May 9-10, 2024

Columbia Basin College

Building H, Hawk Union Building (HUB)

May 9, 2024

# Call to order

WEC President Dani Trimble called the meeting to order at 8:47 am.

Vice President for Instruction Michael Lee welcomed WEC to Columbia Basin College, providing an overview of the college’s history of almost 70 years and highlighting their focus on building government-to-government relations with the Yakima Nation. He added that 47% of the current student population is Hispanic.

# WEC business meeting

## Introduction of members

All present introduced themselves, including several who were attending their first WEC meeting.

Dani relayed that the 2024 Skill Standards for Professional Technical Educators was unanimously approved by the Instruction Commission and acknowledged Ann Avary and Jamie Wells for their leadership of the work.

## Approval of WEC winter meeting minutes

Jason Boatwright of Clover Park made a motion to approve the minutes of the winter 2024 WEC meeting; Skye Field of Yakima Valley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## Treasurer’s report

WEC treasurer Rickitia Reid reviewed the treasurer’s report, noting several colleges have not paid their dues.

Kelly Johnston of Tacoma Community College made a motion to approve the treasurer’s report as presented; Jason Boatwright of Clover Park seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## Review of agenda

Dani provided an overview of the agenda. Committee work will be replaced with a discussion on implementation of the skill standards.

# Washington State Labor Council

– Rachel McAloon, WSLC

WSLC’s legislative priorities include unemployment insurance for strikers (HB 1893 / SB 5777) and fertility coverage (HB 1151 / SB 5204).

In partnership with the regional STEM network, Career Connect Washington, and Washington State Department of Labor & Industry, the registered apprenticeship roadshow is underway.

The next registered apprenticeship meeting is July 23 in Tumwater, open to the public.

All professional technical program advisory committees should have Labor representation, or written justification if not. Rachel is available to help connect colleges with Labor representatives. [Complete this form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeatiasXiicYVanP6b3dea__ASyQk7Y3eXs3Yj15H2uoq4JYQ/viewform) to convey to needs.

# Association of Washington Businesses (AWB)

– Erika Borg, AWB Institute (via Zoom)

AWB’s spring 2024 quarterly survey was recently sent to roughly 500 employer participants from throughout the state. Results are still being compiled.

There has been an uptick in active opportunities posted to the [Washington Workforce Portal](https://www.washingtonworkforceportal.org/), particularly in the Vancouver and Tri-Cities areas.

Planning is underway for this fall’s manufacturing tour (likely first week of October). They are looking for programs to highlight and would like students to participate.

Nominations for business awards are being accepted, including workforce partnerships. WEC members are encouraged to nominate on of their partners to advance to other businesses what a good partnership looks like.

Top bills AWB is looking at include several related to financial aid (SB 5904, SB 5953, HB 1943, SB 6053, HB 2214).

AWB Vitals indicators will be revised over the coming year to be more forward-looking – where we want to be by 2040.

Though AWB does not collect data on paid versus unpaid internship, they do always advocate for paid. Only paid internships are posted on the Workforce Portal.

# Professional development: *serving special populations*

– Panelists: Skye Field, Dean of Workforce Education at Yakima Valley College (on behalf of YVC’s new DEI Director); Kerri Holferty, Interim Vice President for Student Instruction and Director for Access & Disability Services at Whatcom Community College); Ariana Muro, Assistant Director for Workforce & Career Services, Passport to Careers, at Lower Columbia College; Maria Rodriguez, Program Support Supervisor for Career & Technical Education at Columbia Basin College

– Facilitator: Lauren Hadley, Director of Workforce at Shoreline Community College

What is a success or something you’re proud of?

Kerri established an ad hoc accessibility team about 12 years ago with people from across campus who were passionate about accessibility. The team became a governance committee about three years ago. They have developed a Canvas course with topics such as creating accessible document and close captioned videos. It will be available for other colleges to adapt for their campus.

Recognizing some high school students might not even consider college if they’re not aware of the resources and supports available to them, Ariana is working with school districts to get the word out about Passport to Careers while seniors are still in high school.

Similarly, Maria is not waiting for students to stumble upon available resources and supports. She is going to the classrooms to make presentations about workforce funding. Students have subsequently thanked her as they otherwise wouldn’t have known about the funding were at risk of dropping out of college.

What was a surprise or pitfall that you identified and maybe overcame?

Many workforce funding sources have certain criteria to be eligible, such as not being currently employed and yet students needing the funding often also need to work.

Some students struggle with housing. Having the Students Experiencing Homelessness grant housed with workforce funding helps facilitate collaboration and eliminates the need for students to have to apply separately.

To access accommodations, students are often required to provide documentation, which can be costly for the individual.

Panelists reported working with industry, community, K12 partners, college Foundation, and on-campus colleagues to address needs such as cost of maintaining CTE equipment, student housing, emergency funding, and transitions from high school to college, as well as collaborating on grants.

What do you do to raise visibility on campus?

Panelists reported sharing information in classrooms and during student orientation sessions. Some integrate information about support resources into Canvas shell, every syllabus, college 101. They also share success stories via social media and the college’s website and convey information via short videos (versus text-heavy documents). One invites non-CTE faculty and staff to the workforce building for events such as the career fair.

As you think about the future of your work, what would be your next steps or desired state?

Panelist recognized the need to engage with others on campus to develop and implement strategies. For example, if everyone would use universal design principles, the need for accommodations would be lessened.

What would be something that would be a big ask of our institutions that could have a big impact?

Expand eligibility for housing to foster youth, as well as to those in apprenticeship programs.

Anything else to share?

Panelists expressed appreciation for the opportunity to share their stories, stressing the students they work with often need the additional supports provided to cover basic needs. They also encouraged everyone to get to know the staff on campus leading these efforts – knowing they have support across campus is helpful and appreciated.

# Washington State Opportunity Scholarship

– Kimber Connors, WSOS

The Washington State Opportunity Scholarship (WSOS) is available to build pathways to high demand jobs. Awards of up to $1,500 per quarter are available for students pursuing a high-demand associate degree, certificate, or apprenticeship program. Funding is flexible and can be used for living expenses such as transportation, childcare, food, housing, tools, and equipment. Scholars also have access to mentorship, career services, and first look at internship/job board.

Eligibility:

* Washington resident with a high school degree or equivalent
* No minimum GPA requirement
* Are pursuing an eligible high-demand trade, STEM or healthcare program (must be a financial aid eligible program)
* Are from a low- or middle-income family (up to 125% of statewide median family income or $150,000 for a family of four) – initially based on self-attestation on application and subsequently confirmed via FAFSA/WASFA
* Complete a FAFSA or WASFA (can support undocumented students); do not have a bachelor’s degree or higher

CTS eligible programs are found on the [WSOS website](https://waopportunityscholarship.org/cts-eligible-programs/). Eligible programs are determined based on living wage (regionally), BLS projections for openings for the next five years, and additional feedback from community partners. Contact Amandalyn Rubio (arubio@waopportunityscholarship.org) to request changes to the list.

Students are eligible for the baccalaureate scholarship if they are direct from high school or have fewer than 90 credits. Students considering switching from an associate to a bachelor program should apply before they have 90 credits.

WSOS requests WEC members help get the word out on their campus. They can provide a collateral package and help with co-branding.

# Working lunch (DEI faculty fellows, hot topics/Q&A)

– Dr. Vik Bahl, Green River College (via Zoom)

The DEI Faculty Fellows program has been developed in an effort to seek greater ethnic and knowledge diversity of faculty, bringing together people to teach who would represent underrepresented populations.

Elements of program:

1. Inviting to see if colleges would like to hire one-year adjunct faculty with expertise, experience, and capacity for serving and building relationship with Washington tribal and communities of color.
2. Pilot program (2024-25) – cohort of 4-5 positions with elements/lenses of ethnic studies and American Indian studies in multiple disciplines
3. Multi-college consortium of colleges form 34 CTCs with specific departments willing to house fellows.
4. Enhance the pipeline for early-career professional and other experienced adjuncts and candidates to apply for full-time tenure-track faculty positions
5. Fellows offered mentorship and support and system and college level, but they are knowledge holders who also have the expertise, experiences, and capabilities

Possible position responsibilities:

* Teaching 1-2 courses per quarter
* Curriculum and course development
* Support the professional development of colleagues
* Student and community engagement
* Assessing and making recommendations around institutional gaps
* Participation in statewide or multi-college networks and initiatives related to one or more communities of color and/or tribal organization.

Colleges would pay for the faculty member’s teaching time; Dr. Bahl is seeking system-wide funding from the Legislature for the release time.

# Workforce system partnership

## ESD’s programs and collaboration with colleges

– Anne Goranson, Strategic Initiatives Manager; Alberto Isiordia, Eastern Regional Director; Rick Perez, WorkSource Specialist (Employment Security Department)

The Employment Security Department and community and technical colleges partner to bridge gaps between education and employment.

Things that are currently going well across the system include working with the regional Workforce Development Council and Educational Service District to partner around career services, as well as co-located staff to strengthen relationships. An area of improvement includes encouraging ESD and industry to help with enrollment in college programs. To leverage each other’s strengths, suggest better hand-offs to the colleges to help students and better data sharing.

WEC members are encouraged to identify their point of contact at ESD (talk with the regional director) to define common goals, enhance communications, align resources, and share success stories.

## Labor market information feedback

– Annaliese Vance Sherman, Chief Labor Market Economist (Employment Security Department)

ESD is redesigning its website and data for improved accessibility and navigation. Recommendations from WEC members:

* SOC and CIP codes crosswalk and tied into data
* Visual dashboards and/or ability to pin data sources frequently accessed
* List of skills that are transferrable between occupations
* Data to help with identifying pathways
* List of occupations employment by sector
* Regional nuances for education requirements

For training on the website, contact the regional labor economist (who is also available to sit on advisory committees).

## The occupations in demand list

– Mike McBride & Ajsa Suljic (Washington Workforce Association)

The Occupations In Demand list is managed in collaboration between the ESD and local Workforce Development Board (WDB). WDBs ensure the list is tailored to each community. Demand is based on 2-, 5-, and 10-year projection. Adjustments are made based on UI claims, job postings, etc. Emerging occupations are based on O\*NET online tracking.

## Local workforce board partnerships with community colleges

– Crystal Bright, WorkSource System Coordinator (WorkSource Columbia Basin) & Scott Koopman, Director for Workforce Education (Columbia Basin College)

Crystal and Scott shared highlights of their collaborative efforts:

1. Co-located outreach and training specialist – switched from position in Center (case manager) to one serving as bridge for CBC students and those graduating and transitioning into workforce. Rather than stop/start, more like flowing traffic circle with multiple onboarding and exit points.
2. Inter-agency funding committee – higher dollar requests don’t live with just one person. Started with just BFET; now also student emergency assistance, students experiencing homelessness, free & reduced lunch, Foundation etc. – representatives from each source can open options for other sources beyond the one that was originally requested. WorkSource joins committee meetings for cases where hand-offs are needed. The committee meets twice a week and consider all requests submitted since last meeting. The result is warm hand-offs (versus blind referrals). They refer 2-10 students per week and are able to leverage funds between sources.
3. Workforce collaboration committee – stakeholders from across the community (including voice of students) – typically meets quarterly. They’ve moved from silos to a collaborative roundtable.

# Implementation of skill standards

With the updated skill standards approved by IC, the next step is implementation. The priority for the coming year will be to integrate the standards into WEC’s existing work (e.g., deans academy, boot camps).

IC and the State Board have been discussing the possibility of modifying the online ProCert tool some colleges are using to track skill standards self-assessments and professional development plans. Some schools are using the badger system in Canvas for professional development.

Colleges do have flexibility on how they implement. Considerations include the faculty collective bargaining agreement and where each faculty is in implementation of their current plan.

# Liaison reports

## Continuing Education Council (CEC)

 – Mike Nilsen, Green River

CEC is pooling enrollment across multiple colleges so that smaller colleges can stand up programs. DEI work continues to be a focus, with one or two events per year. They are compiling an annual report regarding the effectiveness of continuing education.

## Council for Basic Skills (CBS)

– Riva Morgan, Wenatchee Valley College

Recognizing inequities in CASA testing, CBS is piloting a program with locally designed assessments. They are also working on guided pathways. They are wondering if the $25 tuition is worth the trouble. Some colleges have figured out how to pay for first six credits for students to qualify for FAFSA without a high school diploma. They are putting together an inventory of what’s happening at each of the colleges.

## Baccalaureate Leadership Council (BLC)

Mary Jane Oberhofer, Tacoma Community College

BLC has sent letter of concern to IC about tuition rates for upper division courses. Currently, an associate degree student pays about $9K if full-time ($11K if part-time), whereas a BAS student pays about $14K if full-time ($21K if part-time).

## Articulation and Transfer Council (ATC)

No report

## Instruction Commission (IC)

– Dani Trimble, Lower Columbia College

In addition to approving the updated skill standards, IC is having a lot of conversation regarding government-to-government relations, working with tribal partners.

## Diversity and Equity Officers Commission (DEOC)

No report (working on establishing a liaison; hopefully, a former WEC member

## Research and Planning Commission (RPC)

No report

## Guided Pathways Advisory Council (GPAC)

No report; however, note that each college’s guided pathways workplan is due at the end of June.

Dani adjourned the meeting for the day at 4:31 pm.

May 10, 2024

Dani reconvened the meeting at 8:53 am.

# Election of officers for 2024-25

Nominations for WEC executive at large members: Wendy Fox (Olympic College), Christy Doyle (Walla Walla Community College), Kristi Lagrutta (Edmonds College), Jason Boatwright (Clover Park Technical College). Christy and Kristi accepted the nomination, Wendy and Jason decline.

Michael Reese (Bellevue College) made a motioned to elect Christy Doyle and Kristi Lagrutta as WEC executive at large members. Skye Field (Yakima Valley College) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Keri Lobdell (Columbia Basin College) was previously voted by WEC executive to serve as chair elect next year.

# Centers of Excellence update

The Centers of Excellence (CoE) have been in place for 20 years! Started with ten Centers and are now at 12, with a 13th coming on board in hospitality at Columbia Basin College. Though hosted by specific colleges, each serves the entire system.

Center directors shared recent highlights and activities.

## Cybersecurity

– Brent Lundstrom, Whatcom Community College

They are supporting colleges achieve the national CAE (Centers of Academic Excellence) in cybersecurity designation. They are also assisting with hosting industry events at colleges, striving to do about two per year. They are conducting a series of virtual town hall meetings for faculty on various topics in cyber. They have professional development funds available for instructors to earn and maintain certifications and to attend events (e.g., NICE conference).

## Allied Health

– Dan Ferguson, Yakima Valley College

Meetings with all allied health deans are held monthly (Wednesdays at 1 pm). Faculty can enroll in the Partners in Care virtual training series at no charge and earn CEU credit (more at nwrpca.org).

## Semiconductor & Electronics Manufacturing

– Carl Douglas, Clark College

Meetings with VPIs, deans, and faculty at colleges with a manufacturing program are being held, with a focus on industry-focused training and building K12 awareness.

## Agriculture & Natural Resource

– Lindsey Williams, Walla Walla Community College

The Pathways to Excellence Program Guide is updated annually, offered in English and Spanish, and distributed widely online and in hard copy.

## Construction

– Christina Rupp, Renton Technical College

Engineering 101 is being offered May 23rd at no charge to instructors. In partnership with the Coe for Clean Energy, the Enlighten Women’s Forum was held March 21, a gathering to empower women in the construction and energy trades.

## Marine Manufacturing & Technology

– Ann Avary, Skagit Valley College

The Pacific Northwest Maritime Education Alliance (PAC Maritime) received a 5-year designation as a U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) Center of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education. A Chmura information webinar will be held June 3, 11 am – noon, via Zoom, with emphasis on semiconductors, construction, and homeland security.

## Careers in Education

– Bill Belden for Jamie Wells, Green River College

Professional technical bootcamps will be moving from Olympic College to the CoE for Careers in Education. A DACUM training will be held sometime in fall 2024.

# SBCTC report

## Industry demand

– Carolyn McKinnon

The 2024 Legislature provided a small proviso for the State Board to convene a retail industry workforce work group to understand how short-term credentials will benefit the retail workforce. WEC members are asked to let Carolyn know if they have programs or ancillary programs.

The Customized Training Program helps pay for industry-specific training when a college partners with a business. The State Board pays the college from a revolving loan and the business has 18 months to pay back, half of which is a tax credit. To be determined if the tax credit will be extended.

Currently seeking volunteers to participate in Centers of Excellent site reviews.

## Perkins Workforce Grants

– Kimberly Ingram

Highlights from this year’s comprehensive local needs assessments are being compiled and will be sent soon via email. Colleges will be asked via email to share questions and surveys they use to interview stakeholders.

Perkins Plan revisions are due May 23rd. Perkins Leadership, Corrections, Non-trad, and Special Projects feedback will be coming soon; revisions are due June 5. Special Projects applications will continue to be accepted through to Aug. 1st.

Demand for Non-trad was so strong last year, the statewide funding has been increased from $30K to $100K.

To date, 70% of Perkins budgets have not been invoiced! An anonymous survey will be sent soon to seek input on if colleges are having trouble spending down.

Technical assistance is available. Be on the look-out for dates and times of scheduled trainings.

## Program Approval Updates

– Bill Belden for Shelby Means

The new online program approval request (PAR) site has launched. Reach out to programapproval@sbctc.edu for assistance. One of the PAR requirements is a current advisory committee membership form showing equal representation of business and labor.

Shelby is continuing to work with colleges on inventory alignment and program status updates. Once a program has been moved to inactive, that program code is gone and cannot be reactivated.

In response to a legislative request, a survey was recently sent regarding program waitlists. Responses will be used to inform legislative funding requests.

## Sector response

– Anna Nikolaeva-Olson

The Early Achievers Grant (EAG) application has closed. Requests for 737 FTEs were received. This is comparable to FY24 requests; however, only 568 were awarded. Each of the 27 colleges will receive $25K to assist with EAG staffing; an additional $126K will be prorated based on waitlists.

Just under $2M available for Hospital Employee Education and Training (HEET) grants, short of the $2.6M in requests from eight applications, currently under review.

## Gainful employment updates

– Summer Kenesson (via Zoom)

One of the biggest changes is regarding allowable program length. Historically, Title IV programs with state certification or licensure requirements could be up to 150% of the minimum length outlined by the state. Beginning July 1, that will be reduced to 100%. Fully online programs are exempted. Programs that enroll students from other states may be affected by that state’s licensure requirements.

The ruling affects enrollments in programs on or after July 1. Enrollments prior to July 1 for fall start would not be affected. The Department of Education has agreed to a light touch on compliance until Jan. 1, 2025, assuming documentation can be provided.

Programs with very short licensure requirements could be pushed below the 600-hour Title IV / Pell eligibility threshold, adding one more piece of uncertainty for students. Programs may also find issues with prerequisites and general education requirements (e.g., where not listed in certification / licensure requirements).

The State Board is identifying programs that will be affected and the impact. The will be communicating with college leadership on the significance of the rule, progress in implementation, and resources needed for affected programs. Guidance and materials for communicating with other affected roles (financial aid offices, registrars/credential evaluators, advisors, advisory committees, students) will be provided.

The State Board is also working with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) on an appeal to the Department of Education to consider at least increasing to 125%.

## Work-based learning

– Genevieve Howard

$200K one-time funding (25 FTE) will be available to increase access and capacity to manufacturing apprenticeship related supplemental instruction. A funding survey will be sent to colleges with existing programs.

A total for $5M for the biennium was available for Career Launch Capital Equipment grants, of which almost $4M was awarded in round 1. The balance was awarded in round 2. There will not be a round 3. The Career Launch Endorsement application will be down to two pages, beginning July 1.

# Hot topics

Several colleges expressed frustration with the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) process with their Workforce Development Center (WDC). In some cases, they don’t know how the formula is determined and/or they’re not involved in how it’s determined. Others are paying into WDCs that don’t serve their college. Some WDCs may be looking at the State Board dashboard and basing calculations on total enrollments versus workforce enrollments. Some colleges are not getting credit for in-kind support.

# Other

Michael expressed appreciation to Dani for her leadership as WEC chair for the past year.

Committee chairs were reminded to send Dani a short summary of their committee’s accomplishments for the year.

# Next meeting

Fall 2024, Whatcom Community College (TBC), Oct. 17-18 or Oct. 24-25

Looking for other host colleges for winter and spring

Dani adjourned the meeting at 11:09 am.