



ADVISORY COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

WCC PROFESSIONAL-TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

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A Message From The President

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for your support of Whatcom Community College's professional-technical programs. By volunteering to become a member of a program advisory committee, you are helping the programs stay strong and relevant. Our hope is that by being involved, your professional world will be enhanced by the people you meet and the graduates you work with in the future. They will carry their education with them, an education that you helped to define.

As a member of the industry and community, your input is vital to the growth and health of our programs. Thank you again for serving on a Whatcom Community College advisory committee.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kathi Hiyane-Brown
President
Whatcom Community College

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Welcome Letter from the Director

Dear Advisory Committee Member:

Thank you for your willingness to participate on a Whatcom Community College Advisory Committee. Your involvement is critical to our programs' and to our students' success.

Advisory committees play an important role in keeping educational content current and germane. Your connection with the industry, your involvement in the community, and your input on program needs all assist the college in continuously improving the quality and relevance of our professional and technical curricula.

During your term as an advisory committee member we anticipate that you will inform the college on current labor market information and how that will impact programs; advise the college of changing technologies or practices; review courses and curriculum; and recommend strategies that ensure excellent, professional programs are in place.

An effective, efficient advisory committee requires all of its members to be engaged in the committee's work. We greatly appreciate your active involvement in your committee. If there is anything we can do to assist you in your duties, please do not hesitate to contact me or any of our associated staff or faculty. Again, I want to express a sincere thank you for your time, involvement and input into this important work.

Sincerely,



Janice Walker
Workforce Education Director

Whatcom Community College Professional-Technical Education Advisory Committee Overview

WHAT IS A PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

Each professional-technical program (or program group) has an advisory committee made up of people working in the related industry. The committee is made up, as much as possible, of an equal mix of employers, employees, and labor representatives (if available), and may also include non-voting (ad hoc) members from professional organizations, governmental agencies, or appropriate non-profit organizations. College employees also serve on committees, although are not eligible to vote.

WHY DOES THE COLLEGE HAVE PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES?

WCC believes that input from the community on professional-technical programs is essential to their effectiveness and success. Advisory committees, and the required membership mix, are mandated by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). This means that the college must maintain an active advisory committee for each program (or group of programs) that meets at least twice per calendar year. Attendance at those two meetings must be of a quorum of at least 50% of the voting membership for the program to remain viable.

WHAT DOES AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE DO?

Professional-technical advisory committees have three major roles:

- ◆ advise program administration and faculty on their respective industries and skill/knowledge requirements for employees;
- ◆ assist with current issues impacting programs;
- ◆ provide support and advocacy for quality education and training.

WHAT WILL BE EXPECTED OF ME AS A MEMBER?

Time commitment: There are usually three meetings per year of one to two hours per meeting (~6 hours per year). It is very important to attend the required meetings. Occasionally, programs that are going through a period of intense change will request extra meetings or conference call or e-mail input. There will sometimes be information sent prior to a meeting for your review. Participation in the meetings is almost always the largest part of the commitment.

Sample duties: You will be asked for your input on proposed changes to the program, to review curriculum, and to help create an annual committee work plan. Providing and sharing information about industry trends, new educational needs for workers, and industry technological advances is expected. You will be asked to support the program in the community by sharing your knowledge of it in business-related interactions, and providing tours or internship opportunities for students. In addition to these basic duties, the committee you are serving on may elect to take on other projects.

Standard length of term: Three years.

I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO CHAIR THE COMMITTEE, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Committee chairs work with the program coordinator to set the agenda for each meeting. This is usually accomplished via e-mail. The chair also leads the meeting and moves it along so that all the agenda items are covered. The chair does not have to have prior experience with Robert's Rules of Order or any other special training. College personnel will take minutes at the meeting.

Role of Advisory Committees

The primary purpose of professional-technical education advisory committees is to promote collaboration between specific educational programs and business, industry and labor in preparing individuals to enter and succeed in their chosen career. Advisory committees historically have been a very effective means of helping the educational delivery system respond to the needs of a constantly changing labor market. As noted above, professional-technical advisory committees have three major roles:

- ◆ advise program administration and faculty on their respective industries and skill/knowledge requirements for employees;
- ◆ assist with current issues impacting the programs;
- ◆ provide support and advocacy for quality education and training.

Working cooperatively with program coordinators, administrators and faculty, advisory committees can significantly help strengthen and improve the programs they serve. Since they are “advisory” by design, these committees do not have administrative, policy or legislative authority.

Types of Advisory Committees

Program advisory committees can be formed in support of a single program, a group or cluster of related programs within the institution, a region or area cluster of related programs or of a career pathway. Regional committees are encouraged for the purpose of postsecondary programs. If program cluster or regional advisory committees are formed, care must be given to ensure that every occupational program area is adequately represented. Clustering of advisory committees is highly recommended to enable balanced representation that minimizes the burden of excessive meetings for private sector members.

Establishment of Advisory Committees

APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Advisory committee members are appointed by the college program coordinator and administration, and are invited to serve, in writing, for a term typically of three years. A three-year rotational process provides for a continuous flow of new talent and ideas to the committee. There may be extenuating circumstances when a committee member would be re-appointed to serve additional years or terms (for a maximum of 6 years of service).

MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION

The strength of an advisory committee is reflected in the diversity of its membership. Consideration must be given in the makeup of the committee to gender, geographical representation, ethnicity, and nature of the occupational area represented. Advisory committees must be composed of equal numbers of employers and employees to maintain a balance of interest. When the occupation being taught is apprenticeable and a local Joint Apprenticeship and Training Council (JATC) is active in the geographical area, at least one labor and one management member of the JATC should be invited to participate on the committee.

Consideration should also be given to include representatives of local professional associations related to the occupational area, organized or non-organized employee organizations, and county/state labor councils.

Committee Administration

CHAIR

The chair of the advisory committee must be elected from the private sector membership of the committee and must represent business, industry, labor, or a non-profit agency. The name and position of the committee chair should be noted on the committee roster on file. This person, in collaboration with the program coordinator and other committee members, establishes the work plan/goal(s) of the committee each year. At the fall meeting (first meeting of a new academic year), the chair will be identified. Subsequent meetings for the academic year will also be scheduled. The committee chair, program coordinator, and professional-technical program administrator, working in partnership, are responsible for facilitating the work of the committee and setting the agenda for each meeting. The chair is responsible for leading the committee meetings.

The program coordinator, faculty and administrators serve as consultants to the committee. However, they are not voting members and do not count towards the constitution of a quorum. The program coordinator acts as the main liaison to the college regarding the committee's activities and is responsible for keeping the administration, board, and appropriate staff fully informed of committee activities. They are also responsible for ensuring logistical support for the committee's work.

COMMITTEE MINUTES AND PARTICIPATION

Accurate and complete minutes of all meetings should be available at all times and kept on file—electronically and in hardcopy—for the previous three years. An up-to-date roster of committee membership should be maintained at all times. In order for the committee to vote on binding activity, a quorum (50% or more) of the voting members must be present. Members repeatedly unable to attend meetings should be replaced to maintain a viable committee.

MEETING FREQUENCY

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges requires that professional-technical advisory committees hold at the minimum two meetings each calendar year. However, it is strongly recommended that committees meet three times per year (once per quarter) for continuity and effectiveness. A committee may elect to meet more often if necessary.

Responsibilities of Advisory Committees

WORK PLAN

Each fall, the program coordinator and advisory committee members work collaboratively to develop an annual work plan based on the current and future needs of the program and industry. Work plans should be limited to the few most important activities that should be accomplished by the committee during the course of their year's work. Work plans should address for each activity: goals, steps, who will complete work, and desired completion dates.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

The following activities and duties are not meant to be all inclusive, but are suggested areas of committee review and discussion.

CURRICULUM ADVICE

- Review labor market information to ensure that the occupational program area is in demand and that vacancies exist for future employment.
- Advise the college as to the industry standards or certification required by the occupational area, and/or assist in the development of skill standards where appropriate.

- Review the content of the professional-technical program and respective courses. Advise the college of changing market conditions, technologies, and employment needs.
- Advise as to the kinds and balance of theory, technical skill development, communication capabilities, production work, and/or realistic enterprise tasks to be accomplished by the students, in order to ensure the most effective and efficient use of instruction time.
- Review instructional support resources and recommend those that are most appropriate to the instructional program; e.g., instructional materials, computer software, technical materials and trade publications.
- Assist the college in conducting special events that benefit both the student and the college; e.g., career fair or college open house.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT BUDGET

- Advise the college as to the adequacy of the physical facilities and conditions of equipment, and prepare recommendations for effecting needed change.
- Assist the college in obtaining instructional equipment, or grants to support equipment purchases.
- Review annual budgetary requests for equipment and supplies, make recommendations and assist in the development of bid or purchase specifications when appropriate.
- Advise in development of plans for new construction or remodeling of existing facilities.

INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- Advise on the development of evaluation instruments and procedures that may assist in determining the effectiveness of the instructional program, conduct outcomes assessments, and recommend appropriate changes.
- Recommend procedures for developing, implementing and evaluating internship programs.
- Recommend instructional practices that promote safe work habits.

- Recommend standards and minimum academic qualifications for student enrollment into programs.
- Advise college administration regarding program continuation and/or modification as determined by a review of outcomes.

INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY REVIEW

- Recommend qualified professionals for the pool of faculty, guest speakers, and presenters.
- Recommend new methods and technologies for delivering instruction.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

- Recommend ways to assist students in securing internships and/or eventual employment.
- Participate in annual career fairs.
- Assist in the identification of portable, transferable competencies, skills and abilities expected of successful employees.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Recommend/facilitate/conduct an awards program for students that will encourage excellence and pride in achievement (e.g., special recognition, scholarships, etc.).
- Present programs to local civic and service groups.
- Recommend/develop a marketing plan for increasing community awareness and value of the program (e.g. facilitate obtaining sponsored media advertisements).
- Recommend/develop measures supported by business and industry to increase awareness of the program through local and state professional trade associations.
- Participate in and promote special college events related to the program.
- Advocate to legislators regarding the needs of the program and college.
- Promote, support, or influence legislation that will positively impact the program.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

- Assist in developing and/or serve as a judge for competitive skills events for student organizations.
- Sponsor or collect contributions of equipment and supplies for skills events.
- Arrange for display/demonstration space to promote student organizations at special events.

Ethical Conduct

Although state ethics laws are directed toward state and public employees, advisory committee members are indirectly affected by the law through their relationship with college employees. For example, the ethic laws govern all actions and working relationships of state employees with current or potential customers, government representatives, the media and others. In these relationships, state and public employees must observe the highest standards of ethical conduct. Each employee is expected to place the college's best interest above his or her own self-interest in all education, business, and other matters of interest. Paramount in the public trust that obligates college administrators, instructors, and advisory members in fulfilling their responsibilities is the principle that their position may not be used for personal gain or private advantage within any relationship.

For more information about ethics in public service, explore RCW 42.52 at www.search.leg.wa.gov.

Process for Meetings

Once you have agreed to serve on a committee, you will be asked for your contact information, including an active email address. You will receive a letter confirming your appointment to the committee that also includes the date of the next committee meeting. Meeting dates for the year are set by the committee at the first meeting of the year.

- About two weeks before each meeting, you will receive a reminder email. It is critical that you reply to this email confirming your availability for attending the meeting. Meetings will typically be rescheduled if a quorum cannot be met.
- One week prior to the meeting the minutes from the previous meeting and current agenda will be sent to you for your review.
- At your first meeting you will receive a hard copy of this handbook, a committee roster, and other college and program information.

Seven Indicators of Effective Advisory Committees

WCC Program faculty and administrative personnel are dedicated to helping you achieve the following outcomes during the course of your committee service.

#1 Understand the mission and goals of the college and program

- Know why the program exists
- Understand the quality of student the program is capable of producing
- Understand the mission of the college, and how the program helps to achieve that mission

#2 Know what must be done to achieve the mission

- Identify the academic competencies needed
- Identify employability and technical skills in demand
- Search for improvement opportunities—confront status quo

#3 Scan internal and external environments

Internal factors

- Administrative and board commitment to quality programs
- Programs/related programs offered by the institution
- Adequacy of facilities and equipment
- Instructor background and qualifications
- Resources available (financial and support)
- Student access and recruitment

External factors

- Labor market needs, trends, and directions
- Occupational licensing/certification requirements
- Success of program graduates/completers
- Community perceptions
- Programs in other colleges

#4 Envision the future

- Project skill and industry requirements 3 to 5 years out
- Prioritize items that must be done to make the program responsive
- List barriers (real and perceived)
- Enlist other industry experts, academic instructors, and the community

#5 Develop work plan to address identified gaps

- Set clear, measurable short-and long-term goals
- Specify logical implementation strategies and measurable objectives
- Assign tasks and establish timelines
- Plan small wins
- Develop specific recommendations for continuous improvement

#6 Monitor progress toward recommendations

- Review program progress to determine achievement
- Get support—leverage influence of local business, labor, legislators and community members

#7 Encourage the heart—students, instructors and administrators

- Celebrate accomplishments; value the victories
- Champion the cause of professional-technical education

Whatcom Community College Professional-Technical Program Advisory Committees

Accounting Ad Hoc

Business and Office Administration

Computer Information Systems

Criminal Justice

Early Childhood Education

Hospitality and Tourism Business Management

Massage Practitioner

Medical Assisting

Nursing

Paralegal Studies

Physical Therapist Assistant

Visual Communications

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Whatcom Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, genetic information or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director for Human Resources, 237 W. Kellogg Road, Bellingham, WA 98226, 360.383.3400. For Title IX compliance, contact: Vice President for Educational Services, 237 W. Kellogg Road, Bellingham, WA 98226, 360.383.3070. WCC publications are available in alternate formats upon request by contacting the Disability Support Services Office at 360.383.3080; VP 360.255.7182.