Competency Based Education: Building Equitable Education In the CCCCCO's Pilot

Presentation to the members of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges

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Erin Thomas, Coastline College
What is the Competency Based Education (CBE) Grant?

- $515,000 over 4 years
- Establishes collaborative of up to ten colleges (eight selected)
- Allows Coastline to remain leaders in innovative education
- Empowers Coastline to influence state policy on CBE
- Supported by the Board of Trustees
- Expected increase in enrollments (unaddressed student market)
Pilot Colleges – Grant Recipients

- Bakersfield – Culinary Arts AS
- Coastline – Management AS
- East LA – Technology & Logistics AS
- Madera – Business Administration AS
- Merced – Child Development AS
- Mt. San Antonio – Kinesiology
- Shasta – Early Childhood Education AS
- Southwestern - Automotive Technology AS
What is CBE?

• Intentional and transparent approach to curricular design

• The **time** it takes to demonstrate competencies **varies**

• The **demonstration** of competencies is held **constant**

• Students learn by **engaging in learning exercises**, activities and experiences

• Students receive **proactive guidance and support from faculty and staff**

• Learners earn credentials by **demonstrating mastery** through multiple forms of assessment, often at a personalized pace
Direct assessment competency-based education is an intentional outcomes-based equity-minded approach to earning a college degree with the expectations of learning held constant, but time is variable through a flexible, self-paced, high-touch and innovative learning practice.

The goal of competency-based education is to empower students in their learning journey by providing a personalized, flexible, adaptive, and culturally responsive curriculum with which students can engage; it allows students to demonstrate mastery of learning and the achievement of competencies at their own pace aided by customized instructional and student service support.
CBE Focuses on Mastery of Competencies

Credit Hour Model...
• Based on seat time originally designed to determine faculty pensions and not as a measure of learning.
• Credit Hour is current basis for awarding financial aid, faculty workload & degree completion.

Competency Based Education...
• Moves beyond seat-time focusing on mastery of competencies through learning activities and experiences that align with clearly defined programmatic outcomes.
• Hours will vary, but the learning is fixed.
• Often fully online modules.
• Flexible academic calendar term options.

“Cracking the Credit Hour” by Amy Laitinen
## Competency Based Education is and is not…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CBE is…</th>
<th>CBE is not…</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time is variable with program offered in a flexible, self-paced approach</td>
<td>Learner works at course-set pace with pre-determined scheduled of assignments, activities, etc. with true beginning and end dates</td>
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<td>Learning is fixed requiring demonstration of mastery of each competency</td>
<td>Learning varies with passing course grade (i.e., A, B, C, D)</td>
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<td>Determined by rigorous summative authentic assessment focused on meeting core outcomes and competencies</td>
<td>Student evaluation varies based on accumulation of activities, exams, projects, discussion, attendance, etc.</td>
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<td>Student learning supported by faculty and staff throughout learning journey</td>
<td>Independent student (i.e., students learn on their own and then take final exam)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completion of program is based on mastery of intentionally designed scaffold of all competencies</td>
<td>Achievement of credential is based on passing grades and credit-hours (i.e. 60 credit hours = AA/AS)</td>
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Institutions with Direct Assessment Authority

- American Public University System (Charles Town, WV)
- Boston Architectural College (Boston, MA)
- UMass Global (Irvine, CA)
- Capella University (Minneapolis, MN)
- Grace College and Theological Seminary (Winona Lake, IN)
- Southern New Hampshire University (Manchester, NH)
- SUNY Empire State College (Saratoga Springs, NY)
- University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee (Milwaukee, WI)
- Walden University (Minneapolis, MN)
CBE at Coastline College

Our History of innovation
Management A.S. Program Structure

LEGEND
- English
- Math
- Communication Studies
- Business
- Computer Information Systems
- Ethnic Studies
- Philosophy
- Accounting
- Geology

| BLOCK 1 | Written Communication 4 credits: ENG C100 | Financial Acumen I 3 credits: MATH C101 |
| BLOCK 2 | Comm and Active Listening 3 credits: CMST C100 | Financial Acumen II 3 credits: BUS C120 |
| BLOCK 3 | Technology Savvy I 3 credits: CIS C105 | Sensitivity 3 credits: ETHN C233 |
| BLOCK 4 | Drive & Energy I 2 credits: BUS C282 | Organization & Planning 3 credits: BUS C101 |
| BLOCK 5 | Functional Expertise 3 credits: BUS C139 | Relationship Building 3 credits: MGMT C115 |
| BLOCK 6 | Business Thinking 3 credits: BUS C100 | Integrity 3 credits: PHIL C140 |
| BLOCK 7 | Conflict Management 3 credits: CMST C140 | Presentation Skills 3 credits: CMST C110 |
| BLOCK 8 | Financial Acumen III 3 credits: ACC C116 | Team Management 3 credits: MGMT C100 |
| BLOCK 9 | Prob Solv & Decision Making 3 credits: GEO C121 | Technology Savvy II 3 credits: CIS C205 |
| BLOCK 10 | Drive & Energy II 3 credits: BUS C283 | Influence 3 credits: MGMT C144 |
The Perfect Pair: Industry Certificates + CBE

**INDUSTRY CERTIFICATES**

- Focused, skill-oriented, hands-on
- Real World Skill Application
- Meet Changing Industry Needs

**CBE**

- Mastery of specific skills & knowledge
- Performance Based Assessments
- Agile and Responsive Curriculum
Unlocking Potential: Collaborating with External Stakeholders

• Establish Common Ground
  • Identify desired learner outcomes
  • Ensure value for external stakeholders

• Remain Adaptable
  • Be open to adjusting strategies based on feedback

• Demonstrate Effectiveness
  • Provide examples of other licensing agencies partnering with CBE
Building an Operational Model Cont.

- A&R Processes
- Financial Aid Processes
- Board Policies
- Outreach
- Marketing
- Navigating multiple bureaucracies
  - Coastline was the first community college in the nation to receive Direct Assessment approval from an accreditor (ACCJC Approval)
  - Coastline has submitted to CO for approval to submit to DOE
Best Practices

- Keep students at the center
- Collaborative approach through faculty-admin partnerships & institutional buy in
- Tolerance for ambiguity
- Strategic risk taking
- Future-proof your college
- Know that investment is front-heavy
Southwestern College
Competency-Based Education
Get Ready: 5.1 Million Adults Plan to Enroll in College

One in five adults in California intend to enroll within 2 years.
Annie the Auto Tech Student

Demographics
Married 12 years
Female
Age 35-40
Two girls ages 7 and 10
Working with her family's business since high school
HS Diploma with one semester of community college
Served four years in the military

Goals
• Wants a degree in Automotive Technology from an ASE accredited college
• Wants to manage the family business

Responsibilities and Challenges
• Cares for young children and aging parents
• Manages the business while attending school
• Needs financial aid for school

Influences and Decision Points
• Family members (in the business for years)
• Customers
• Social Media
• Other ASE certified mechanics
Students enroll in a program, not in courses

Competency statements are equated to units based on expected learning time, intensity, existing courses

Competencies are cross-walked to unit-bearing courses to determine credit value for financial aid SAP, transcripts, etc.

Students demonstrate mastery of competencies through formative (teaching) and summative assessments

Credit is transcripted on a CBE transcript AND a credit transcript based on crosswalks

Students demonstrate mastery of competencies according to their schedules

Academic terms and multiple start dates allow for flexibility
Competencies (AT Program & Gen Ed)

• Look to ASE industry standard to write program competencies
• Curriculum process interrogated existing curriculum to ensure traditional program is ASE aligned
• Competencies grouped into “CBE Modules” cross walked to existing courses
• New “Auto Safety” course created to captured shared competencies
• GE statements written by cross-discipline faculty groups, vetted by Academic Senate
• Based on Degree Qualifications Profile, SWC/CSU/UC GE Outcomes
• Process included creating contextualized assessment examples to show relevance of GE to an Auto Tech student
• Cross-walked to courses for purposes of Fin Aid, staffing, and transcription

Over 500 Competencies across 20 CBE modules
Auto Tech Competency Modules

Automotive Shop Safety
Introduction I
Introduction II
Electrical I
Brakes
Suspension
Engine Repair
Manual Transmission
Automatic Transmissions
HVAC
Electrical II
Engine Performance I
Engine Performance II
SMOG Level I
SMOG Level II
General Education: English Composition
General Education: Oral Communication and Critical Thinking
General Education: Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning
General Education: Arts and Humanities
General Education: Social and Behavioral Sciences
General Education: Natural Sciences
CBE: Critical Program Components

**Program Design**
- Competencies and modules*
- Credit hour equivalencies*
- Assessment plan*

**Faculty and Staff**
- Description of faculty and staff model (with RSI) and roles*
- Description of student support services*

**Policies**
- Board policy changes adopted
- Academic calendar policy
- Redirection and transfer policy
- Financial aid policies

**Technology**
- Identify new or enhanced technology needs
- Re-envision current systems (e.g., Canvas, Colleague) to meet CBE needs
- Process to accommodate dual transcripts
- Flexible calendar program certification

*Items required for ACCJC submission; DOE requires the same items + financial aid policies
Areas of Common Questions

- Faculty Workload and Selection
- Enrollment and Funding Models
- Academic Calendars
- General Education
- Financial Aid
Meet the Southwestern Team!

- Randy Beach, CBE Faculty Co-Lead and Curriculum Committee Faculty Chair, rbeach@swccd.edu
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- Dr. Mink Stavenga, Dean, School of Business, CBE Project Lead, mstavenga@swccd.edu
- Suzanne Woods, Director of Financial Aid and Veterans Services, swoods@swccd.edu
Resources

• Book: A Leader’s Guide to Competency Based Education By Charla S. Long, Deborah J. Bushway, and Laurie Dodge

• Book: Students First: Equity, Access, and Opportunity in Higher Education By Paul LeBlanc

• Competency Based Education Network (CBEN) website and conference https://www.cbenetwork.org/

• Chancellor’s Office webinars and presentations (recordings posted in the Vision Resource Center)

• Colleagues at the 8 pilot colleges, including us!

Coastline Team Key Contacts

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