



WR -MINUTES
March 6, 2025, at 11:00 AM
Zoom

Members Present: Sean Moore (Committee Chair) Senior Project Manager, Workforce SW WA; Michelle Thor, VP of Outreach & Social Responsibility, Columbia Credit Union; Chad Mullen, Programs Manager, CCL and STEM, ESD 112; Emily Robertson, Regional Labor Economist, Employment Security Department

Guests:

Members Absent: Ryan D Reese, President/1st District Representative of the WSCFF, IAFF Local 452/Washington State Council of Firefighters; Garth Bachman, Business Manager/Financial Secretary, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 48; Chase Kleinschmidt, Director of Operations, Silicon Forest Electronics; Karin LaValla, Business Solutions Consultant, WorkSource

Labor Representative: Labor recruitment attempted

Clark College: Nicole Rogers-Marcum, Director of Instructional Finance & Operational Support, Clark College; Theo Koupelis, Dean of WPTE & STEM, Clark College; Kathrena Halsinger, Interim Dean of SOFA, Clark College; Elizabeth Flores, Advisory Coordinator, Clark College; Liz Bigback, Fiscal Analyst 3, Clark College; Kath Chennault, Clark College Foundation; Kate Jacky, Financial Aid, Clark College; Terri Kaufman, Enrollment Services, Clark College

The meeting began at 11:05 AM

NEXT MEETING DATE

The committee will meet next on Thursday, April 17, 2025.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes from the previous meetings on October 24, 2024, March 7, 2025, and October 2, 2023, will be sent via a poll for approval, as a quorum was not met.

POLL VOTES MARCH 12, 2025

**The committee approved the bylaws, work plan, expanded eligibility policy and the previous minutes from October 24, 2024, March 7, 2025, and October 2, 2023, via a poll on March 12, 2025.*

Worker Retraining Funding Summary

Nicole displayed the 2024-2025 Worker Retraining funding summary and discussed how each column is broken down and how the money is allocated. Nicole welcomed questions, comments, and feedback and noted that the College is currently planning for next fiscal year.

Sean asked if there is any threat to student financial aid given the budget cuts that are happening?

Nicole noted that currently the College is not being impacted and there is information that is still unknown.

Worker Retraining Program Mix

Nicole presented the program mix for the 2024-2025 academic year, which displays how the College is funding and how the spending is going to each of the programs. Additionally, the College is in the process of developing a new program. Nicole requested feedback from the committee on how to formulate the upcoming program mix.

Michelle asked if the funding is divvied up based on the number of potential students that would be using funds in that department.

Nicole explained that the College aims to adapt to ongoing changes. Initially, we gather estimates regarding who we are serving and what resources we have in the pipeline. Based on this information, we then allocate funding accordingly.

Michelle asked if the College could move some of those dollars around if necessary.

Nicole acknowledged that the College does this if necessary; however, we must follow strict funding rules and regulations for all funding types.

Forecast Job Needs and Trends

Elizabeth presented the in-demand job list.

Emily noted the document is the Employment Security Department's occupations and demand list. Primarily captures the employment projections as the main data input such as in demand, not in demand or balanced.

Emily noted that when a job is in demand, it translates to high projected job growth or healthy projected job growth in the area and not just rapid growth.

Sean inquired if the advisory committee could benefit from additional members so we can advise effectively in terms of wages, company climate, internal growth, etc.

Sean noted this is the data that the Workforce Development Councils use to determine funding as well.

Sean noted that the program mix, displayed programs that were found in the high demand or high wage category, and highlighted that as a supportive piece in terms of looking for funding grants and placing students in high wage, high demand career path opportunities. Additionally, Sean added that we hope to support students in pursuing career paths that may not seem in demand but can be transitioned into high-demand careers.

Michelle shared that some of those jobs are steppingstone jobs that people grow into and gradually move up in the industry.

Sean agreed and noted that first jobs are important, and the committee could look at those positions and then where Clark College advanced programs could come in and parlay them into a career path. Emily discussed many jobs that are not currently in demand, although the industry itself remains stable. She shared the projections tab that shows data for the Southwest region along with all occupational codes. Emily highlighted the last columns, noting that they represent the average total openings, including turnover.

Emily explained the openings displayed and clarified that the number is more indicative due to retirements, job changes, industry changes, people moving. Additionally, the not in demand jobs are not due to growth, but sometimes due to turnover. One thing to view is average total openings. Emily added that it's a difference between slow growth versus healthy or more expansive growth, however, the Employment Security Department observes that there is negative growth projected. Sean inquired if the College sees additional insight from their perspective.

Nicole noted there are a lot of needs with limited resources and it takes time to get new programming in place and welcomed committee feedback and guidance on long-term planning. Sean asked Theo if the committee could benefit from additional members from Clark College. Theo mentioned that Kelly Love might be able to participate, but otherwise, it is the College's responsibility to communicate any needs to the Vice President of Instruction and to allocate the budget to address the community's needs. He emphasized to the committee that if they notice any upcoming issues or developments, they should inform us so we can relay the information. This way, we can hopefully facilitate discussions at the executive cabinet level.

Kathrena supports Theo's approach and staff nominations. She also mentioned that the College should add faculty positions to support a specific program.

Kathrena emphasized the importance of evaluating the expected number of attending students concerning the investment required for the program, referencing the previous Power Utilities program as an example.

Worker Retraining 2024-2025 Student Trends

Elizabeth displayed the WR student trends for 2024-2025 and noted that Cheyanne, who provided us with this data, could not be here this morning as she is at WorkSource.

Sean inquired about the term displaced homemaker.

Theo noted that anyone who performs unpaid work at home as a spouse may become unemployed due to death, divorce, or other reasons and may lack support.

Terri confirmed that is correct.

Michelle asked for clarification on high school equivalent GED students on the form and how those degrees apply to worker retraining.

Kate mentioned that this could mean students working towards their high school diploma, as the College offers high school diplomas, and they would be on track to take CAP classes.

Budget Feedback

Nicole shared that the College is in the process of developing the 2025-2026 budget and welcomed committee feedback and guidance on the guidance and considerations. She also encouraged input on

long-term planning for future budget processes. Specifically, we need to determine the direction we should take based on this data and explore different formats, such as a survey, to gather insights. We can submit our findings and discuss them further, using our current efforts to help guide the College in shaping its future initiatives.

Theo agrees with Nicole regarding removing some positions off the budget. In essence, permanent but officially temporary full-time positions in some areas should be the responsibility of the institution to find.

Theo welcomed members to share what they are observing in the industry so the College can better accommodate changes.

Michelle asked about the percentage of the funds that go to instruction. Based on how many go into each area, is the College required to give a certain percentage of funding to instruction to help support the programs?

Nicole noted the funding summary is what was shared, and the College will not know until the end of the year as adjustments still need to happen. Additionally, it is up to the committee to decide for approval and that's how we apply, and at the upcoming meeting, we will be presenting the new matrix we will need to discuss, modify, and vote on.

Expanded Eligibility Policy

Nicole acknowledged that this area is not her expertise but invited feedback from the committee, as we need to review, deny, or approve this policy. This policy is designed to help us reach more students by broadening the eligibility process. We have found that our students benefit from expansion.

Sean stated that the third bullet point contributes to flexibility and helps ensure that people remain employed.

Michelle is in favor of the expanded eligibility policy and the need to focus on how to help these students who aren't in the narrow scope of the worker retraining, and how we can meet community needs.

Elizabeth will share the expanded eligibility policy through a poll for committee approval.

WORKPLAN

Elizabeth presented the work plan and invited feedback from the committee.

Chad asked about the student map and how the system works from the student perspective.

Sean asked where unemployment informs the committee work plan since we will see additional increases locally.

Michelle noted it would help us gauge where the needs are to modify the funding.

Sean asked if we are seeing a big surge in job seekers because of unemployment.

Kate recalled collaborating closely with WorkSource during the 2009 recession, working with organizations that experienced mass layoffs. During that time, they conducted large orientations and group trainings to support affected workers. She noted that if similar circumstances arise, they are prepared to provide the same level of community support.

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Emily highlighted that WorkSource presents a valuable opportunity to integrate into the Worker Retraining program. Regarding the unemployment discussion, she noted that the Employment Security Department provides data that could be incorporated into broader economic analysis. This includes unemployment insurance claims categorized by industry and county, with initial claims serving as key indicators of layoff trends. While not everyone who is laid off files for unemployment, these claims, but that is one of the Employment Security Department's economic indicators they review.

Emily asked the committee if they were familiar with WARN notifications. She explained that when a large employer undergoes a significant workforce reduction, they are required to file a notice with the State of Washington. These layoff alerts are available on the Employment Security Department's website.

BYLAWS

Elizabeth presented the bylaws and invited feedback from the committee. Since a quorum was not present, she will distribute the bylaws for approval through a poll.

ACTION ITEMS

The advisory committee will review the new program matrix at the spring meeting.

Elizabeth will distribute a poll via email to approve the previous meeting minutes, bylaws, work plan, and expanded eligibility policy.

The meeting adjourned at 12:31 PM

Prepared by Elizabeth Flores