



Worker Retraining -MINUTES
April 17, 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; Emily Robertson, Regional Labor Economist, Employment Security Department

Guests:

Members Absent: Karin LaValla, Business Services Consultant, WorkSource; Chad Mullen, Program Services Manager, CCL and STEM, ESD 112

Labor Representative: Labor representative recruitment attempted

Clark College: Nicole Rogers-Marcum, Director of Instructional Finance & Operational Support, Clark College; Theo Koupelis, Dean of WPTE & STEM, Clark College; Scot Headley, Dean of Business & Health Sciences, Clark College; Kathrena Halsinger, Interim Dean of SOFA, Clark College; Elizabeth Flores, Advisory Coordinator, Clark College; Liz Bigback, Fiscal Analyst 3, Clark College; Shannon Jackson, Associate Director of WES, Clark College; Terri Kaufman, Enrollment Services, Clark College

The meeting began at 11:06 PM

NEXT MEETING DATE

The committee will meet next on October 9, 2025.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes from the previous meeting on March 6, 2025, were approved.

2025-26 Program Mix

Nicole shared the worker retraining program mix and observed that it is similar to last year. The college is reviewing where students are, and this is subject to change. Nicole welcomed feedback, questions, or comments.

Michelle inquired if the diesel program is not in demand, what is the reason for supporting this? Nicole discussed that there are some variations within the data, and it could be modified. The college observes where we are funding the students, and if there is a gap, then modifications are necessary to support the students.

Sean inquired about nursing, and the state data he has observed shows that it is not in demand. There is always a nursing need, but according to the state data and southwest Washington it is reflecting the need is not in demand. Sean recommends reviewing the piece, but he is in favor of funding the program.

Nicole discussed that her findings from the state showed in demand.

Michelle asked if this funding goes to student tuition.

Nicole discussed that the funding goes directly to teaching and paying for classes, so that the college can offer additional sections to meet the demand.

Emily shared that according to the state and WDA, registered nurses are in demand statewide.

VOTE

Sean motioned to approve the 2025-25 program mix, Michelle seconded, and all unanimously approved.

2025-26 Worker Retraining Funding Summary

Nicole displayed the worker retraining funding summary. Nicole discussed the categories and where the funding is. Nicole shared the estimated number and the pieces where the college has it broken out this academic year. The college is starting early as the start of the fiscal year is Thursday, July 1, 2025. The college is receiving 17,049 less for this year of 2025-26 compared to 2024-2025. The college had to make some reductions to balance salaries and funding for equipment.

Nicole discussed the breakdown for the 2025-25 retraining funding summary and percentages of services that students will receive such as: advisory committee program specialist support, program faculty positions, workforce and financial aid student support, director of work force and associate director of work education services and financial aid program specialists, direct part-time instruction and student financial aid is a separate piece and other services that students will receive.

Nicole welcomed questions.

Michelle asked why we pull out automotive instructors versus other instructors specifically.

Nicole discussed the bottom is our part-time and additional sections piece. The automotive program has full-time faculty who are dedicated to the program and program coordination. We will want to discuss long-term planning, and we will need to discuss the following year to see if that is the direction the advisory committee would like the college to go in, for automotive worker retraining focused.

Sean asked about students who utilize this program; are they all worker retraining students, or is this open to all students regardless of where they are coming from?

Nicole shared that it is open to all students, but the college tends to have worker retraining students in the program to make it available for retraining. The college does offer significant other funding for the automotive program.

VOTE

Sean motioned to approve the 2025-26 worker retraining funding summary, Michelle seconded, and all unanimously approved.

Scot asked, when a student is identified as eligible for worker retraining, does the state or unemployment office reach out to the student or through some application or advising process at the college does the student become informed?

Terri shared that if the enrollment services team sees a need, they connect students to WES and get them connected to the appropriate resources on campus.

Shannon shared that when a student arrives at the WES office, they are prompted to fill out an application to identify eligibility criteria for all the programs we offer, and worker retraining is one of them. The WES team also connected with financial aid and conducts community outreach.

Scot asked if the application is based on our projection of the scope of the students, we are going to be serving those who have this eligibility?

Nicole stated yes, it is based on our best estimate, adapted as needed to make sure the funding is aligned.

2026-27 Advisory Committee Development Plans

Sean recommended in the data moving forward it would be helpful to view a tenure demand and what does the tenure forecast look like to support planning ahead.

Sean inquired due to the turbulent funding, are there any programs that are in jeopardy that the committee should be aware of?

Michelle noted that as previously stated, the college adjusts as the year goes on. Michelle recommend that at the upcoming fall 2025 meeting the committee can review where the funding landed or where the needs really were and understanding them. What are students coming in for? Is there a way to attract students or measures the college is taking to attract students to these worker retraining jobs that are needed.

Michelle acknowledged Nicole's successful presentation from today's meeting and continued moving forward, making sure that it is the standard.

Michelle discussed automotive, and if there is another area we need to fund?

Theo would like the faculty of automotive to be supported by the institution. In the period of a tight budget, it is challenging, but Theo is in support of having it eliminated.

Scot highlighted a four-sided figure including student demand, labor market need, technology, and evolving technology. The college strives to deliver a quality program and prepare students for the workforce.

Scot discussed that the phlebotomy program is under-enrolled and faces challenges in finding clinical placements. The health care fields are undergoing massive changes with technology, and how do we prepare students if some things will be eliminated or not needed? The healthcare programs are acutely aware that they need to prepare students to be successful in the workforce with the ongoing advancements.

Theo discussed that the community must make difficult decisions, and the college does as well. It's challenging to develop or eliminate programs in a two-year cycle. Theo recommends having a planning process as much as we can, since the college cannot make decisions based on what the demand 2-5 years out.

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Kathrena discussed changes within the digital media arts and programming future with the advancements of AI. The college does not have a full understanding of how it will impact the programs.

Sean asked the deans if, on a regional basis, they would partner with local community colleges to work together so that the impact of the workforce is positive and less reactionary.

Theo noted, yes, the college is in partnerships, but the distinction is that the college must be mindful of what we support and how far we expand our offerings. A steady and slow approach is a safe pathway forward for the college and its size.

Emily noted that a ten-year prediction is not realistic to make a lot of plans on, and economists have a hard time predicting the future. Economists can only work based on what we've seen in the past and make middle-of-the-road assumptions about where we go. The ESD model uses a more conservative model, and Emily discussed methods. Emily recommended not projecting too far into the future and relying on specific numbers. Emily recommended looking at data and measures, and how specific programs relate to the career ladder. For example, how are students going through their careers, and how might a welding degree transfer as students move throughout their careers, but where alumni end up would be helpful to track.

Scot discussed the comprehensive local needs assessment for Perkins funding, the college gathering interviews, focus groups, and survey work with alumni. The college is tasked to ask students where they ended up or if they are not completing our programs, inquiring why. Scot is in favor of tracking alumni, shared resources, shared personnel, and shared equipment.

INDUSTRY FEEDBACK

Sean asked Do we have an overlay between jobs needed for the interstate bridge project and programs/training through Clark?

Theo said, The Construction Management Program is in the works, and the Advisory Committee is helping in shaping the curriculum and the specifics of the pathway.

Sean shared Workforce updates and the federal funding changes. Funding for adults and dislocated workers will be less, but we will still receive some funding.

Michele noted that the financial industry is changing daily. Two NCOA individuals have been let go, and the credit union is navigating those losses and questions to determine where the industry shifts. Additionally, how to support the community and business members.

Emily discussed that statewide, this is the third month in a row for job losses. They are not large ones, but the first two months were January and February; even with seasonal adjustments, those are slow months. The March numbers can be revised in the next two months. Clark County is generally better than the state-wide average, but this was the third month where we lost jobs, and the unemployment rate was unchanged in March statewide. The overall employment trend varies from last year.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM

Prepared by Elizabeth Flores