Career Education Program Advisory Committee Handbook

Background and Purpose

College of the Canyons Career Education Program Advisory Committee Background:

Strong partnerships between community college educational institutions and employers are pillars in effective technical/occupational education programs. These partnerships ensure community ownership and build local support, commitment, and resources. In recognition of this fact, College of the Canyons Career Education Departments collaborate with industry professionals on many aspects of their programs. Advisory committees are groups of local employers and community representatives who advise educators on the design, development, operation, evaluation, and revision of technical/occupational education programs. The workplace knowledge and resources provided by committee members help to ensure that all aspects of technical/ occupational education reflect the needs and current conditions of the workplace and that program completers are capable of successfully completing the next step whether it be employment or further education.

Legal Requirements:

Advisory committees in support of CE programs are legally required.
Title 5, #55601 states:

> *The governing board of each community college district participating in a vocational education program shall appoint a vocational education advisory committee to develop recommendations on the program and to provide a liaison between the district and potential employers.*

California Education Code Section 8070 states:

> *The governing board of each school district participating in a career technical education program shall appoint a career technical education advisory committee to develop recommendations on the program and to provide liaison between the district and potential employers. The committee shall consist of one or more representatives of the general public knowledgeable about the disadvantaged, students, teachers, business, industry, school administration, and the field office of the Employment Development Department (EDD)." (EC § 8070.)*

Perkins V Section 134 Local Application for Career and Technical Education Programs Section (e) states:

> *An eligible recipient receiving financial assistance under this part shall consult with stakeholders described in subsection (d) on an ongoing basis, as determined by the eligible agency.*

Updates and changes to this document may occur based on evolving federal and/or state policy, law, and guidelines.

The Advisory Committee

Role and Purpose of the CE Advisory Committee

The primary role of the committee is advisory. The advice may be accepted or rejected by the program based on, but not limited to, a variety of factors such as available resources, laws, and regulations. It should be noted that the committee has no administrative or policy forming authority. Specific roles of the committee by area may include:

Industry

- Promote communication and partnerships between education and industry
- Assist in identifying new and emerging fields
- Validate local area job markets
- Recommend program modifications for existing programs that align with changes in industry or industry standards
- Assist the program in identifying specific skills and knowledge needed to be successful in the workplace
- Assist in determining skills needed for particular jobs at entry, technical, and professional levels
- Help connect program faculty with other industry professionals and prospective students
- Provide pay ranges and job descriptions for entry-level positions
- Identify job vacancies, hiring practices, and industry trends

Students

- Provide opportunities for real world work experience for students including but not limited to information interviews, job shadowing, unpaid or paid internships and project based learning
- Be a student mentor
- Help obtain sponsors or resources for awards, scholarships, equipment or supplies
- Serve as a guest speaker, provide demonstrations, or host field trips as needed
- Assist in marketing the program and recruiting students
- Recruit students for employment opportunities
- Participate in career and job fairs

Curriculum

- Assist in establishing curriculum and programs that are relevant to current industry standards and practices
- Assist in evaluating program effectiveness and reviewing student outcomes data
- Provide and/or identify training opportunities for educators
- Assist in keeping programs relevant by reviewing existing curriculum and programs

Facilities and Equipment

- Make equipment and facilities recommendations and connect programs with relevant vendors
- Help obtain sponsors or resources for equipment or supplies
- Donate equipment or supplies
- Assist in keeping programs relevant by reviewing existing facilities and equipment

Forming and Maintaining an Advisory Committee

Membership

CE Advisory Committee members should be cooperative, responsible, and productive people who are interested in the success of CE. Prospective members should have current successful work experience in the related occupation and be willing to contribute the necessary time to help strengthen the program. The ideal Advisory Committee candidate will serve to build and improve the technical program as well as promote the program within the community. At a minimum, each member should be an active participant in the meetings and should provide technical assistance and advice as needed.

The committee should be comprised of Advisory Members, Institutional Members, Participatory Members, and Student Members when possible. The majority of the committee membership should be Advisory members and the overall membership should be truly representative of the district.

Advisory (Industry) Members

Advisory Members are individuals that have successful work experience in the related occupation. They should:

- Be successful individuals engaged in the specific program or discipline

- May be from the human resources department or other areas of the partner organization
- Have recent, successful, firsthand, and practical experience
- Recognize the time commitment required and express a willingness to serve on the committee

Institutional Members

Institutional Members are those individuals from College of the Canyons that participate on the committee representing administrative or management functions. They may include individuals from:

- Program Faculty
- Academic Affairs (including program or CE Dean(s))
- Career Services
- Institutional Research
- Office of Instruction

Participatory Member

A Participatory Member is someone from another academic institution that may share articulation agreements or other academic pathways with the program. This may include:

- Faculty from other colleges, universities, or high schools

Student and/or Alumni Member

A Student Member is defined as a current student in the program. Program alumni may also be invited to participate and may be able to provide a good perspective on how the program has impacted them since leaving the college.

Finding New Members

A good starting point is to ask current committee members or appropriate professional organizations for suggestions. Additionally, other campus programs or departments may have resources that can assist you with finding new or additional committee members as needed. Suggestions for places to recruit members includes:

- Professional Organizations
- LinkedIn
- VIA (Valley Industry Association - https://www.via.org/)
- Chamber of Commerce

- EDC
- Workforce Development Office/Economic Development
- Foundation Office
- Santa Clarita Chamber
- SCCRC Region (South Central Coast Regional Consortia)
- Regional Directors
- University Programs (if applicable)
- COC Director of Educational Partnerships

Committee Size

There is no fixed number that will satisfy all situations. The group needs to be large enough to be representative of the district but not so large that it is unwieldy or difficult to call together. The total number may vary based on the program/discipline.

Role of the Department Chair and the Committee Chairperson

According to the College of the Canyons Faculty Association (COCFA) Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article 12, Section K:3:j, the role of the Department Chair is as follows:

> "…where appropriate, assist in setting direction and leading external accreditation and meetings of program advisory committees."

The Committee Chairperson should be someone from industry. The Committee Chair, working with the Department Chair, can:

- Preside at meetings
- Call meetings
- Appoint necessary sub-committees
- Represent the advisory committee in other groups

The Committee Chair along with the Department Chair will create and maintain a cohesive, effective group and will create an environment that is conducive to positive committee action.

Each Committee should determine how the Committee Chair will be selected and the length of service for the position. The committee may also want to consider what process is required to remove or replace a Committee Chair who is no longer meeting the requirements of the position. Often it is difficult to find someone who is willing to serve as Chair so each Committee needs to evaluate this with respect to the committee's specific needs.

New Member Orientation

The Department Chair should provide a basic orientation for new members. Although new Advisory Members are discipline experts, they may be unfamiliar with academia, the purpose of the advisory committee, how the committee functions, and their role on the committee.

It is suggested that members should serve on the committee for a minimum of two years but this may be determined by each Committee. Here are some things a new Advisory Member may need to understand or be provided:

- The structure of the college system
- The structure of the program – program(s) offered
- The roles and responsibilities of an Advisory Member
- The time commitment required to serve
- Current list of committee members
- Meeting schedule
- Previous minutes and agendas

You may choose to provide this handbook to new members or share it with your entire advisory board. This may assist you with providing information to members on the purpose of the committee and the role of the members. A one page handout or other marketing materials may become available for distribution as well.

Operation of Advisory Committees

Meeting Location and Schedule:

- Whenever possible the meeting should be held at the CE program facilities
- Meeting space should be set up with comfortable seating and allow for face to face interaction and discussion
- Refreshments and/or meals should be provided
- The upcoming meeting schedule should be determined at the end of each meeting to ensure the most convenient meeting time for the members
  - If possible, schedule the meetings for the entire academic year by the start of that year
  - Meeting schedules are at the discretion of the department and committee chair based on the needs of the Committee
  - Date availability is subject to college resources

- The scheduled meeting time should be strictly adhered to. Everyone's time is valuable and should be respected.
- The agenda for each meeting should be clear and specific. Advisory members will likely drop out if they perceive their time is being wasted through an unproductive or poorly run meeting.
- Previous meeting minutes and any reading material requiring action should be sent with the agenda well in advance of the meeting date.
- If necessary ensure that the room can easily accommodate video or web conference for any members unable to attend in person.
- Ample meeting notice should be provided and may vary depending on the committee, but a minimum of 2 weeks is recommended.

Meeting Frequency

The Department Chair in consultation with the Industry Committee Chair will determine the number of meetings each academic year.

- Each CE Advisory Committee shall meet at least once per year. Best practice is to have two meetings each year with one meeting held in the fall and one in the spring.
- Generally, meetings are scheduled for at least one to one-and-a-half hours as determined by the committee.
- When only one meeting is to be held during the year, additional ways of facilitating communication and soliciting feedback with the CE Advisory Committee should be employed.

Suggestions For Communicating Between Meetings

It is important to stay connected with the members of the committee. Your department may want to consider developing a newsletter, impact document, general summary, or a listing of program highlights that could be shared with the committee between meetings. This communication is intended to be informal, compact and likely shared via email.

Consider using other forms of technology for communication as well including:

- Blogs
- Collaborating and File Sharing
- Groups and listservs/email
- Online polls, surveys, and registrations
- Podcasting
- Social Networks (Facebook page, LinkedIn Group, etc ...)
- Video Sharing/Video Blogging

- Web Conferencing/Video Conferencing
- Website

Organizational Functions and Duties

Academic Affairs Support

Academic Affairs will provide logistical and administrative support to the Department Chair in coordinating and hosting the Committee meeting. The timelines and activities are **suggestions only** and may not be practical due to a limitation of resources or are subject to change based on the committee, the program, and when during the semester the meeting has been scheduled. Support will include:

At the start of each semester . . .

- A list of members will be sent to the program Department Chair for review, editing, and approval

4-6 weeks Prior . . .

- Send a list of members to the program Department Chair for review and input
- Send a "Save the Date" notice
- Create/Draft the meeting invitation with input from the program Department Chair
- Request agenda items from the program Department Chair and Chairperson
- Secure the meeting room
- Order appropriate refreshments for the meeting
- Send the Department Chair a copy of the previous meeting minutes

2-3 Weeks Prior . . .

- Send meeting invitations and maintain RSVPs
  - At a minimum, invitations should include:
    - Agenda
    - Parking Permit
    - College Map
    - Day, time and specific location of the meeting
    - Previous meeting minutes and any other documents the committee members need to review prior to the meeting

1-2 Weeks Prior . . .

- Send reminder emails

- Send the agenda if it wasn't included with the original invitation
- Confirm refreshments

Day of Meeting . . .

- Set up the meeting room
  - Arrange tables and seating
  - Connect and test video conferencing equipment if needed
- Bring Sign in Sheet and Copies of the Agenda
- Coordinate and set up refreshments
- After the meeting, clean up the meeting room
- After the meeting, prepare meeting minutes and submit to the program Department Chair for review

2-3 Weeks After . . .

- Finalize meeting minutes with the program Department Chair
  - The Department Chair may collaborate with the Advisory Board Chair to finalize the minutes.
- Send thank you letter and finalized minutes to attendees
- Possibly send a follow-up letter to non-attendees to check their interest in continuing to serve on the committee

Ongoing . . .

- Maintain the member list throughout the year to include any changes indicated by the program Department Chair
- Optional - Work with the program Department Chair to formally recognize the service of the committee members. Suggested forms of recognition are:
  - Certificate of Appreciation
  - Display names on a plaque and/or on the program website
  - Letter of Appreciation to the employer
  - Invitation to education events
  - Highlight accomplishments in Press Releases
  - Invite members to visit programs to see implementation
  - Include names in program literature

Program Faculty Support

Typically, the program Department Chair will be responsible for the following:

- Verify and review committee membership
- Review the meeting invitation

- Prepare the agenda by consulting with the department and the advisory members and/or chair
- In addition to the agenda, provide Academic Affairs staff any materials that may need to be sent out along with the invitation or provided at the meeting
- Review and edit meeting minutes
- Provide ongoing updates to the membership list

Advisory Meeting Agenda Recommendations

Meeting discussions should remain focused on the agenda and should be made to involve each member. Time should be allowed for open and free discussion. It is important that the advisory committee actively provide programs with information and advice that leads to instructional improvement.

The Department Chair should collaborate with the Advisory Board Chair on the creation of each meeting agenda.

General Recommendations

- Encourage everyone to participate equally
- Share ideas freely
- Provide constructive suggestions rather than negative criticisms
- Stay on track and on time
- Be concise

Suggested Agenda Items

Specific agenda items will vary based on the program but sample topics may include:

- Welcome & Introductions
- Review and Approval of minutes from the previous meeting
- Curriculum Review/Development (Both credit and noncredit)
  - Including recommendations for new or revised content
  - Articulation/Pathways
- Facilities and Equipment
- Course and/or Program Level SLO Outcomes
- Program/Department Data
  - Program Review Data (# of students, completers, etc.)
  - Perkins
  - Labor Market Data

- ○ Industry Certifications
- Program/Department Updates
  - ○ Staffing
  - ○ Grants
  - ○ OER
- Scholarships
- Work based learning opportunities (internships, job shadow, etc.)
- Industry Updates
  - ○ Emerging Fields
  - ○ Labor Market Trends
  - ○ Changes in the workforce
  - ○ Changes or new skills required
  - ○ Employment Opportunities
- Program Marketing and Events
  - ○ Outreach Events
  - ○ Job Fairs
  - ○ Student Recruiting
- Professional Development for Faculty (including conferences, workshops, etc)
- General Feedback or Recommendations
- Determine next meeting date/time

In addition to the list of suggested agenda items above, sample agenda have been provided in Appendix A.

Not Sure How to Get the Conversation Started?

The following is a list of questions that may be helpful in starting a conversation with Advisory Members.

Employment

- Are you able to provide internships (paid or unpaid) or other work based learning opportunities?
- Do you have open positions? How many have you filled during the past 12 months?
- What employment trends do you see throughout the industry?
- What are the specific job skills this discipline should focus on?
- Do our program completers meet current industry standards?
- What changes/trends are occurring in the industry that will affect employer needs?
- What employability skills do workers need?

- Are there any industry credentials you believe the program should offer to students?

Curriculum/Facilities/Equipment

- Do our courses reflect adequate training, current practices, and job duties in your company?
- What entry level skills are not supported by the instructional equipment available in the laboratory classrooms?
- What equipment should students be able to use?
- What curriculum modifications do you suggest to meet any skills gaps?
- In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the COC program?
- What other suggestions do you have for program improvement?

APPENDIX A

Regardless of the agenda format you select, remember to include the agenda items that most pertain to your committee and program needs. A list of suggested agenda items has been provided on page 12.

Below is a more formalized agenda format. You should include the meeting title, date, time, and location at the top of the page or in the header when using this agenda.

Meeting Topics:

6:00 – 6:15	***WELCOME*** • Introductions	**Committee Chair**
6:15 – 6:20	***PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES*** • Review and Approval of prior minutes	**Committee Chair/Department Chair**
6:20 – 6:30	***REVIEW OF COURSE SEQUENCE /CURRICULUM***	**Department Chair/Faculty**
6:30 – 6:45	***STATUS OF PROGRAM (DATA)*** • SLOs • Enrollment/Program completers • Perkins data - • Labor Market Data – • Industry Certifications • Other relevant data	**Department Chair/Faculty**
6:45 – 7:00	***INDUSTRY*** ***General questions you may want to ask your advisory board: See the list of sample questions on page 13 of the handbook.***	**Department Chair/Faculty**
7:00 – 7:15	**PROGRAM PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT** *General questions you may want to ask advisory board members: See the list of sample questions on page 13 of the handbook.*	**Department Chair/Faculty**

7:15 – 7:25	**OTHER BUSINESS** • Open discussion	**Committee Chair/Department Chair/Faculty**
7:30	**ADJORN**	**Committee Chair/Department Chair/Faculty**

Here is another, less formal sample agenda.

College of the Canyons
PROGRAM NAME
Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda
DATE
LOCATION/TIME

1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Approval of Agenda and Previous Meeting Minutes
3. Department Updates
    a. Staffing (Full Time/Part Time/Classified/Student Hires)
    b. Projects
4. Grants
5. Program Marketing/Events
6. Curriculum/Course Sequencing
    a. Credit
    b. Noncredit
    c. SLOs
    d. Program Mapping and Articulations
    e. Facilities/Equipment
7. Data
    a. SLOs
    b. Program Data (Enrollment, completions, demographics, etc,)
    c. Labor Market Data
    d. Perkins Data
    e. Other
8. Scholarships
9. Work Based Learning Opportunities (internships, job shadowing, etc)
10. Industry Conferences
11. Industry Updates
12. Recommended Program Improvements
13. Announcements/Other Topics/Open Discussion
14. Determine next meeting
15. Adjournment