



COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADER BULLETIN

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Work progresses on Reverse Credit Transfer (RCT) project



More students will be awarded high-quality credentials, thus increasing college completion rates in the state, thanks to a partnership between the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Board of Regents, the state's public two- and four-year postsecondary institutions, and the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC).

Referred to as Reverse Credit Transfer (RCT), the process aims to increase successful degree completion by retroactively granting postsecondary credentials to students who transfer from Iowa's community colleges to one of the state's public universities prior to completing an associate degree, diploma or certificate. A recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the NSC and each of Iowa's 15 community colleges and three public universities will allow the successes experienced through an earlier pilot program to be replicated across the state on a larger scale. The agreement facilitates the sharing of student course records so that community colleges can use the



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combined credits to award credentials while students are also working toward bachelor's degrees.

To help ensure students take advantage of this opportunity, the state's three public universities are identifying and contacting students who have transferred 30 or more community college credits to encourage them to participate.

In addition to the expanded RCT process, Iowa community college transfer students can "opt-in" to participate before leaving their community colleges, or at any point after they have transferred. By doing so, they agree to have their university transcripts sent back to their original community colleges for an evaluation to determine if degree, diploma, or certification requirements have been met. The community colleges will then make the decision as to whether a degree or other credential will be granted.

Participation is good for both colleges and students, as research shows that students who have earned associate degrees complete baccalaureate programs at higher rates and earn more money on average than those who do not. With the number of awards issued by the community colleges through RCT expected to significantly increase, this work supports the Future Ready Iowa initiative to build Iowa's talent pipeline by encouraging more Iowans to earn degrees and other postsecondary credentials leading to high-demand jobs. The goal is for 70 percent of Iowa's workforce to have education or training beyond high school by 2025.

The RCT Advisory Committee will meet again later this spring to review the success of this new arrangement and continue work on other strategies that can be adopted to increase student degree completion.

More information about RCT can be found at http://www.transferiniowa.org/reverse_credit_transfer.php or on the Iowa Department of Education website at <https://www.educateiowa.gov/adult-career-and-community-college/transfer>. For questions about these initiatives, contact Chris Russell, education consultant, at 515-725-2247 or chris.russell@iowa.gov.

Embedded General Education Committee completes work



A committee of community college representatives recently finalized a process for documenting general education objectives and associated credits that are embedded within a career and technical education (CTE) core course. The committee was appointed in 2017 when rules for Associate of Applied Science (AAS) and Associate of Applied Arts (AAA) award programs were being drafted to increase the required general education credits from 12 credits in Iowa law to 15 credits to align with Higher Learning Commission (HLC) criteria requirements (CRRT.A.10.010). Because the HLC has a provision for an "integrated, embedded, interdisciplinary model of general education," the Iowa community college chief academic officers (CAO) asked the arts and science and CTE deans to propose a model to ensure and document general education learning objectives taught within a CTE program.

The committee designed an Embedded General Education Agreement and Plan for college staff to complete that includes steps for college review and signatures for each CTE course that is being documented. Each college's process will involve collaboration between liberal arts instructors, CTE instructors, and college administrators. These agreements will then be uploaded to the state's curriculum management system, CurricUNET, with courses and credits associated with the embedded general education objectives flagged by new identifiers.

In consultation with the Iowa Department of Education, the CAO's voted at their February meeting to adopt the model to allow for a maximum of three general education credits of an AAS or AAA award to be designated as embedded through the

committee's proposed process. The next steps are for administrative rules to be revised, reviewed, and then published in a notice of intended action in the Iowa Administration Bulletin (IAB) prior to expected adoption in the upcoming year.

Committee members included Daniel Marvin, chair (Eastern Iowa Community Colleges); Scott Ocken (Des Moines Area Community College), Jill Budde (Indian Hills Community College), David Grunklee (Hawkeye Community College), and Anne Duffy (Kirkwood Community College).

For questions about this process, contact Chris Russell, education consultant, at 515-725-2247 or chris.russell@iowa.gov.

Celebrating Career and Technical Education



In recognition of the role CTE has in preparing students for college and careers, Governor Kim Reynolds signed a proclamation recognizing February as CTE month in Iowa. The month coincides with a national campaign celebrating achievements and accomplishments of CTE programs across the country.

“The old-school mentality of CTE as vocational educational isn’t the case anymore,” said Lisa Folken, director of Kirkwood Community College’s Jones County Regional Center, where students from area high schools have access to cutting-edge programs in a centralized location.

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Alternative pathways for completion of a high school equivalency diploma



In January, the Iowa State Board of Education adopted new administrative rules establishing additional pathways for Iowans to earn a high school equivalency diploma (HSED). Previously, the only way to earn a HSED was by passing the HiSET®, the state-approved high school equivalency test.

The new pathways, which are in addition to the HiSET®, are based on the accumulation of secondary credit or completion of postsecondary credentials equal to or beyond an associate degree. They include HSED programs based on:

1. attainment of high school credits;
2. postsecondary degrees; and
3. foreign postsecondary degrees.

Currently, there are an estimated 150,000 Iowans who lack high school diplomas. These expanded options aim to reduce this number by providing flexibility in how students can demonstrate competency leading to the issuance of HSEDs by the Iowa Department of Education.

A comprehensive guide is being developed to assist programs in the implementation of all pathway options and will be shared with adult education program administrators at the April 19 coordinators' meeting in Des Moines. The Department plans to pilot new options with partner community college programs in May and June of 2018, with full implementation beginning July 1, 2018.

Contact Jayne Smith, education consultant for adult education and literacy, at jayne.smith@iowa.gov or 515-725-0046 with questions.

Creating authentic learning experiences through CTE



Today's career and technical education programs (CTE) have become increasingly innovative. Extending well beyond the development of simple technical skills, high-quality CTE programs increase student engagement through the integration of technical and academic skills in hands-on, real-world learning experiences. These programs don't happen on their own. It takes passionate and dedicated teachers to help students build the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in college and careers.

In recognition of Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month, we asked a few of these teachers from across the state to tell us how they came to the profession, share ways their CTE programs integrate core academic areas, and explain why these programs are important for students and the state. Here is what they said.

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STAR training helps instructors improve reading achievement of adult learners



Adult education instructors from Eastern Iowa Community Colleges, Iowa Western Community College, Southeastern Community College, Indian Hills Community College, and Kirkwood Community College, participated in STAR training (Student Achievement in Reading) provided by the Iowa Department of Education in February. This professional development and training program, developed by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), teaches instructors how to use evidence-based reading instruction in the classroom to improve the reading achievement of adult learners.

The Department is in its fifth year of offering STAR training to community college adult education and literacy program personnel.

For more information about the training, contact Jayne Smith, education consultant for adult education and literacy, at jayne.smith@iowa.gov or 515-725-0046.

Competition heats up for culinary, hospitality state championship

High school students from across the state converged on the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines last week in hopes of becoming the next Iowa ProStart Invitational champions in culinary arts and restaurant management.

Hosted by the Iowa Restaurant Association Education Foundation, the Iowa ProStart Invitational provides a venue for top high school teams to demonstrate their skills, network with industry professionals, and compete for the opportunity to represent Iowa at the National ProStart Invitational, which will be held in Providence, R.I., in April.

"The ProStart Invitational is a full day of competition," said May Schaben, executive director of the Iowa Restaurant Association Education Foundation. "It is like 'Top Chef' in the morning for the culinary teams and 'Shark Tank' style in the



afternoon where hospitality management students create their own restaurant concept and pitch it to a team of industry professionals.”

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