



**Worker Retraining-MINUTES**  
**February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at 11:00 AM**  
**Zoom**

**Members Present:** Michelle Thor, VP Outreach & Social Responsibility, Columbia Credit Union; Emily Robertson, Regional Labor Economist, Employment Security Department

**Guests:**

**Members Absent:** Sean Moore (Committee Chair), Senior Project Manager, Workforce SW WA; Ryan D Reese, President/1<sup>st</sup> District Representative of the WSCFF

**Clark College:** Nicole Rogers-Marcum, Director of Instructional Finance & Operational Support, Clark College; Liz Bigback, Fiscal Analyst 3, Clark College; Theo Koupelis, Dean of WPTE & STEM, Clark College; Scot Headley, Dean of Business & Health Sciences, Clark College; Elizabeth Flores, Advisory Coordinator, Clark College; Don Romesburg, Dean of SOFA, Clark College; Kevin Thomas, Director of Workforce Education Services, Clark College; Kate Jacky, Associate Director of Financial Aid, Clark College

---

The meeting began at 11:02 AM, and a quorum was met.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The committee will meet next on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes from the previous meeting on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026, could not be approved due to a lack of a quorum.

*The committee achieved a quorum through poll votes on March 9, 2026.*

*The committee approved the previous meeting minutes from October 9, 2025, as well as the Expanded Eligibility Policy.*

**Program Mix 2025–2026**

Nicole explained that the Worker Retraining program must submit a program mix as part of the funding application for the 2026–2027 fiscal year, which begins July 1. Nicole noted that the current list reflects the 2025–2026 fiscal year allocation of Worker Retraining funds across programs, and the committee is being asked to review the list and suggest updates.

Nicole stated that several programs are not currently listed, including Surgical Technology and Advanced Manufacturing. Nicole asked the committee for feedback on whether these programs should be included in the funding mix.

Scot supported adding Surgical Technology to the Worker Retraining program mix because of workforce demand.

Michelle agreed that Advanced Manufacturing could be considered because the program was developed to address industry demand in the community, though enrollment and funding needs should be evaluated.

Theo recommended waiting before adding Advanced Manufacturing, explaining the program is still being developed. Theo said the college is still hiring faculty and determining operational costs, and it may be better to reconsider funding support next year once the program is more established.

Theo raised a broader question about whether positions currently funded through Worker Retraining funds could eventually be shifted to operational budgets so funds could be distributed more equitably across programs.

Nicole responded that the state budget situation is uncertain and tight, making it difficult to move positions off Worker Retraining funds at this time. Nicole said she continues to advocate for moving those positions, but progress depends on state funding outcomes.

Elizabeth summarized the discussion and confirmed the committee supports adding Surgical Technology to the program mix.

Kevin asked why Network Technology was not listed separately in the program mix.

Nicole explained that Network Technology courses are currently included under the Cybersecurity category, which is why they are not listed independently.

Theo suggested that since Network Technology and Cybersecurity are now separate departments, the programs may need to be separated in the program mix in the future.

### **Worker Retraining Student Trends**

Elizabeth introduced the Worker Retraining student data and invited Cheyanne to review the trends.

Cheyenne reported that the Worker Retraining program currently serves 189 students.

Cheyenne explained that 114 students are funded exclusively through Worker Retraining, while 75 students are co-enrolled in other workforce education programs.

Cheyenne noted that during the intake process, staff screen students for eligibility across multiple workforce funding programs to maximize available funding support.

Cheyenne shared that the most common academic programs for Worker Retraining students are Nursing, Pre-Nursing, and Business Administration (AAS).

Cheyenne stated that Nursing and Pre-Nursing have historically been the largest enrollment areas for Worker Retraining students.

### **Forecast Job Needs**

Nicole emphasized that Worker Retraining funding should focus primarily on programs classified as in-demand occupations by workforce data.

Nicole explained that while the state categorizes some programs as balanced, local workforce conditions may still show higher demand within the community.

Michelle noted that new programs such as Advanced Manufacturing were created specifically to address local workforce needs, suggesting they may become important areas for Worker Retraining support in the future.

Theo noted that understanding local workforce demand and job placement outcomes will help guide future decisions about program support.

### **Trends and Data**

Cheyenne explained that Worker Retraining eligibility is determined using multiple eligibility codes, with ten possible qualifying categories.

Cheyenne reported that the most common eligibility category is SW01 – Dislocated Worker Retraining.

Cheyenne clarified that the Worker Retraining definition of dislocated workers differs from the definition used by the Washington Employment Security Department.

Cheyenne explained that students coded as SW01 are individuals who are currently receiving unemployment benefits, have received unemployment within the past four years, or are eligible for unemployment benefits.

Nicole noted that reviewing student data alongside workforce demand helps guide future adjustments to the Worker Retraining program mix.

### **Expanded Eligibility**

Cheyenne explained that Worker Retraining eligibility includes ten different qualifying pathways, allowing the program to serve students experiencing job displacement or employment barriers.

Cheyenne noted that the program carefully reviews student circumstances during intake to determine which eligibility category best fits each student.

Cheyenne emphasized that screening for multiple workforce funding programs allows the college to expand financial support opportunities for students.

### **Worker Retraining Application and Member Recruitment**

Nicole explained that the committee must review and approve the program mix as part of the Worker Retraining funding application process for the upcoming fiscal year.

Nicole noted that the committee will revisit the updated program mix at the next meeting to finalize recommendations before submission.

Elizabeth welcomed committee members for their feedback.

Elizabeth welcomed committee members to reach out if they have colleagues or community partners in mind to join the committee. The worker retraining advisory committee is seeking more members.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 AM

Worker Retraining  
Advisory Committee Meeting  
February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Prepared by Elizabeth Flores