriculum- uses the experience of experts in the field to define the major areas of responsibility (duties) and their associated tasks of a job. Experts will also identify: the behavior, attitudes and traits required for the position, general skills and knowledge needed to be successful, tools and equipment used in supporting the tasks, and future trends of the position (not a wish list).  
|                   | - Job analysis and profile  
|                   | - [www.DACUM.com](http://www.DACUM.com)  
|                   | - Integration into curricula  
| Experiential or work-based learning | - Benefits of work-based learning opportunities  
|                   | - Job-shadowing, clinicals, internships, on-the-job training, etc.  
| Current industry skill standards | - Guidelines and requirement for certifications  
|                   | - Knowledge of and access to industry publications, work-alike sessions, associations and resource materials  
|                   | - Gap analysis between existing program and new skill standards  
|                   | - Integration with program curricula  
| Program accreditation | - Curriculum alignment with program guidelines  
| Developing program assessments | - Aligned with student learning outcomes  
|                   | - Formative and summative assessments  
|                   | - Exit interviews  
|                   | - Capstone assignments  
|                   | - Presentations to program advisory committee and industry leaders  
|                   | - Student research and development projects  
|                   | - See Course: Assessment for Learning  
|                   | - See Student Outcomes and Assessments and Outcomes Template in Resources (Section #18) of this guide  
| Collaboration with other college faculty | - Team-teaching  
|                   | - Teamwork to develop core and support courses  
| Curriculum integration | - Advantages within single disciplines, across several disciplines, inside the minds of learners  
|                   | - Technical and SCANS  
|                   | - Academic and vocational  
|                   | - See “Preparing for Curriculum Integration,” attached  

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**9.4 CURRICULUM GUIDE: DEVELOPING AND REVIEWING PROGRAMS**
SUPPORT MATERIALS: These materials are at the end this course outline.

- Sample Program Plan: Computer Science
- Sample of College, High School Partnership
- DACUM, What is it?
- Guidelines for Participating in the DACUM Process
- A SCANS Report: Learning a Living; A Blueprint of High Performance
- Benefits of Work-Related Learning
- A National Context for Skill Standards
- The Benefits and Uses of Skill Standards
- The Process of Building Skill Standards
- Pyramid of Competencies
- Skill Standards to Curriculum: A Continuous Development Process
- Skill Standards and Project Managers in Washington
- School-to-Work Transition in Washington State
- Setting the Record Straight About School-to-Work Transition
- The Role of the Integrated Curriculum Standard
- Preparing for Curriculum Integration
- Checklist for Program Development
- Sample Program Assessment

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

- Research program accreditation requirements and advisory committee program approval procedures.
- Meet with advisory committee and other industry leaders to apply workforce needs to program plan.
- Prepare exit interview and summative assessments for students finishing a program.
- Prepare a list of student learning outcomes for the program.
- Maintain a notebook of current industry skill standards and certifications.
- Sequence courses within the curriculum to ensure student success and add necessary prerequisites.
- Prepare written learning outcomes, competencies, and program assessment tools for all courses.
- Produce course syllabi that include industry skill standards and assessments.
- Produce a program planning sheet that describes workplace requirements and other requirements of the college.
- Analyze curriculum for SCANS and other workplace readiness skills.
- Work with advisory committee to develop work-based learning activities and authentic assessments for summative student performance.
  - Actively participate in the development of integrated curriculum across programs.
  - Attend work-alike sessions for program faculty with similar disciplines at other community and technical colleges.
RESOURCES

PRIMARY TEXTS/RESOURCES:


ADDITIONAL READINGS AND RESOURCES:

- Blank. (1982). *Twelve Tasks to Develop a Competency-Based Training Program*.

WEBSITES:

- www.dacum.com

GLOSSARY:

- SCANS Skills
- DACUM
- Curriculum Integration
- Work-based Learning
- Curriculum Alignment
- Contextualized Curriculum
- Curriculum Infusion
### LEARNING ACTIVITIES:
- Produce a current list of program advisory committee members with contact information (phone, email, address, title, organization).
- Invite at least two new members, who add diversity, to join the program advisory committee.
- Create templates to use for membership communication.
- Prepare meeting agendas and minutes.
- Design an activity that involves students in committee meetings.

### SUPPORT MATERIALS:
- Professional Technical Program Advisory Committees
- Building Better Programs Through Stronger Advisory Committees
- Sample Advisory Committee Membership Letter- Invitation to Join
- Sample Advisory Committee Membership Letter- Welcome Letter
- Sample Advisory Committee Membership Letter- Regretfully Dropping Member
- Sample Advisory Committee Membership Letter- Regret Your Leaving
- Sample Advisory Committee Roster Change Form
- Sample Advisory Committee Agenda

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Content</th>
<th>Working With Program Advisory Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Discussion Topics and Key Points</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Agenda Construction** | • Collaboration with program faculty  
| | • Conducting a meeting/following procedures  
| | • Teamwork |
| **Advisory Committee Procedures** | • College policies  
| | • State Board/WAC policies  
| | • Approval process  
| | • Plan of action and goals  
| | • Reporting  
| | • Minutes construction |
| **Advisory Committee Roles and Responsibilities** | • Roles and responsibilities outlined in handbook  
| | • Recruitment  
| | • Length of commitment  
| | • Benefits of membership to the college, to the program, to businesses and to students  
| | • Methods of communication: correspondence, record keeping  
| | • Factors in selecting members: firm, labor/management, alumni geographic considerations, minorities, diversity, etc. |
| **Factors in Selecting Members** | • Labor/management, program alumni, geographic considerations, diversity, large and small firms, etc. |
| **What Makes a Committee Successful?** | • Size, diversity, teamwork, etc.  
| | • Good communications, good meetings |
| **Involving Students** | • Showcase work, achievements  
| | • Job interview procedures |
RESOURCES
PRIMARY TEXT/RESOURCES
    College Advisory Committee Policy/Procedures Handbook.

ADDITIONAL READINGS/RESOURCES
    Washington State Council on Vocational Education.

WEBSITES
    http://millennium.aed.org/hjoney.html

GLOSSARY
    Program Advisory Committee
    Job Shadowing
    Internship
    Externship
Support Materials for Course 9: Developing and Reviewing Programs
Sample Program Plan: Computer Science
Submitted by Karen Braunstein-Post, Renton Technical College

Program Description: This two-year program is designed to prepare graduates for entry into various careers in the Information Technology industry. Job titles include: Application Developer / Programmer; Software Tester; Systems Analyst; Database Developer/Administrator; Network Administrator / Specialist; Internet Developer / Webmaster. Students learn to design, develop and test client-server applications with an emphasis placed on using Visual Basic. Web development, database, graphics, XML, networking, software testing, e-commerce and other programming languages are also covered. Reinforcement of theory is achieved through use of lab projects and close instructor contact. Safety is emphasized and leadership, ethics, teamwork, math and written / verbal communications are covered. In order to earn an Associate of Applied Science Degree, the student must complete all requirements for the certificate program plus 20 credits of General Education. Transfer credit to/from other institutions may be possible. Please contact the college for more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSI-101 Fundamentals of Microprocessors</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSI-102 Introduction to Microsoft Office</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSI-131 PC Communications</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSI-145 Introduction to the Internet and Web Authoring</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSI-147 Digital Imaging Fundamentals</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSI-152 Introduction to Programming</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSI-155 Beginning/Intermediate Visual Basic Programming</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSI-156 Introduction to Database Theory and Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSI-158 Database Server Administration and SQL Development</td>
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<td>CSI-159 Applied Database Development</td>
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<td>CSI-172 Computer Mathematics</td>
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<td>CSI-173 Technical Presentations and Public Speaking</td>
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<td>CSI-181 E-Commerce Foundations</td>
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<td>CSI-245 Beginning/Intermediate JAVA Programming</td>
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<td>CSI-253 Advanced Visual Basic Programming</td>
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<td>CSI-255 Beginning/Intermediate C++ Programming</td>
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<td>CSI-271 Software Testing</td>
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<td>CSI-277 IT Industry Research and Writing</td>
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<td>CSI-282 Leadership and Teamwork in Systems Analysis</td>
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<td>CSI-291 Advanced Web Application Development/XML</td>
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<td>CSI-293 Independent Design and Development Projects</td>
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<td>CSI-294 Cooperative Education</td>
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Totals 2520 148

[Please note integrated courses.]
Sample of College - High School Partnership

NEWS RELEASE from The Seattle Public Schools

Seattle Public Schools and Community Colleges Smooth the Road Between High School and College

The Seattle Public Schools and the Seattle Community Colleges, who have a long history of working together on behalf of students, are now easing the transition between high school and college.

A landmark “Articulation Agreement” being signed on Feb. 12 paves the way for shared campuses and curriculum and other innovations to benefit students and the community. Seattle Schools Superintendent Joseph Olchefske and Seattle Community Colleges Chancellor Peter C. Ku will sign the agreement at a combined meeting of the Seattle School Board and Seattle Community Colleges Board of Trustees at 3:30 p.m. in School District Administrative Headquarters, 814 Fourth Ave. North.

The agreement was developed by the Seattle Articulation Council, which was organized during the last year by Carin Weiss, Vice Chancellor of Seattle Community Colleges, and Brian Benzel Chief Operating Officer of Seattle Public Schools. The Council includes high school principals and community college administrators who have been discussing ways to share resources and coordinate things like calendars and student testing.

Together, the school district and the college district represent nearly 100,000 Seattle students, and already have a number of coordinated programs. For instance, “English 101 in the High School” offers high school students a college-level course on the high school campus. Students meet their high school English requirement while earning college credit and a college transcript.

“Even with transition programs such as English 101, Middle College and Tech Prep, some students still are not taking the next step into higher education at the community colleges—a step that will benefit both the students and our community,” said Chancellor Ku.

“This agreement will create a more seamless educational continuum that we hope will encourage more students to take advantage of the extraordinary experiences our two districts are working to create,” said Superintendent Joseph Olchefske.
DACUM: What is it?
Adapted from William E. Sinnell. The Application of DACUM in retraining and post-secondary curriculum development.

Developing A C U r r i c u l u m (DACUM) is an approach to task/occupational analysis developed and used extensively in Canada during the late 60’s and 70’s. It was initially created by the Canadian Department of Manpower and Immigration and the General Learning Corporation of New York. It was first used in the Women’s Job Corps Program in Clinton, Iowa, in the mid-1960’s. This process has been adopted at numerous community colleges and in business/industry training departments in the United States also. The process is used both to develop new curricula as well as to update existing curricula.

The Maryland DACUM Resource Center at Dundalk Community College is one of the most active users of the DACUM process. The process was first introduced in the College in 1982, and first applied to the development of an extensive training program for the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. The purpose of the program was to create an entirely new job description, Inspector Planner, and to train a cadre of experienced technical workers in this new job.

The DACUM process is based upon two assumptions:
1. Any occupation can be described in behavioral terms;
2. Successful practitioners can describe their own occupations better than anyone else.

Under the direction of a qualified facilitator, a panel of five to twelve expert workers from the occupation being analyzed uses a brainstorming and consensus process to identify job functions and specific tasks.

The result of this two-day brainstorming session is a DACUM chart, which is a single-sheet skills profile of an occupation. This chart then becomes a key tool for colleges and training departments to develop curriculum because it identifies skills at entry-level that an employee needs to be successful. Additional validation of findings is typically conducted by mailing the chart to another 100 incumbent workers.

In order to be successful, the DACUM process needs the mutual support of both the education and the business communities in providing the financial and human resources to undergird the process. The real effect of DACUM is its positive impact on student learning. The rationale underlying the use of the DACUM process is that it will improve both the design and implementation of instructional activities that will, in turn, result in improved student learning and student effectiveness in performing job responsibilities.
The DACUM Approach to Competency Identification
Adapted from William E. Sinnell. The Application of DACUM in retraining and post-secondary curriculum development.

The DACUM technique is a traditional approach that is being used at many secondary and postsecondary institutions as a basis for program planning. DACUM (Developing A Curriculum) was created in the late 1960s by the Experimental Projects Branch, Canada Department of Regional Economic Expansion, and the General Learning Corporation of New York. It has proven to be a very effective approach for quickly deriving, at a relatively low cost, the competencies or tasks that must be performed by persons employed in a given position or occupational area.

DACUM, which utilizes small-group brainstorming techniques, is a process that results in a skill profile for a particular job or occupational area. DACUM is primarily concerned with the what of a curriculum, rather than the how. It is, in fact, an analysis of the occupation rather than a curriculum evolving from an analysis.

It is graphic in nature, defining an entire occupation on a single sheet of paper. This tends to prevent treatment of any element of the occupation in isolation and, conversely, tends to promote treatment of each element as part of a larger whole.

The duties (or duty areas or general areas of competence) required in the occupation are listed, and each is broken down into those individual tasks that collectively enable an individual to perform competently within that duty area. These tasks are defined quite simply and are structured independently in small blocks on the chart. Each can serve as an independent goal for learning achievement.

A carefully chosen group of about 10—12 experts (workers and supervisors) in the occupational area form the DACUM committee and work for two to three days to develop the DACUM chart. Committee members are recruited directly from business, industry, or the professions: they do not include vocational educators.

A DACUM committee is carefully guided through each of the following steps by a trained DACUM coordinator:

1. Receive a general introduction and orientation.
2. Review a description of the specific job or occupational area.
3. Identify the duties.
4. Identify the specific tasks for each of the duty areas.
5. Review and refine the task statements.
6. Sequence the task statements.
7. Establish levels of competence for each task in terms of difficulty, frequency of use, and general importance.
8. Structure the competency profile chart into a final form.

Once completed, a vocational teacher, with the advice of the occupational advisory committee, can use the DACUM chart as a basis for instruction and/or the development of instructional materials.
Guidelines for Participating in the DACUM Process
Submitted by Beverley J. Gestrine, Centralia College
These materials were modified from the DACUM Training Program at Ohio State University.

**PROCESS:**
- Everyone participates equally.
- Share ideas freely.
- Hitch-hike on each other’s ideas to provide constructive suggestions for identifying Duties and Tasks.
- All task statements are carefully considered to precisely describe the Tasks.
- Do not use any references.
- All task statements must begin with an action verb and describe an observable performance.
- Observers cannot participate.

**JOB TASKS:**
- Smallest unit of job activity with a meaningful outcome
- Represent assignable units of work
- Result in a product, service, or decision
- Can usually be observed/measured
- Have a definite beginning and ending point
- Can be performed over a short period of time
- Can be performed independent of other work
- Consist of two or more steps.

**DEVELOPING TASK STATEMENTS:**
The Components of a Task Statement are:

**VERB:** The verb must be in the first person singular, active voice.
(e.g., select, prepare, maintain, organize, instruct)

**OBJECT:** The object is the thing acted upon by the worker.
(e.g., reports, equipment, records, customers)

**QUALIFIER:** Qualifiers are words or phrases used to limit or modify the task statement.
(e.g., “…develop “financial” plan, evaluate “staff” performance)

**TASK STATEMENTS:**
- Concisely Described in Performance Terms
- Contain an Action Verb and an Object that Receives the Action
- May Contain One or More Relevant Qualifiers
- Are Explicit, Precise, and Stand Alone
- Avoid References to Knowledge and Attitudes Needed
- Avoid References to Tools and Equipment

**EXAMPLES OF A TASK STATEMENT:**
- Determine appropriate tools for measuring length and width
- Measure and cut appropriate lengths of wood
A SCANS Report: Learning a Living - A Blueprint for High Performance
A SCANS Report for America 2000*

WORKPLACE KNOW-HOW
The know-how identified by SCANS is made up of five competencies and a three-part foundation of skills and personal qualities that are needed for solid job performance.

WORKPLACE COMPETENCIES

- **Resources**
  They know how to allocate time, money, materials, space and staff.

- **Interpersonal Skills**
  They can work on teams, teach others, serve customers, lead, negotiate and work well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

- **Information**
  They can acquire and evaluate data, organize and maintain files, interpret and communicate, and use computers to process information.

- **Systems**
  They can understand social, organizational and technological systems; they can monitor and correct performance; and they can design or improve systems.

- **Technology**
  They can select equipment and tools, apply technology to specific tasks, and maintain and troubleshoot equipment.

FOUNDATION SKILLS
Competent workers in the high-performance workplace need:

- **Basic Skills**
  Reading, writing, arithmetic and mathematics, speaking, and listening.

- **Thinking Skills**
  The ability to learn, to reason, to think creatively, to make decisions, and to solve problems.

- **Personal Qualities**
  Individual responsibility, self-esteem, and self-management, sociability, and integrity.

INTEGRATING SCANS KNOW-HOW INTO VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION
A process or educational invention is required to restructure schools around teaching the SCANS foundation skills and competencies so that “learning to do” is integrated with “learning to know.” The experience of schools, districts, and states that are breaking new ground in advancing high performance schooling... provide important lessons:

- Teaching should be offered in context. “Learning in order to know” should not be separated from “learning in order to do so.”
- Improving the match between what will work and what students are taught requires changing how instruction is delivered and how students learn.
- High performance requires a new system of school administration and assessment.
- The entire community must be involved.
SCANS believe that applying these lessons will free up the schools to teach new skills in new ways. It insists that students need not first learn in the abstract what they will later be expected to apply.

Few educators are more aware of the importance of teaching workplace know-how than those in vocational-technical education. Vocational-Education can shape itself into high performance centers for training by incorporating the SCANS foundation skills into its curriculum. Reading, writing, math and science are currently being woven into vocational studies to enhance the ability of students to achieve the SCANS workplace competencies.

Benefits of Work-Related Learning
By Cal Crow, Director, Center for Learning Connections, Highline Community College

For the Institution

WORK-RELATED LEARNING
• Can improve recruitment and retention.
• Helps improve student motivation.
• Can help generate community/business support.
• Enables students to receive more balanced educational experiences.
• Helps turn out graduates who are appreciative of their educational experiences, and may
  return the favor.
• Helps students and faculty broaden their knowledge base and world views.
• Promotes academic excellence.
• Helps students and faculty integrate academic and career development.
• Encourages faculty involvement in the community.
• Helps keep faculty and curriculum up to date.
• Can give students access to state-of-the-art equipment.
• Can lead to faculty becoming consultants.

For Students

WORK-RELATED LEARNING HELPS STUDENTS
• Apply theory to practice.
• Increase their sense of responsibility, judgment and self-confidence.
• See more clearly how education and work are related.
• Discover who they are, what they can do, and how they can apply their talents.
• Become self-motivated.
• Test interests and abilities in connection with real jobs.
• Develop marketable skills/experiences related to their career objectives.
• Develop contacts that increase their chances for employment.
• Understand how the workplace operates.
• Learn how to interact with diverse groups in the workplace.
• Acquire attitudes, values and interpersonal skills necessary for future success in the
  workplace.
• Develop a work history and resume.
• Hone their planning, problem solving and decision-making skills.
• Learn time management skills.
• Develop earning power and fiscal responsibility.
• Mature socially.
A National Context for Skill Standards

The National Skill Standards Board was established by Congress in 1994 to encourage the creation and adoption of a national system of voluntary skill standards that would enhance the ability of the United States to compete effectively in a global economy. Several voluntary skill standards projects have been developed by various industries in full partnership with education, labor and community-based organizations. The intent is to have voluntary skill standards that are flexible, portable and continuously updated and improved.

What Are Skill Standards?

Skill standards are performance specifications that identify the knowledge, skills and abilities an individual needs to succeed in the workplace. They are critical to improving workforce skills, raising living standards and improving the competitiveness of the U.S. economy.

Skill standards provide measurable benchmarks of skill and performance achievement. They answer two critical questions: What do workers need to know and be able to do to succeed in today's workplace? And, how do we know when workers are performing well? Without this fundamental information, employers do not know whom to hire or where to focus their limited training dollars; employees and new entrants to the workforce do not know what they need to do to improve their performance; and educators do not know how to prepare students for the challenge of the workplace.

Where do Skill Standards come from?

Western European economies that have maintained their competitiveness are characterized by a well-established skill standards system that guides each nation's workforce development strategy. The increased competitiveness of the global economy, and the declining power of the U.S. economy have prompted government, business, labor and education leaders in the US to reevaluate existing approaches and to develop new strategies for workforce development. One of these responses of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, signed by President Clinton in March 1994, which established the National Skill Standards Board (NSSB) to encourage the development of a national system of voluntary skill standards for different occupations. Another was the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 that encourages states to develop skill standards and link them to national efforts.

Why are Skill Standards Important?

In today's workplaces, the only constant is change. Jobs that once were relatively simple now require high performance work processes and enhanced skills. Because skill standards are changing workplace realities, they become a tool which can be used by applicants and employees to access greater career opportunities.
National recognition of skill standards in career fields provides a common basis for certifying achievement against those standards, thereby allowing for the portability of skills across geographic areas, companies and careers. Updating skills and knowledge is now a lifelong endeavor, causing many employers and employees to spend more effort, time and money on education and training. Skill standards provide benchmarks for making education and training decisions, shaping curricula, and directing funds towards highest value education and training investments.

Who will use the Skill Standards?

Businesses use skill standards to maximize efficiency in recruiting, hiring, training and promoting employees. Firms developing high performance work organizations can use skill standards to identify baseline high performance skills.

Unions use the standards to ensure that workers have a greater voice at the workplace, and benefit from enhanced career and job opportunities.

Educators use the skill standards to develop new and revise existing curricula and programs based upon industry requirements.

Students and job seekers use the standards to understand and acquire the skills needed to attain high wage jobs and successful careers.

Workers use the standards to advance their own careers and enhance their ability to reenter the workforce.

Government uses the skill standards to link other national efforts such as School-to-Work, workforce training and economic development by supporting collaborative efforts among education, business, and labor.

Voluntary, industry-based skill standards should be:

- Responsive to changing work organizations, technologies and market structure.
- Benchmarked to world-class levels of industry performance and free from gender, racial or other forms of bias.
- Tied to measurable, competency-based outcomes that can be readily assessed.
- Inclusive of basic reading, writing and critical thinking skills.
- Useful for qualifying new hires and continuously upgrading employees' skills.
- Applicable to a wide variety of education and training providers, both work and school-based.
- Based on a relatively simple structure to make the system user-friendly.
- A cooperative effort among all stakeholders.
- Developed independently of any single training/education provider or type of education/training provider.
The Benefits and Uses of Skill Standards

Skill standards benefit all the stakeholders — business, labor, educators, government and the community. The success of a skill standards development project and its usefulness to the community is dependent on the full participation and commitment of all stakeholders. These benefits can be used as a benchmark for evaluating the effectiveness of collaborative efforts.

How Skill Standards Benefit Employers

Employers can use skill standards to establish personnel qualification requirements. Interviews, performance reviews, and productivity can be evaluated and assessed to a higher degree of accuracy and efficacy. Employers are also able to identify core competencies, workers’ abilities to demonstrate competencies and to match competencies to critical work functions and key activities to significantly improve efficiencies and productivity. Performance-based skill standards also provide a vehicle for varying degrees of job certification and the ability to structure competency-based pay scales. In addition, employers use skill standards to:

- Align personnel qualification requirements with nationally adopted certificates of competence.
- Modify employee training.
- Simplify measurement of employee training effectiveness.
- Assess employee skill levels based on industry standards.
- Match employee skills to the work needed.
- More easily document employee skills, training needs, and performance criteria.
- Improve consumer satisfaction and confidence through better developed evaluation skills of customer contact personnel.
- Improve employee satisfaction and morale by clarifying expectations.
- Improve quality, productivity, time to market and competitiveness.
- Achieve their business goals.
- Partner with education and labor in developing school-to-work initiatives.

How Skill Standards Benefit Labor Unions

Labor unions can use skill standards to gain support for company-sponsored worker training programs and to identify career paths for workers within companies and industries. Unions can provide this information to union members and develop strategies to improve career mobility and stability.

- Improve member value to company.
- Provide a greater worker voice in the company.
• Link skill standards to increased training and upward career mobility for union members.
• Assist employers to match employee skills to the work needed.
• Develop skills-based training and certification initiatives that complement union apprenticeship programs.
• Communicate effectively with employers about worker training and retraining needs.
• Cooperate with education and industry developing school-to-work initiatives.

How Skill Standards Benefit Educators

Educators can identify core competencies and assessments based on the skill standards and implement them in their curriculums. Students can then be required to demonstrate competency throughout their coursework. Academia and industry can build a cohesive relationship through a like-minded expectation of student competencies and work readiness. This enhances an instructor’s ability to teach information consistent with industry’s entry level expectations and needs. In addition, educators use skill standards to:

• Partner with business and labor in developing school-to-work initiatives.
• Provide effective, targeted instruction.
• Develop benchmarks for certificates of competence earned by students.
• Communicate what companies expect of employees.
• Develop new and evaluate existing curriculum and programs based on industry needs.
• Develop assessments to evaluate skills, knowledge and abilities in classrooms and internships.
• Develop a common language on workforce preparation with business and labor.
• Improve relationships with local businesses, labor unions, other educators and agencies.
• Provide students with relevant career education and counseling.

How Skill Standards Benefit Students and Workers

Skill standards assist students in making career choices by providing industry expectations for success in the workplace. In addition, standards-based curriculum and assessments provide students with credentials that certify work-readiness. Work-ready students can anticipate being hired at higher rates of pay and can experience faster advancement in their chosen fields. Workers can accurately assess their skills against those required for career advancement and plan effectively for their career pathways. They can determine the skills and abilities needed for advancement or transfer within industries, and determine the continuous learning and training they need to upgrade their skills. In addition, students and workers can use skill standards to:

• Achieve clarity regarding what they are expected to learn and how to prepare for work.
• Enter and reenter the workforce with better control of their choices of high skilled and high paying jobs.
• Accurately assess business expectations of the skills needed for positions and careers of their choice.
• Improve mobility and portability of their credentials.
• Obtain certification of competence of the skills they gain through experience, school, training or self-study.
• Enhance their performance and achievement by self evaluation against known standards.
• Be active contributors to the activities that make their organizations successful.

How Skill Standards Benefit Government

Government can provide information that will ensure a better skill match between workers and employers and initiate education reform to better educate future members of the workforce. Skill standards better enable agencies to provide options for career and job mobility and link learning to the needs of the workplace. In addition, government can use skill standards to:

• Assist in the development of a highly skilled, high-quality and competitive workforce and industry base.
• Evaluate the effectiveness of publicly funded education and training.
• Increase opportunities for under-represented populations by making public the information that defines the skills required for success and by facilitating the national adoption of those definitions and their use.
• Support the creation of high performance organizations where they improve living standards for all members of the population.
• Facilitate collaboration between educators and industry.
• Communicate the need and basis for education reform to business, education, labor and the community at large both on local and national levels.

“College is a must... Better skill building, more funding, greater access to a college education. An all-hands-on-deck approach to the educational challenges of America’s new century is required... now.”

Anthony P. Carnevale, A College Degree is the Key in Other Voices, Crosstalk, Vol. 7, Number 3, p. 10.
The Process of Building Skill Standards

1. Research other standards projects and relevant literature.

2. Conduct focus groups to identify job functions and tasks and required skills, knowledge, and abilities.

3. Set performance criteria for tasks, indicating how we will know if the task is performed well.

4. Create problem scenarios using indicated skills, knowledge and abilities.

5. Validate the standards.
The Pyramid of Competencies is a depiction of skill standards in three broad skill categories.

**Tier I**
Tier I represents the broadest level of competencies, and is the set of employability (SCANS) skills, knowledge, abilities, and personal qualities required of all workers to be successful in today’s workplace. These are the universal skills that are needed to apply technical knowledge and tools effectively.

**Tier II**
Tier II represents technical skills, knowledge, and abilities common to all jobs within a cluster across all industries or industry sectors. For workers in fabrication, for example, knowledge of the applicable federal, state, and local laws would be applicable across all sectors.

**Tier III**
Tier III represents industry-specific technical skills, knowledge, and abilities that are unique to individual jobs or clusters and are the most prone to rapid change. For example, many workers need to upgrade their skills based on sudden market shifts.
Developing and Reviewing Programs

Skill Standards to Curriculum: A Continuous Development Process

It is anticipated that the skill standards generated in this project will be used by its education partners to develop or modify curriculum at the community and technical college, four-year college, and university levels. By providing the necessary input from the teaching and training industry, this Skill Standards document is a first step in curriculum development for preparing professional-technical instructors. We hope it serves the professional-technical college faculty and corporate trainers in particular.

In order to keep current with a rapidly changing workplace, standards need to be reevaluated and updated on a regular basis, with full partner participation at each step. New technological developments impact the ways that workers and their instructors organize and apply their skills, including time management and interpersonal relationships. Increased technological complexity may simplify some of the job tasks but make others more intricate. Today's professional-technical college faculty are asked to acquire a broader range of decision making and customer service skills as well as keeping current with emerging technologies. Ongoing changes like these must be reflected in curriculum in order to meet the needs of industries where expectations for educators are evolving.

USING SKILL STANDARDS

Step 1: Skill Standards Identification

- Compile and research existing standards in related jobs and careers
- Conduct focus groups to identify critical work functions and key activities, define key activity performance indicators, and identify technical knowledge, foundation skills and personal qualities.
- Conduct a survey of current workers to determine level of SCANS skills required for the job.
- Develop work-related scenarios to place the skill standards in the context of the work environment.
- Validate the data gathered from the focus group.
- Disseminate skill standards information to involved parties from industry, education and labor for their review and editing.

Step 2: Assessment

- A person generates and collects evidence of his or her ability to perform at the levels determined by the skill standards.
- A student, trainee, apprentice, prospective worker or worker seeking additional training is assessed to determine present skill level through direct and indirect evidence.
- Direct evidence includes products and items produced by the person who is assessed.
• Indirect evidence includes supporting information.
• Assessment results meet the criteria of validity, currency, authenticity and sufficiency.
• Demonstration of validity is a tangible item or record of action.
• Demonstration of authenticity shows that the item or specific piece of a team-effort is produced by the individual being assessed.
• Demonstration of sufficiency provides enough evidence to match key tasks and performance criteria of the skill standards.

Step 3: Curriculum Development

• Identify necessary competencies based on the skill standards information.
• Perform gap analysis to determine changes or additions to be made to curriculum.
• Revise existing curriculum to better meet the current and future needs of the industry.
• Develop new curriculum and establish new programs based on these competencies.
• Develop program outcomes for specific academic and training programs, including Tech Prep, 2-year and apprenticeship programs.

Step 4: Articulation

• Develop models to support the articulation of program outcomes and competencies between academic and training systems.
• Establish articulation agreements between existing programs to ensure portability of skills.
• Connect competencies and Certificates of Competence with benchmark documentation to build national portability systems.

A Continuous Updating Process

A continuous exercise by all partners of revising and validating skill standards on a regular basis is necessary. Updating of curriculum and current training methods to meet workplace standards is required for success in national economic development.

Individual workers must have access to clearly stated competency goals and direct access to skill development assistance. With cooperative effort on local and national levels, we can begin to resolve the workforce shortages in professional-technical education that face us today.
## Skill Standards Projects and Managers in Washington State 2001*

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* Manuals for the above projects can be ordered from the Center for Learning Connections at 206-870-3759 or online at www.wa-skills.com
WHAT IS SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION?

School-to-Work Transition is a systematic approach to education to equip students with the skills they need to fulfill their potential. It links students, schools, and work places and prepares young people for continued education and the career of their choice.

Locally driven and community-based School-to-Work Transition initiatives combine with ongoing education reform to establish high standards for students and to connect a student's education more closely to his or her interests.

WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF THE SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION?

School-to-Work Transition is based on the premise that most individuals learn best by doing and by relating what they learn in school to real-world experiences.

Each School-to-Work Transition initiative typically will be three elements. School-based learning is classroom instruction that integrates high academic standards with vocational learning. Work-based learning is experience at job sites that allows students to develop skills and study complex subject matter in a hands-on, work-based environment. Connecting activities provide program coordination and support for student, schools, and employers in areas such as career counseling, postsecondary education, and job placements.

School-to-Work Transition envisions a system of well-marked, flexible pathways that all students follow as they move from school to college and to eventual employment. A pathway is a cluster of classes within a broad subject area (such as arts and communications, health, or science and technology) that equips a student for an eventual career within that subject area. Pathways make learning relevant by allowing students to practice what they are learning in the classroom in real-world settings and by infusing career-related information into academic studies. Most schools use five to seven pathways, and students choose a pathway based on their individual interest. Students may change pathways should their interests change.

HOW IS SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION BEING IMPLEMENTED IN WASHINGTON STATE?

Washington State has made improving the education of its youth a top priority in the 1990s. The School-to-Work Transition initiative builds upon the state's current education reform efforts. Recent state laws establish goals for improving student achievement, laying the groundwork for creating a performance-based education system in the public schools, and expanding School-to-Work Transition initiatives statewide.

The Education Reform Act of 1993 (ESHB 1209) established four goals for improving student achievement. The fourth goal calls for students to 'Understand the importance of work and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities.' Other legislation provided seed money for a limited number of school districts to develop model School-to-Work Transition initiatives.

In 1994, a council appointed then Governor Lowry to make recommendations about what the School-to-Work Transition initiative should look like. The recommendations encouraged schools, parents, employers, workers, and community leaders to work together to develop an education system that best meets the needs of their youth.

Nationally, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 provides venture capital for states to develop a School-to-Work Transition system. In 1995, Washington State was awarded a five-year,
$27 million federal grant to enable local communities to create School-to-Work Transition initiatives and for state-level partners to assist with system-building activities.

Establishing a School-to-Work Transition Initiative primarily is the responsibility of the local community. About 200 of the state’s 296 school districts have established partnerships or started School-to-Work Transition initiatives. During the 1996-97 school year, these districts received more than $5 million in state and federal funds to help them get started. The goal is to have these initiatives in place in all schools statewide by the year 2000.

THE PUBLIC SUPPORTS SCHOOL-TO- WORK TRANSITION.
A recent survey of adults in Washington State found widespread support for students to receive career preparation in school and for School-to-Work Transition to be part of local school curriculum.

In the survey, 74 percent said careers and the skills necessary to succeed at work should be introduced to students before high school, and 87 percent said high schools should provide career preparation to every student before they graduate. Nearly everyone, 96 percent, said an education system that includes School-to-Work Transition is “highly desirable” or ‘desirable.” School-to-Work Transition was described as providing a strong academic foundation for every student, giving every student hands-on learning experience, and providing an opportunity for every student to practice what they have learned in a work-based setting.

Also, a 1996 summer survey of youths in Seattle also showed widespread support among students of all grade levels for job-related experience connected to their education and for School-to-Work Transition.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION?
The Governor's School-to-Work Task Force directs the activities of the state's public and private partners to ensure they support local initiatives and connect local partnerships and initiatives into a statewide system.

Five state-level organizations are supporting local School-to-Work Transition initiatives:

- Association of Washington Business and Washington State Labor Council, which formed an alliance to expand business and labor involvement in local School-to-Work Transition initiatives.
- State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, which is developing industry-based skills standards, preparing faculty and staff for work-based learning, and developing training for teachers, staff, and work site supervisors.
- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, which is awarding grants to local School-to-Work Transition partnerships, assisting in teacher training and development of career pathways and curriculum, and ensuring that School-to-Work Transition initiatives meet the needs of all students.
- Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, which is resolving barriers to expanding student work-based learning opportunities, assisting in development of a regional structure for connecting activities, designing an accountability system, and coordinating public awareness activities.
WHAT IS SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION?
School-to-Work Transition is a locally based education initiative that brings educators, students, business, and industry together to help young people move smoothly from their classrooms to their careers. It is a systematic approach to education that links students, schools, and work places, and prepares young people for continued education and the career of their choice.

IS THIS TOTALLY NEW?
The components of School-to-Work Transition, rigorous academics, career awareness and exploration, work-based learning, and post-secondary education options, are not new. School-to-Work Transition integrates these components with education reform to establish high standards for students and to connect a student’s education more closely to his or her interests.

WHY IS SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION SO IMPORTANT?
Many young people leave high school unprepared for the career they want to pursue. They drift from job to job for years before realizing that they are trapped without further education and training. Currently, more than half the state employers have trouble finding qualified applicants with skills needed for jobs that are now available. Today’s work place demands individuals who have good basic reading, writing, communication, and math skills and who excel at solving problems, working in teams, and learning on the job. Without these skills, young people face a life of low-skill, low-paying work.

WHY ARE BUSINESS AND LABOR INVOLVED?
In today’s economy, the skills of its workforce are a company’s major competitive advantage. No longer are Washington State companies competing only against other companies in the United States; they are competing against companies worldwide. Our best companies use the brain power of their employees to develop new products and adapt to new technologies. To meet that competition, they must have competent, trained, and educated individuals who perform at high levels. And, labor understands that high wages can only be earned by highly skilled workers.

WHICH STUDENTS BENEFIT MOST?
All students will benefit. School-to-Work Transition will inspire students by exposing them to new opportunities. Students preparing for college will focus more on their studies when they see how academic courses apply to careers that interest them. Students preparing for full-time work after graduation will learn the skills and work habits needed to get started in a successful career. And students combining academics with career preparation will see the connection between school and their future. Students are more likely to stay in school when they see hope for their future.

HOW ARE PARENTS INVOLVED?
School-to-Work Transition offers parents a great way to stay involved in their children’s education. Typically, many parents have little involvement with their children’s schools after elementary grades. As a result, they have little impact on what kinds of courses their children take in high school. Too often, students take the path of least resistance— easy courses that neither challenge them nor prepare them for advanced education or their careers. School-to-Work Transition encourages parents to take an active role in helping their children develop a plan of study that coordinates their high school studies with advanced education and their potential career interests.

HOW DOES SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION FIT IN WITH ACADEMIC PREPARATION?
School-to-Work Transition is a “connector” for students. Students cannot succeed without a strong academic foundation in basic skills such as reading, writing, communication, and math.
They must have a broad range of knowledge, and they must understand and be able to apply that knowledge, regardless of their career interests. School-to-Work Transition provides the connection between academics and the world outside the classroom. This connection currently is missing for many teens.

WHAT IS WORK-BASED LEARNING?
Work-based learning means that work places become active learning environments for students, consistent with their career interests. Employers provide learning experiences for students who can then develop broad, transferable, entry-level skills. Teachers work with employers, labor, and other community leaders to develop a curriculum that helps students understand the skills needed in the work place. Students actively develop projects and work in teams much like employees do in today’s work place. Examples of work-based learning include visiting work sites, job shadowing or observing people at work, employee-student mentoring, and student internships.

HOW IS SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION FUNDED?
School-to-Work Transition is being implemented with a mix of private, local, state, and federal money. A $27 million, five-year federal grant to assist with development and implementation of School-to-Work Transition. This funding will provide seed money—or venture capital—to help local school districts establish School-to-Work Transition initiatives and to help state partners with system building activities.

WHO WILL OVERSEE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT’S SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION INITIATIVE?
School-to-Work Transition is designed to operate and be governed at the local and community levels through regional and community partnerships. These partners include businesses of all sizes, labor organizations, parents, educators, and other community members.
Setting The Record Straight About School-to-Work Transition

**FICTION:** School-To-Work Transition is for Students not headed for College.

**FACT:**
Vocational classes historically served students who did not plan to go to college. However, today’s high-skill job market demands much from high school graduates. They must have good reading, writing communication, and math skills; they must excel at solving problems, and they must have work place skills and training. School-to-Work Transition focuses on improving the learning of all students through more interesting and relevant experiences. These experiences enable students to apply in real-world settings what they learn in class. And, they help all students: those who go directly to work after high school and those seeking degrees from two-year and four-year colleges and universities.

**FICTION:** Our schools already prepare students for college and careers.

**FACT:**
Washington’s schools have programs and courses to prepare students for college and careers. However, the traditional “drill and grill” method of educating young people is not preparing them for the changing demands and opportunities of modern society. As an example, Washington’s colleges and universities devote significant resources to remedial courses in subjects such as math, reading, and writing. And, a 1995 survey showed that 55 percent of businesses in our state have trouble finding new employees with the skills for jobs that are available now. School-to-Work Transition offers all students challenging, relevant academics and meaningful work-based learning experiences. School-to-Work Transition will improve student preparation for college and for the career of their choice.

**FICTION:** School-to-Work Transition is another program for low-achieving students.

**FACT:**
At the heart of School-to-Work Transition are two goals. The first is to improve the quality and relevance of education for all students. The second is to improve student knowledge of and access to career opportunities. School-to-Work Transition breaks down barriers between academic and vocational learning and provides each with the best aspects of the other. School-to-Work, as a capstone to education reform, prepares all students to meet high academic standards coming to our schools.

**FICTION:** School-to-Work Transition will track students, based on industry demand, into inferior programs of study with low academic standards and dead-end, low-skill jobs.

**FACT:**
School-to-Work Transition does not “track” students into occupations based on local industry demand. Students’ career paths are not chosen for them, nor are students asked to make a final high-stakes occupational decision. Rather, career pathways developed-by local school districts provide students with opportunities to explore many career options within broad subject areas. These subject areas include arts and communications, health, and science and technology. Pathways enable students to learn how their course work is relevant to their interests. Students are free to change their career pathway any time.

**FACT:**
Limited data will be collected to determine the impact and effectiveness of local School-to-Work Transition efforts. Personal information about students will not be shared without student or parent permission. That would violate the federal privacy law.
FICTION: School-to-work transition is just another federally controlled job training program

FACT:

The national School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 provides limited seed money for states and communities to design and set up their own School-to-Work Transition activities. School-to-Work Transition actually began in Washington State in 1993 with a few local demonstration projects. Currently, three-quarters of the state's 296 school districts—representing more than 90 percent of our state's students—are preparing School-to-Work Transition activities. These efforts build on existing local programs such as Tech Prep, cooperative education, and apprenticeship. Local district participation in School-to-Work Transition is voluntary.

FICTION: Young people will not want to participate in School-to-Work Transition activities.

FACT:

Young people want relevant learning opportunities and want a chance to learn both in school and the job. For example, a 1996 summer survey of youths in Seattle showed young people want classes that connect to the real world with hands-on and job experiences. Students want School-to-Work Transition in their schools and are willing to participate in activities after school. Additionally, in a series of focus groups held around Washington State, students said an education system that includes School-to-Work Transition is desirable. A recent national survey of teens showed similar results.

FICTION: Local School-to-Work Transition initiatives must implement national skills standards, and all students will be nationally certified.

FACT:

School-to-Work Transition in Washington State is not based on federal skill standards or certifications. However, educators are working with community members such as business and labor to help students understand the requirements of future occupations that interest them. The state is developing skill standards for several critical and emerging industries and occupations. These standards will identify the skill needs of employers and clarify how classroom learning relates to those skills. Knowing what's expected is a first step in helping students make good decisions about courses and their future careers.
The Role of the Integrated Curriculum Standard

The starting point for curriculum design is the identification of the knowledge, skills, and abilities in a particular area of study and the thinking processes needed to acquire an understanding of and meaningful application of the content. This collection of competencies, information, ideas, and capabilities is shaped by a business and industry perspective as well as the academic perspective. In the information age, reflective thinking must be given added focus. Knowing information is simply not enough; all students must be given the opportunity to apply and use knowledge through higher-order thinking skills and processes, such as analyzing details, synthesizing concepts, determining reliability of source, evaluating evidence, and validating a causal explanation.

Traditionally, content has been defined in several ways. In academic areas, the writing of textbooks has anchored the base of knowledge in the traditions of each subject as interpreted by expert authors, who are typically university professors, researchers, or experienced elementary and secondary teachers. In vocational programs, content has been defined both by textbook authors and by competency inventories developed with the assistance of occupationally-experienced practitioners and processes such as Developing a Curriculum (DACUM). Validation of both academic and vocational materials has relied on review processes involving other knowledgeable practitioners with similar expertise.

While these processes are successful from some perspectives, they lack a mechanism for integration or connection with other areas of the curriculum. Developing those connections is left to the teacher and to the students. Since teacher training typically does not provide the experience needed to integrate many areas of content, the student ultimately inherits the task of finding meaningful relationships among the many areas studied. Unfortunately, curricula often do not offer the student the frame of reference and thinking tools to apply and integrate material learned. This undesirable situation can be addressed only by providing a readily usable structure that assists both teacher and student in establishing interconnections among areas of learning. The concept of Integrated Curriculum Standards (ICSs) provides a structure that systematically connects to accepted standards in academic, employability, and occupational domains.

The advent of standards in areas of academic content, employability skills, and occupational capabilities provides a rich source of data to define curriculum content. Standards have not been perfected, and the quality and level of development vary considerably; nevertheless much progress has been made, and it is reasonable to expect standards will continue to expand and improve. If meaningful ways are found to use standards effectively, their further development will be encouraged.

Development of standards has opened the analysis of content to a much wider view. Content experts have, in effect, shared their basic understandings of content, whether academically or occupationally oriented, through the publication of these standards. Curriculum development now can be based on the fundamental building blocks of content rather than on collected
interpretations in the form of textbooks and course syllabi prepared in isolated areas of content. Curriculum developers have the opportunity to seek the deeper connections among the building blocks and present material to students in ways that expose the contexts and relationships among areas of knowledge and information. In addition, the interpersonal and intrapersonal application of knowledge and skills fosters the development of students who are better prepared to meet the demands of a highly complex world of work.

At a more fundamental level, examination of standards opens the opportunity to rethink what is important within curricula and to add or remove elements based on a comparative critique recognizing that an overwhelming body of knowledge is available in modern society. Sequencing of content also can be reexamined to find efficiencies in learning by more closely connecting preparatory knowledge with applications. For example, not all trigonometry must be taught at one time in one course in which the future utility of some of the subject material may not be evident.

Related to employability, Daniel Goleman makes a connection to “emotional intelligence.” Goleman has the support of Howard Gardner whom he quotes as saying:

“...I appreciate how crucial these emotional and relationship abilities are in the rough-and-tumble of life. Many people with IQs of 160 work for people with IQs of 100, if the former have poor intrapersonal intelligence and the latter have a high one. And in the day-to-day world no intelligence is more important than the interpersonal. If you don’t have it, you’ll make poor choices about whom to marry, what job to take, and so on. We need to train (students) in the personal intelligences in school.”

ISWEC (Integrated System for Workforce Education in Curricula Project) is designed to synthesize integrated standards from academic, business and industry, and employability arenas. This broad base for curriculum development maximizes the likelihood that content and process related to the development of all types of intelligences will be addressed. In such curricula, students can have continual experiences in seeking and applying connections and can form habits of mind based more firmly in analysis, synthesis, and reflective thinking, and do so within the context of authentic learning/working experiences.

The difficulty in using this rich source of information lies in the volume and complexity of the integration process. In raw form, the collection of standards that exists today fills several hundred pages of print material representing tens of thousands of distinguishable elements of information. Among these elements are many that overlap, duplicate, or restate others from various perspectives. It is unrealistic to expect teachers or even school systems to digest and translate this volume of information into workable instructional programs without assistance. Required are both a process and much preliminary work to assist educational practitioners in the development of integrated curricula based on a synthesis of standards within specific areas.

Small steps can be taken as a way of progressing toward these goals within the limitations of
local capabilities. Incremental reform can use the Skill Standards to

- infuse standards into existing courses,
- augment contextual materials with use of standards,
- create linkages to worksite learning experiences based on standards,
- implement project-based and thematic-based curricula based on standards,
- use student portfolios as learning tools,
- incorporate learning technology with specific connections to standards,
- employ embedded and authentic assessment in the curriculum as a learning tool, and
- embed developmental career guidance in a curriculum through the standards.

The collective impact of these steps will lead to major curriculum reform in a manageable progression. Infusion implies a pouring in or incorporation of something that gives new life or significance to a curriculum. Standards are a resource that can be infused into existing courses with little or no change in structure. Teachers in an existing class who are addressing a topic that relates to a particular standard can use the supporting database to identify examples of occupational contexts for the topic. Since teachers cannot be familiar with all occupational fields, the standards provide reference connections to applications of the topic that not only assist the teacher but also can be assigned for student research.

Used in this form, the concepts of standards become a teaching/learning resource that adds contextual motivation to students while providing the teacher assistance in lesson planning. Over time, the teacher can become familiar with a range of academic and occupational connections in a relatively efficient manner while providing an enriched program for the student. Workshops and other professional development activities can be used to accelerate the orientation process for teachers.

Another advantage of the infusion process is that it can be initiated at the local level immediately with no system or structural changes. In fact, infusion provides a mechanism for familiarizing teachers with these concepts in preparation for broader-scale implementation, and it provides an opportunity for teachers to critique the materials and offer suggestions for improvement. It is an opportunity to develop commitment to the concept at the grassroots level while providing support for the teacher in the form of ideas for lesson planning. Infusion of standards is the easiest step toward broader implementation of integrated curriculum concepts.
Preparing for Curriculum Integration

1. Think of a concept, process, topic you teach. Write it below.
   Ex: I teach a unit on Sexual Harassment Prevention.
   I have students read and discuss 7 Habits of Highly Successful People.
2. What do you want students to learn, know, and be able to do as a result of your teaching this?
3. Why is it important that students learn, know, and be able to do this?
4. How can students use this information, knowledge, and skill outside of school?

Begin with one person in the group. In turn, read your responses to these four items. What themes/commonalities did you notices as you heard people in your group respond to these questions? Discuss.

Pair up with a member of your group. Discuss an activity you could design together that would reinforce information, skills or know-how you both want for students.

Do the same thing with every other member of your group.

CURRICULUM INTEGRATION IS:
- Focusing on the priorities of disciplines in depth
- Integrating information literacy, technology, SCANs in programs
- Relating issues studied in academic classes to those in vocational
- Targeting multidimensional skills and concepts within one lesson
- Rearranging the sequence when a topic is taught to coincide with a parallel topic in another content
- Integrating one subject with another through the learner’s conceptual eye
- Using a thematic umbrella across all disciplines (coordinated studies)
- Integrating the content of what is taught with cognitive tools and cooperative strategies that cross disciplines and spill into life situations
  - Integrating threads with the learner himself/herself that connect past experiences and prior knowledge with new information and experiences
  - Reaching out to build bonds with other experts through networking
- Interdisciplinary team planning in which conceptual overlaps become the common focus across departments and the academic and vocational.
Checklist for Course/Program Development
Submitted by Rick Geist, Welding, South Puget Sound Community College

NEW COURSE/PROGRAM
- Is the course title complete/clear? yes/no
- Is the instructional level appropriate? yes/no
- Is the description clear (avoids redundant wording) yes/no
- Are prerequisites needed and listed? yes/no
- Are quarters to be offered marked? yes/no
- Are required texts, evaluation process, course objectives, and course content identified? yes/no

IF THE ANSWER IS ‘NO’ TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, REFER TO DIVISION CHAIR.

REVISED COURSE
- Is the course title (if new, attach existing cover) attached? yes/no
- Is the course id name (i.e. COMM 101) complete/new? yes/no
- Is the description clear (avoids redundant wording) yes/no
- Are prerequisite needed and listed? yes/no
- Are quarters to be offered listed? yes/no
- Are required texts, evaluation process, course objectives, and course content identified? yes/no

IF THE ANSWER IS ‘NO’ TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, REFER TO DIVISION CHAIR.
Sample Program Assessment
Submitted by Laura Parkins, South Seattle Community College

XXX College has made assessment of programs a focus for the year 2000-2001. During the Accreditation Self-Study phase, each of the Professional/Technical program faculty groups conducted its own “mini” self-study. At that time each determined the best combination of assessment processes for evaluating both individual student progress and program effectiveness. Selection was made from a variety of tools available at XXXX College:

INTERNAL COLLEGE ASSESSMENT:
- Student course evaluations
- Community College Student Experience Questionnaire (CCSEQ)
- Student interviews
- Retention Report
- Completion statistics
- Grading data
- Competencies scores
- College Graduation and transfer rates
- Vocational Follow-Up Survey
- Student Goals and Learning Outcomes Survey (SGLO)
- Internal Program Reviews
- ASSET scores
- COMPASS scores
- SLEP scores
- Portfolios
- Pre-Mid-Post assessments
- Final Projects
- Presentations
- Placement data
- ACT Graduating Student Survey
- ACT Alumni Outcomes Survey

EXTERNAL SOURCES DATA
- Occupational Program Reviews
- Technical Advisory Committee meetings
- College transfer statistics
- Employer Surveys
- Employment Security statistics
- State Board of Community and Technical College's data
- License/Certification scores
- Internship/Employer feedback

FACULTY RESPONSES
- College Employee Climate Survey
- Program Self-Studies
- IEC Assessment Sub-Committee's Spring Quarter 2000 Final Report
- Faculty meetings/conferences
Developing and Reviewing Programs

CURRICULUM GUIDE: DEVELOPING AND REVIEWING PROGRAMS

Professional Technical Program Advisory Committees

PURPOSE:
• Advise the administration and program on policy, philosophy and curriculum content
• Advise on curriculum development and program planning
• Assist in development of partnerships between business, industry, labor and education

THE ROLE OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES:
• Advise re. Entry-level Skills
• Advise re Entry-level Standards
• Advise re Equipment, Software, Facilities
• Provide Technical Expertise
• Identify Industry Trends
• Identify Employment Opportunities
• Review Texts, Films, & Other Materials
• Increase Community Awareness
• Serve as Advocates
• Serve as, or Identify, Resources
  o Guest Speakers
  o Field Trips
  o Donations
  o Industry Experience for Teachers
  o Sponsors, Judges, etc., for Student Leadership Programs
  o Interviewers for “mock” interviews

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP
• Opportunity to support public education
• Access to pool of well-trained potential employees
• Opportunity to influence employment training
• Opportunity to meet with others from your field
• Opportunity to interact with students

FACTORS IN SELECTING MEMBERS:
• Balanced Representation of Employing Community
  o Labor-Management
  o Size and Type of Firms
  o Geographic Considerations
  o Sex, Age, Ethnic Diversity

• Other Possibilities
  o Organized Labor
  o Professional Associations
  o Current Students
  o Alumni
  o Technical Experts
• Number of Members
• Length of Term
• Commitment

THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATORS:

Establish Policy
Develop, Implement, and Maintain Effective Training Programs
Staffing
Budgets
Curriculum
Program Structure
Identify and Recruit Appropriate Students
Delivery of Instruction / Methodology
Student Placement
Program Evaluation

COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

• Scheduling: How often? How long?
• Structure
• Leadership
• Planning : Agenda, Facilities, Minutes
• Make it easy, convenient, and comfortable for people to attend!

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMITTEES:

• Provide opportunities for meaningful activities.
• Take committee advice whenever possible.
• Provide recognition for committee participation.
• Follow up on everything!
• Involve teachers.
• Involve students.

Building Better Programs Through Stronger Advisory Committees:
Submitted by Peter Saflund, M.Ed., Northwest Center for Emerging Technologies
(This was part of a presentation for the State Board’s Fall Seminar for new instructors.)

Some Characteristics of Strong Advisory Committees:
• Between 6 and 14 members
• Comprised 50% “labor” 50% “management”
• Not dominated by one employer
• By-laws allow for rotation of members
• Have representation from former students
• Meet at least 4 times per year
• Every meeting has an agenda
Developing and Reviewing Programs

FORMING OR RE-FORMING ADVISORY COMMITTEES:
Where to find potential members?
- Former students of the program
- Labor organizations
- Trade and industry organizations and associations
- Yellow pages or other directories
- Civic groups – (Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis)

How do I help make changes?
- By-laws
- Each one leads one meeting.
- Clear understanding of program goal or mission

How do I get going in the right direction?
- Have an agenda for each meeting and stick to it.
- Make certain there is a program update.
- Discuss student progress. Show student work. Invite comments.
- Discuss future changes and actions.

How do I sustain interest and participation?
- You must be interested (it's your job!)
- Involve yourself. Visit - schedule field trips - etc.
- Involve committee in curriculum advances (give choices).
- Don't lose control (It's your job).
- Keep them working for your program and students.
- Schedule future topics to be discussed at next meeting.
- Thanks - appreciation - publicity - at all levels

- One meeting per year in class with students
- Committee participates in job readiness.
- Member companies provide student internships
- Member companies participate in instructor updating
- Review textbooks
- Lend or donate instructional resources
- Review and update curriculum
- Have members who are involved in change
- Member companies are leaders or are ascending leaders
- At least one meeting per year involves future planning
- Some members have informal communication paths to administration
- Some administrative involvement
- Active participant in recruitment
- Active participant in retention
- Active participant in placement
- Assist in program promotion and publicity
Sample Advisory Committee Membership Letter - Invitation To Join
Submitted by Mary Scheyer, Renton Technical College

Date Name
Inside Address
x
x
Seattle, WA  98101

Dear :

You are cordially invited to become a member of XXXX College’s (NAME OF COMMITTEE) Advisory Committee. Members are chosen because they have demonstrated or expressed a sense of responsibility toward our community and its schools, and, additionally, have an understanding and interest in the (NAME OF PROFESSION) professions. We feel you exemplify this type of person and, therefore, we earnestly hope that you will be able to serve.

The major objective of the (NAME OF PROGRAM) program is to provide quality instruction. The Advisory Committee makes specific contributions to the development and operation of the program by:

1. Making suggestions concerning content of related instruction.
2. Recommending classroom equipment and instructional materials.
3. Establishing standards for students.
4. Providing information concerning employment standards and opportunities for graduates.
5. Serving as a sounding board for new ideas.
6. Suggesting courses of action on general problems that may arise in the program.
7. Participating in the evaluation of the program.
8. Publicizing the program to the community.
9. Assisting in the maintenance of good community relations.
10. Helping to locate cooperative training positions.

The committee holds three scheduled meetings during each school year. Special meetings, if needed, are scheduled at the convenience of the committee. The meeting schedule for the coming school year is listed below:

(DAY COMMITTEE MEETS, I.E, WEDNESDAYS)

(Date) (Time) (Location of Meeting)

If you have any questions, please call us (DEAN’S NAME & # AND INSTRUCTOR’S NAME & #). We look forward to receiving your response to this invitation.

Sincerely,

(DEAN’S NAME) (INSTRUCTOR’S NAME)
Title Instructor

CURRICULUM GUIDE: DEVELOPING AND REVIEWING PROGRAMS
Sample Advisory Committee Membership Letter - Welcome Letter  
Submitted by Mary Scheyer, Renton Technical College

Date

Inside Address
x
x
Seattle, WA 98101

Dear Mr. :

Thank you for accepting the invitation to become a member of XXXX College's (Name of Committee) Advisory Committee. Your help and advice will assist the College in offering the type of course which will lead its graduates toward successful employment opportunities. We hope that you will find your experience on the committee to be challenging and rewarding.

Enclosed is some information regarding responsibilities of advisory committee members. If you have questions, please call (Dean’s name & phone #). The committee holds three scheduled meetings during each school year. Special meetings, if needed, are scheduled at the convenience of the committee. The meetings (or remaining meetings) scheduled for this school year will be held:

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We are looking forward to working with you on the committee.

Sincerely,

(Dean)  
Associate Dean

(Name of Instructor)  
Instructor

enclosures
xx
Sample Advisory Committee Membership Letter-
Regretfully Dropping Member
Submitted by Mary Scheyer, Renton Technical College

Date

Inside Address
x
x
Seattle WA  98154

Dear :  

Your participation on the (Committee Name) Advisory Committee at XXXX College has been greatly appreciated. On behalf of the College, thank you.

We note that you have been unable to attend this year and understand that schedules and commitments change over time. We are regretfully withdrawing your name from active membership. Should your time in the future permit, we would be happy to hear from you and again benefit from your participation on the committee.

Most sincerely,

(Dean’s Name), Associate Dean
(Department)

xx
Sample Advisory Committee Letter -
Regret Your Leaving
Submitted by Mary Scheyer, Renton Technical College

Date

Inside Address
X
X
Seattle WA 98101

Dear :

I am sorry that you will no longer be able to participate on the (Name of Committee) Advisory Committee. You will be missed.

On behalf of XXXX College, I want to thank you for your past participation. The service that our advisory committee members volunteer is vital to the success of our programs. We sincerely appreciated your time and effort.

Most Sincerely,

(Dean’s Name), Associate Dean
(Department)

xx
Sample Roster Change Form
Submitted by Mary Scheyer, Renton Technical College

TO: _______________________________ (Associate Dean)
FROM: _______________________________ (Your Name)
RE: _______________________________ (Committee Name)
DATE: _______________________________

TO: ____________________________________ (Associate Dean)
FROM: _______________________________
DATE: _______________________________
RE: Advisory Committee Roster Change

☐ ADD TO COMMITTEE (and send Welcome letter)
☐ INVITE TO JOIN (send invitation to join letter)
☐ CHANGE OF INFORMATION ONLY

NAME____________________________________
TITLE____________________________________
LABOR MANAGEMENT UNION
Circle One

COMPANY NAME ________________________________
COMPANY ADDRESS ________________________________
WORK PHONE #_______________________ FAX # ________________
E-MAIL ________________________________ HOME #*___________________
HOME ADDRESS* ____________________________________________
SEND MAIL TO: ☐ COMPANY ☐ HOME
*Optional

☐ DROP FROM COMMITTEE
NAME____________________________________
REASON: ☐ RESIGN ☐ DROP DUE TO ☐ OTHER
NON ATTENDANCE (Explain) ________________________________
☐ SEND “THANK YOU” LETTER ☐ ADD MY COMMENTS ☐ NO LETTER
WHICH FOLLOWS NECESSARY

For Office Use
☐ CHANGE DATA BASE
☐ CHANGE ATTENDANCE TRACKING FORM
☐ NEW ROSTER (& copies to Dean & Instructors)
☐ COPY TO _______ (+State Form)
Sample Advisory Committee Agenda  
Submitted by Mary Scheyer, Renton Technical College

Date

TO: (Name of Committee) Advisory Committee  
FROM: (Instructors)/(Name of Dean)  
RE: Meeting: Date*  
   Time  
   Location  
   Food  

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Introductions  
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting  
3. Selection of Chair/Co-chair  
4. Program Update  
5. Business Trends & Committee Recommendations  
6. Course Review/Approval  
   (Copy enclosed—please bring with you to the meeting)  
7. “Industry Connection” (Honoring Advisory Committees College-Wide  
   (Show Day, Date, Time, Location here)  
8. “Student Highlights”  
9. Other  
10. Next Meeting: (day/date/place)  
11. Adjourn  

* If you cannot attend, when possible, please arrange for a substitute to attend in your place.