SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
BP 303.1: Program Approval and Review Criteria
Stakeholder Engagement Crosswalk

May 2021

CONTEXT. This document crosswalks stakeholder feedback with the Program Approval and Review Quality Criteria and Standards created under the Lumina Grant. These standards were formed using results from stakeholder engagement (surveys and interviews), a national policy scan, and feedback from Lumina Task Force members. Using rosters provided by the System Office and technical colleges, DCM Consulting developed a survey and 1-on-1 interview plan to engage stakeholders during July and August 2020. Stakeholder groups were diverse and included board members, technical college students, and faculty, K-12 education, community leaders, and industry. Overall, DCM received responses from 125 unique internal and external constituents and conducted 23 one-hour interviews with prioritized stakeholders.

CRITERION AND STANDARDS	ALIGNED STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

CRITERION 1: MISSION.
 	
The program aligns with the system's mission and strategic priorities.
 	
1.1. The program aligns with the system's mission of preparing a technically skilled workforce ready to serve the state of South Dakota and its regions.
 	
1.2. The program aligns with the system's strategic priorities.
	Standard 1:
	• When responding to the interview question: "When you hear the term "readiness" what does that mean to you, particularly when you think of a technical college graduate?", respondents most commonly described students that are prepared at or above the level expected of entry-level workers and that require less onboarding and on-the-job training. Specific headlines about "readiness" include students:
	   o Meeting the expectations of employers (above entry-level)
	   o Having high job placement rates
	   o Requiring less onboarding and on-the-job training
	   o Possessing excellent technical and employability skills
	   o Being highly successful in their first job
	• When responding to the survey question: "What role do the following plan in determining the readiness of a technical college graduate?", technical education and skill and employability skills were most often rated as "very important", closely followed by Work-based learning. Specifically:
	   o 95% of respondents rated technical education and skills as " important" or "very important".
	   o 99% rated employability skills as " important" or "very important".
	   o 93% rated work-based learning as " important" or "very important".
	
	Opportunity (Standards 2): Multiple stakeholders cited the need for more consistency between the four technical colleges and better alignment between system and institutional priorities and ways of operating.

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CRITERION 2: DEMAND. The program leads to meaningful employment, adequate student enrollment, and/or fulfills a demand not being met by existing education and training providers. 2.1. The program leads to high-wage occupations that have an average/mean wage greater than the median wage across all occupations. 2.2. The program leads to high-demand occupations that have projected annual openings (a measure of demand for workers) greater than the average across all occupations or is shown as an economic and/or labor market emerging field for the state of South Dakota. 2.3. The program's student enrollment is adequate to justify program existence. 2.4. The program fulfills a demand not being met by existing education and training providers in the region and/or state.	**Standard 1:** • When responding to a survey question, "For a student, which of the following outcomes should occur if a technical college credential is of high-quality?", 71% cited family-sustaining salary and 69% of respondents cited wage gains. Similarly, 33% cited increased social mobility and advancement, and 22% cited decreased social welfare needs. • When asked about expected outcomes for students, employers, the state of South Dakota, and technical colleges if technical college credentials are high quality, 100% of interviewees cited compensation-related outcomes (e.g., wage premium, a livable wage, wage gains, etc.). Similar responses were observed when asked about what the term "high-quality" credential means to them. **Standard 2:** • 59% of survey respondents cited a skilled talent pipeline as an outcome for students that should occur if technical college credentials are high-quality. • 75% of interviewees also said prepared and skilled workers should be an expected outcome for the state of South Dakota. • 89% of survey completers selected immediate employment aligned with the field of study, the top choice of outcomes that should occur for a student if a technical college credential is high-quality. • 84% of survey respondents also cited career advancement from initial placement with 67% of interviewees indicating this as a student outcome. • 83% of interviewees also indicated that leading to "high-demand" or "in-demand" jobs should be foundational to high-quality credentials offered by technical colleges. • The "biggest education-to-workforce challenge" in South Dakota identified by survey respondents was "opportunity mismatching" (i.e., not enough applicants in priority learning pathways to meet workforce demands) **Opportunity (Standards 3 & 4)** • Increased enrollment and growth were oft-cited by interviewees as an outcome for technical colleges. • Stakeholders cited the need for more collaboration between the four technical colleges and other public IHEs in the state. • Several interviewees representing major employers in the state spoke at length of their partnerships with technical institutions and the critical importance of these technical colleges as talent pipelines.

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CRITERION 3: DESIGN. The program's learning assessment strategy, program of study, and delivery methods are designed to provide students with the necessary competencies, as demonstrated through program learning outcomes. 3.1. The program is aligned to competencies, as demonstrated through program learning outcomes, that are developed with and continually validated by relevant stakeholders. 3.2. The program has a learning assessment strategy to validate student mastery of the program learning outcomes. 3.3. The program has an integrated program of study designed to develop and reinforce the program learning outcomes. 3.4. The program, when appropriate, includes a work-based learning component that develops and reinforces the program learning outcomes. 3.5. The program, when appropriate, offers flexible delivery methods to increase student access.	**Standard 1:** • Two-thirds of interviewees said that high-quality credentials should be taught by highly qualified faculty, should be industry-recognized, and should be highly validated. • Several respondents also cited the value of industry stakeholders validating credentials and the ability to ensure programs are using up-to-date and relevant technology. **Opportunity (Standard 2 & 3):** • Several interviewees pointed out the critical importance of data to ascertain program quality, which learning assessment strategies and outcomes fall into. Importance needs to be placed on data quality and consistency. **Standard 4:** • When responding to the survey question: "What role do the following plan in determining the readiness of a technical college graduate?", 93% of respondents rated work-based learning as " important" or "very important". • Over half of all interviewees also cited work-based learning as a critical component of high-quality credentials. **Opportunity (Standard 5):** • Several interviewees, including technical college vice presidents, elevated student access, and the need for multiple delivery methods as critical areas for improvement. This is compounded by the makeup of the student population in South Dakota including rural students, non-traditional and first-generation students.

CRITERION AND STANDARDS	ALIGNED STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

CRITERION 4: ALIGNMENT.
 	
The program is vertically aligned to an education and training pathway.
 	
4.1. The program is vertically aligned to an education and training pathway, reflecting efficient articulation of:
    4.1.1.   Non-degree credential/industry certification
 	
    4.1.2.   Certificate to diploma
 	
    4.1.3.   Diploma to associate of applied science
 	
    4.1.4.   Associate of applied science to baccalaureate
	Standard 1:
	• When asked "What does the term "high-quality credential" mean to you when you think about a technical college?
	    o 86% of respondents answered degree (associate, bachelor's, master's, doctorate)
	    o 82% answered professional license
	    o 66% answered industry certification
	    o 57% answered apprenticeship
	    o 42% answered long-term certificate
	    o 18% answered short-term certificate
	
	• 100% of interviewees also cited degree, industry certification, and/or diploma and certificate as examples of quality credentials.

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CRITERION 5: CAPACITY. The institution demonstrates the internal and external resources necessary to develop, implement, and sustain the program. 5.1. The institution demonstrates the financial resources necessary to develop, implement, and sustain the program. 5.2. The institution demonstrates appropriately certified and qualified faculty with expertise in content, pedagogy, and related industry to develop and validate the program learning outcomes. 5.3. The institution's physical facilities (e.g., classrooms, laboratories) reflect current industry and/or occupational standards necessary to develop and validate the program learning outcomes. 5.4. The institution's equipment and technology resources reflect current industry and/or occupational standards necessary to develop and validate the program learning outcomes. 5.5. The institution demonstrates the ability of the program to meet institutional and programmatic accreditation standards, as applicable.	**Standard 1:** • Resources, including financial and physical (i.e., buildings, technology), were among the top-cited challenges by interviewees when asked what the biggest challenges and hurdles exist in attaining outcomes for students, the state, employers, and technical colleges. • The cost of technical college tuition for students in South Dakota, especially compared to neighboring states, was the #1 concern by interviewees when asked about hurdles and challenges that exist for students and colleges. **Standard 2:** • Two-thirds of interviewees stated that high-quality credentials should be taught by highly qualified faculty. **Standard 3:** • Physical capacity was elevated as one of the biggest hurdles and challenges that exist in attaining outcomes for students, employers, the state, and technical colleges. **Standard 4:** • Access to technology and resources was among the top-cited challenges for technical colleges shared by interviewees if the credentials offered are high quality. Specific anecdotal evidence further identified the ongoing need for cutting-edge, relevant technology for in-demand careers. **Opportunity (Standard 5):** • Several interviewees expressed a desire for more consistency and alignment between what the BOTE is asking of them and what HLC already requires.