



BUSINESS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Community Writing Center
- Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses
- Grand Theatre
- Miller Business Resource Center serves business and community through:
 - Corporate Solutions
 - Miller Business Innovation Center
 - Custom Fit Training
 - Short-Term Intensive Training
 - Global Business Center
 - WorkKeys Testing
 - Facility Rental & Conferencing at Miller Campus both credit & non-credit
- SLCC Alumni Association
- Thyne Center for Service & Learning
- Utah Small Business Development Center Network
 - Lead Center and Salt Lake Regional Center

SLCC is an equal opportunity institution providing educational opportunities without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, age and/or veteran status. February 2015

| SLCC LOCATIONS | FALL 2014 HEADCOUNT* |
|---|----------------------|
| • Taylorsville Redwood Campus (801) 957-4111 | 15,164 |
| • South City Campus (801) 957-4111 | 4,809 |
| • Jordan Campus (801) 957-2600 | 4,407 |
| • Miller Campus (801) 957-5200 | 1,853 |
| • Meadowbrook Campus (801) 957-5821 | 118 |
| • SLCC Online www.slcc.edu/online | 7,635 |
| • International Aerospace/Aviation Ed. Center (801) 957-2050 | 106 |
| • Library Square Center (801) 957-2000 | 756 |
| • Westpointe Center (801) 957-2150 | 202 |
| • SLCC Community Writing Center (801) 957-2192 | |
| • Jordan Applied Technology Center** | 247 |
| • Granite Technical Institute** | 169 |
| • Canyons Technology Education Center** | 153 |

* Student headcount at SLCC locations, Fall 3rd Week. Students may attend class at more than one SLCC location each semester.

** High school concurrent enrollment students.

Prepared by Institutional Research



2014 / 2015
Facts
at your fingertips



SALT LAKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Opened in 1948, Salt Lake Community College is an accredited, student-focused, urban college meeting the diverse needs of the Salt Lake community. Home to more than 60,000 students each year, the College is Utah's leading provider of workforce development programs. SLCC is also the largest supplier of transfer students to Utah's four-year institutions and a perennial Top 10 college nationally for total associate degrees awarded. The College is the sole provider of applied technology courses in the Salt Lake area, with multiple locations, an eCampus, and nearly 1,000 continuing education sites located throughout the Salt Lake Valley. Personal attention from an excellent faculty is paramount at the College, which maintains an average class size of 20.

CORE THEMES

Om Access and Success

- Provide accessible instructional programs and student services
- Provide access to students underrepresented in higher education
- Provide access to students underprepared for higher education
- Support students to become successful and engaged learners

Transfer Education

- Prepare students with a foundation for success in continued studies
- Provide the first two years of articulated major courses (AA, APE & AS degrees)
- Provide students a comprehensive and integrated General Education experience

Workforce Education

- Prepare students with knowledge and skills meeting current industry needs
- Provide specialized training for business and industry
- Provide integrated pathways for academic and career mobility/advancement

Community Engagement

- Contribute to economic and community development
- Champion diversity and cultural enrichment in the community and the College
- Provide community service and involvement opportunities

DEGREES

- Associate of Arts (AA)
- Associate of Applied Science (AAS)
- Associate of Science (AS)
- Associate in Pre-Engineering (APE)
- Certificates and Diplomas

In 2013-2014, SLCC awarded 3,782 Associate Degrees and 646 Certificates and Diplomas (includes the School of Applied Technology).

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Spring Semester: January 12 to May 7, 2015

Summer Term: May 18 to August 8, 2015

Fall Semester: August 26 to December 17, 2015

TUITION & FEES (Semester)

| Credit Hours | Resident Tuition/Fees | Credit Hours | Resident Tuition/Fees |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | \$ 184 | 11 | \$1,607 |
| 2 | 328 | 12-18 | 1,734 |
| 3 | 472 | 19 | 1,861 |
| 4 | 616 | 20 | 1,988 |
| 5 | 760 | 21 | 2,115 |
| 6 | 904 | 22 | 2,242 |
| 7 | 1,048 | 23 | 2,369 |
| 8 | 1,192 | 24 | 2,496 |
| 9 | 1,336 | 25 | 2,623 |
| 10 | 1,480 | | |

FINANCIAL AID

In 2013-2014, an estimated 29,767 students received \$74,735,671 in some form of financial aid. The Financial Aid Department had approximately 120,000 student contacts.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Credit and Non-Credit Unduplicated Headcount for 2013-2014

45,277 Credit-seeking Students
16,523 Non-Credit-seeking Students

61,800 Total Students

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Of the 45,277 credit-seeking students:

- 22,278 were male (49.2%)
- 22,999 were female (50.8%)
- 94.8% were Utah Residents
- 5.2% were foreign students and students from states other than Utah
- The average age was 25
- The median age was 24
- 21.4% of students were minorities
- 28.1% were freshmen
- 30.8% were enrolled in CTE Majors
- 74.8% were enrolled part-time



ADMINISTRATION

Denece Hufalin, PhD

President

Clifton Sanders, PhD

Interim Provost of Academic Affairs

Nancy Singer, PhD

Interim Vice President of Student Services

Dennis R. Klaus

Vice President of Business Services

Alison McFarlane

Vice President of Institutional Advancement

Tim Sheehan

Vice President of Government and Community Relations

Barbara Grover

Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness

Roderic Land, PhD

Special Assistant to the President

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Gail Miller, Chair

Stanley B. Parrish, Vice Chair

Sanchaita Datta

Clint Ensign

Ashok Joshi, PhD

David W. Lang

Patricia Richards

Richard R. Tranter

Carlos Moreno, Student Association President

Annie V. Schwemmer, SLCC Alumni Association President

SLCC FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

347 Full-time Faculty

738 Full-time Staff

105 Administrators

SCHOOL OF APPLIED TECHNOLOGIES & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The goal of the **School of Applied Technology** is to train students for positions in entry-level vocations. Programs are designed to provide individualized, hands-on, competency-based instruction. The open-entry/open-exit enrollment feature allows students to start programs on a weekly basis and complete when they have mastered the competencies supported by business and industry.

In 2013-2014, the School of Applied Technology served 1,580 students for a cumulative total of 477,880 billed hours of instruction.

Of these students:

- 831 were male (52.6%)
- 749 were female (47.4%)

The **Division of Professional Development** offers training to update professional skills for individuals or companies through:

- Professional development workshops
- Conferences in management and other customized training
- Health and Safety training
- Credit program courses through electronic formats
- Computer Training – PC programs, Autodesk® products or specialized needs



SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

- Academic & Career Advising
- Art & Cultural Events
- Athletics and Recreation (SWAC, NJCAA Region 18)
- Athletic Facilities–LAC, Cate Field, and Bruin Softball Field
- Career & Student Employment Services
- Child Care & Family Services
- College Store
- Contact Center
- Disability Resource Center
- Financial Aid & Scholarships
- First Year Experience
- Food Services
- Grand Theatre
- Health & Wellness Services
- International Student Services
- Lifetime Activities Center (LAC)
- “MyPage” Online Portal (Registration, Payment and Financial Aid Services, Course Information, etc.)
- Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs
- Office of the Registrar and Academic Records
- “OneCard” ID Program
- Open Computer Labs
- Printing Services
- Recreation & Fitness–Facilities available for use at the LAC on the Taylorville Redwood Campus
- School Relations (Student Recruitment/Campus Tours)
- Student Center and Student Event Center
- “Student Express” Service Areas
- Student Life and Leadership
- Student Recruitment and Campus Tours
- Testing Centers
- Thayne Center for Service & Learning
- TRIO Programs–Student Support Services & Educational Talent Search
- Tutoring & Learning Support Services
- Veterans Center

CURRENT BUDGET

The total appropriated operating budget for 2014-2015 is \$147,439,100.

Appropriated revenues come from two major sources: state funds and dedicated credits. Other sources account for the residual.

A breakdown of the percentages represented in the 2014-2015 budget:

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| General Fund | \$14,416,700 | 9.78% |
| Education Fund | \$73,033,100 | 49.53% |
| Dedicated Credits/Other | \$59,989,300 | 40.69% |
| Total | \$147,439,100 | 100.00% |

Budgeted expenditures for 2014-2015 are categorized as follows:

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Instruction | \$71,705,728 | 48.63% |
| Institutional Support | \$28,638,582 | 19.42% |
| Operation and Maintenance | \$21,585,675 | 14.64% |
| Student Services | \$14,107,839 | 9.57% |
| Academic Support | \$10,452,407 | 7.09% |
| Scholarships/Fellowships | \$793,000 | 0.54% |
| Public Service | \$155,869 | 0.11% |
| Total | \$147,439,100 | 100.00% |

Competency-Based Education (CBE) Initiative

CBE Benefits for the Student

Reduce Time to Completion

Students who enter the program with extra motivation, affinity to learn the material, or previous knowledge in the subject can accelerate through the program faster.

Reduce Cost of Attendance

Students who are able to accelerate through the program will pay less in tuition. The fewer calendar days a student takes to complete the program requirements the lower the tuition charged.

Recognition of Prior Learning

This delivery model recognizes and rewards all students for the knowledge they bring into their program of study. Learning is measured based on demonstration of competency and not time (credits or clock hours). If a student has previous knowledge of a competency they can demonstrate that by accelerating through the assessment, or they may take additional time working up to an assessment if the competency is new to them.

Self-Paced, Self-Directed Learning

Using technology-enhanced educational resources, students will participate in an environment that allows them to capitalize on their motivation or other factors that influence their pace of academic achievement. Through this technology enhanced approach, adult students will also realize the ability to customize their approach to learning.

Flexibility in Delivery

The design of the CBE model will provide program entry dates on every Monday for incoming students. It will also be based on a hybrid, or blended, delivery system that uses both online and face-to-face instruction, which allows students to access content and learn in a way that accommodates their schedule.

Industry Designed Transcripts

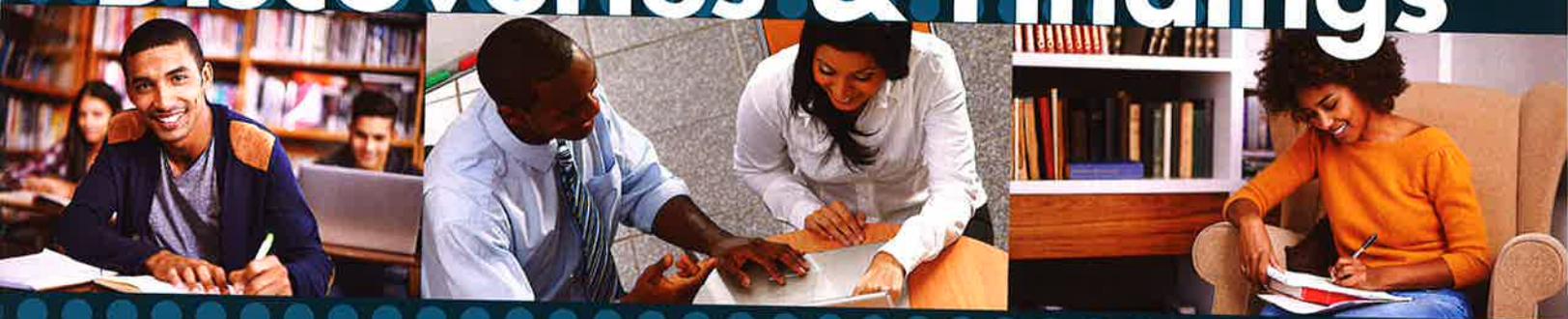
CBE transcripts will list the competencies mastered and not course names. This is designed to demonstrate to potential employers “what you can do” not overarching concepts seen in a typical course title.

CBE Challenges for Implementation

- Financial Aid regulations (Department of Education-Experimental Sites Initiative)
- Traditional academic model does not accommodate a non-term, non-time based model
- Software and data systems compatibility
- Internal and external perception of value and credibility

FIRST YEAR

Discoveries & Findings



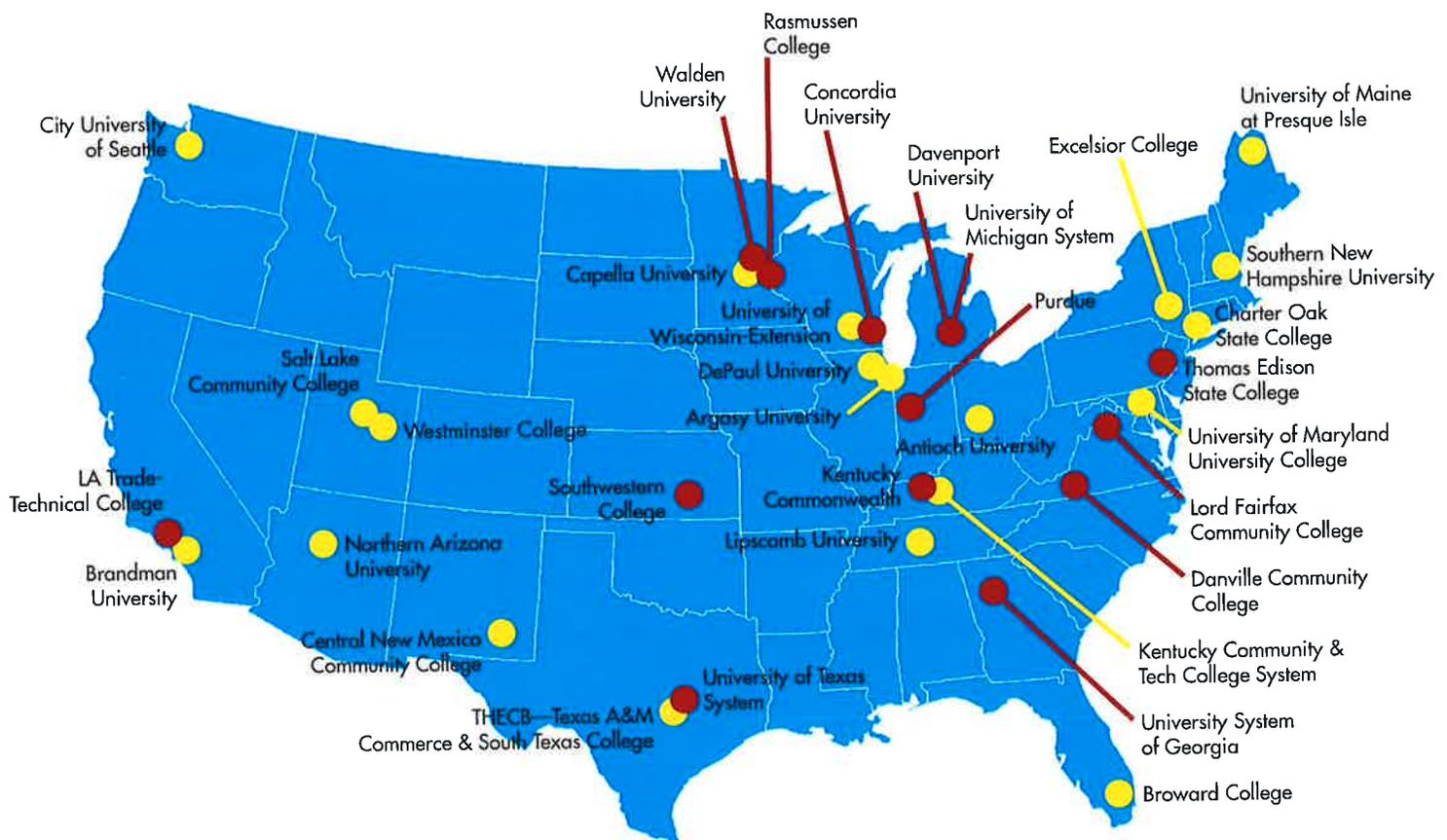
COMPETENCY-BASED
EDUCATION NETWORK



What is the Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN)?

The Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN) is a group of colleges and universities working together to address shared challenges to designing, developing, and scaling high-quality competency-based degree programs.

COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION NETWORK



From its inception, the Competency-Based Education Network has been

Influencing Today... Shaping Tomorrow

C-BEN MEMBERS

COHORT #1

Antioch University
Argosy University
Brandman University
Broward College
Capella University
Charter Oak State College
City University of Seattle
DePaul University
Excelsior College
Kentucky Community & Technical College System

Lipscomb University
Northern Arizona University
Salt Lake Community College
Southern New Hampshire University
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
(South Texas College and Texas A&M
University-Commerce)
University of Maine at Presque Isle
University Of Maryland University College
University of Wisconsin-Extension
Westminster College

COHORT #2

Central New Mexico Community College
Concordia University (WI)
Danville Community College
Davenport University
Kentucky Commonwealth
Lord Fairfax Community College
Los Angeles Trade Technical College
Purdue University

Rasmussen College (MN)
Southwestern College (KS)
Thomas Edison State College
University of System of Georgia
University of Michigan System
University of Texas System
Walden University

C-BEN: A Structured Community of Practice

An environmental scan by Lumina Foundation in 2012 found that institutions working on the leading edge of competency-based education had been dealing with challenges to building academic and business models in isolation and were eager for opportunities to learn from one another.

So, what happens when you convene leaders from eight very different colleges and universities to discuss their aspirations and the challenges they face in achieving their dreams?

An authentic dialogue transpires.

A spirit of collaboration emerges.

A refreshing, forward-thinking conversation ensues.

These leaders realized that by working together they could reach their own goals more rapidly while contributing fresh, new thinking to benefit all of higher education. It quickly became clear that a structured community of practice would be a promising platform for helping these institutions more rapidly realize the potential of competency-based education to bring quality, affordable opportunities for postsecondary education to students who may not be well served by traditional academic instruction.

A brief and recent history of competency-based education: this timeline highlights developments in an emerging movement to promote competency-based education.



2009: Lumina Foundation announced its first Strategic Plan in support of Goal 2025 — a national imperative that 60% of working-age Americans have access to quality college degrees, certificates or other postsecondary credentials by 2025.



FEBRUARY 2009: In his first State of the Union address to Congress, President Obama set a goal that, “by 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world.” He asked that every American commit to at least one year of higher education or career training.



SEPTEMBER 2012: New America Foundation published “Cracking the Credit Hour,” a paper by Amy Laitinen, Deputy Director for Higher Education at the New America Foundation, outlining policy options for advancing competency-based education. The paper was supported by Lumina Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



SEPTEMBER 2012: The Council on Adult and Experiential Learning published “Competency-Based Education in the U.S.” by Rebecca Klein-Collins and issued its “Competency-Based Degree Programs in the U.S.” report.

With Public Agenda's process-management infrastructure and knowledge management and the counsel of various subject matter experts, this group formed a self-governing community, the Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN). United by the goal of advancing competency-based education and new models of higher education through responsible innovation, the Network institutions are bound by shared interests and challenges, and they work collaboratively to accelerate progress toward solutions to common problems.

C-BEN helps create conditions for competency-based education to flourish by:

1. Designing structured opportunities and learning mechanisms for institutions to accelerate progress on common challenges such as program design, business processes and systems, and learning assessment.
2. Sharing checklists, processes, and data generated by the group, and providing research and expert resources to innovators, policymakers, and regulators that support healthy development of the field.

C-BEN members share a vision of working together to help competency-based learning become a stronger, more widely understood option for students seeking degrees and credentials.

C-BEN formed a Steering Committee led by Laurie Dodge of Brandman University and David Schejbal of the University of Wisconsin-Extension in spring 2013, and the network issued a formal call for membership applications in the fall of 2013. Participating institutions either offer degree programs with well-defined learning outcomes and rigorous assessment or are on their way to creating them. The C-BEN Steering Committee, comprising higher education innovators, guides the work.

In early 2014, the Network admitted its initial cohort, including 18 colleges and universities and two public higher education systems serving 42 campuses. The Network expanded in February 2015, welcoming thirteen institutions and two public systems representing 40 campuses.



SEPTEMBER 2012: Lumina and Gates Foundations co-hosted a convening of 23 colleges and universities that operate or are working toward competency-based degree programs. The institutions, brought together for the first time, identified significant challenges to building their models, including barriers to receiving Title IV student financial aid, challenges to building scalable models, including a lack of back-office processes and systems to support competency-based education. The institutions requested foundation help in improving communication and collaboration among higher education and government stakeholders. In addition, the seeds for C-BEN were planted as institutions requested support in business model development.



NOVEMBER 2012: The White House and U.S. Department of Education co-hosted an innovation conference at Georgetown University; as a result of their participation, four foundations (Lumina, Gates, Kresge and Joyce) jointly committed to co-hosting a private stakeholder convening in Washington, D.C., to improve communication and collaboration in support of competency-based education.



JANUARY 2013: Southern New Hampshire University President Paul LeBlanc sent a letter to the Education Department requesting approval to receive federal financial aid for College for America's associate degree program in which learning is directly assessed.

Steering Committee

CO-CHAIRS

Laurie Dodge, Ph.D. (2014-2015)

Vice Chancellor of Institutional Assessment and Planning & Vice Provost, Brandman University

David Schejbal, Ph.D. (2014)

Dean, Continuing Education, Outreach and E-Learning, University of Wisconsin-Extension



Laurie Dodge, Ph.D.



David Schejbal, Ph.D.

FOUNDING STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jay Box, Ed.D.

Chancellor, Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Frederick Hurst, Ph.D.

Senior Vice President for Extended Campuses, Northern Arizona University

Ed Klonoski

President, Charter Oak State College

Paul LeBlanc, Ph.D.

President, Southern New Hampshire University

Charla Long, J.D.

Dean, College of Professional Studies, Lipscomb University

Cid Seidelman, Ph.D.

Provost, Westminster College



JANUARY 2013: In the first State of Union address of his second term, President Obama highlighted the momentum and promise of competency-based education and offered the administration's support for this higher education innovation.



MARCH 2013: The Education Department issued a "Dear Colleague Letter" supporting the direct assessment of learning, which stated, "Competency-based approaches to education have the potential for assuring the quality and extent of learning, shortening the time to degree, developing stackable credentials that ease student transitions between school and work, and reducing the overall cost of education."



APRIL 2013: Lumina, Gates, Kresge and Joyce Foundations co-hosted a stakeholder convening in Washington, D.C.: *Enabling Responsible Innovation: Policy Options for Competency-Based Education*. The gathering brought together representatives from the White House, Department of Education, Office of Management and Budget, regional accrediting agencies, state higher education officials, and competency-based education innovators. Public Agenda facilitated the convening with help from subject-matter experts Michael Offerman, a national education consultant, and Amy Laitinen of New America Foundation. During the meeting, Department of Education officials raised the possibility of federally authorized experimental sites to responsibly explore how Title IV student aid could be used to support competency-based programs. The convening also revealed the need to streamline the process by which institutions seek Department approval to directly assess student learning; at this point, College for America is the only approved program.

THE NETWORK THRIVES WITH THE SUPPORT OF A WIDE RANGE OF EXPERTS:

Process and Knowledge Management

Public Agenda

Alison Kadlec

Senior Vice President, Director Higher Education and Workforce Programs

Erin Knepler

Associate Director, Higher Education and Workforce Programs

Susan Shelton

Director of Public Engagement Programs

Isaac Rowlett

Senior Public Engagement Associate

Nicole Hewett

Senior Public Engagement Associate

Katie Barth

Public Engagement Associate

Teal Arcadi

Public Engagement Assistant

John Immerwahr

Senior Research and Public Engagement Fellow

Funding Support

Lumina Foundation

Kevin Corcoran

Strategy Director

Convening Support

Southern New Hampshire University

Helen Davies

Special Assistant to the President

Additional Support

Aisha Labi

Freelance Writer/Editor

Amy Laitinen

New America Foundation

Libby May

The Hatcher Group

Michael Offerman

Education Consultant



AUGUST 2013: With support from Lumina, Public Agenda facilitates a series of working sessions in Chicago for institutions seeking federal approval of direct-assessment programs. These discussions surfaced the myriad of challenges faced by regional accreditors, financial aid administrators, university registrars, and business office personnel when asked to either approve or to implement competency-based programs. These leading institutions also began to outline areas for potential Title IV experimentation.



AUGUST 2013: President Obama touted competency-based education in another highly visible speech and called upon higher education institutions to become more innovative. Leaders from eight colleges and universities issued a public commitment to create a *community of institutions* to address the unique challenges and opportunities faced by institutions operating or developing competency-based programs. This group of institutions later became the Steering Committee for C-BEN.



SEPTEMBER 2013: *Enabling Responsible Innovation: Competency-Based Experimental Design*—A convening for representatives from the White House, Education Department, regional accrediting agencies, state higher education officials, and innovative institutions to discuss progress since the April 2013 meeting, including specific ideas for federally authorized experimental sites. The convening, hosted by Lumina and Gates and facilitated by Public Agenda, advanced specific ideas that members of C-BEN had developed for federally authorized Title IV student aid experiments.

Structured Work Cycles

ORGANIZING FIRST YEAR RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

C-BEN was created, in part, to develop a practical evidence-base for competency-based education by generating and testing ideas that address core practice-based challenges that must be better understood across educational settings for this form of education to flourish.

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement's 90-Day Research & Development Cycle (R&D) framework guided the early work of C-BEN. It was adapted to provide a practical and effective structure for managing work scope, collaboration, and accelerated knowledge generation across institutions. Three initial strands emerged: Program Design, Business Processes and Systems, and Communications and Storytelling. Participants from C-BEN member institutions were divided among the three strands.

The work within these R&D cycles yielded better data and information for developing competency-based degree programs, including diagnostic tools such as checklists, frameworks, and other information that can be used by these institutions and shared widely. The work cycles also incorporated input from key stakeholders, including: higher education experts; experts in fields such as communications and business; and faculty, staff, and students.

Three 90-day work cycles within each of the three strands—Program Design, Business Processes and Systems, and Communications and Storytelling—were initiated in 2014. A description of the work follows.

Commitment to research and best practices

Public Agenda is taking the following steps to develop formative evaluation as well as summative looks at design processes and outcomes:

- Ongoing, informal observations and reflections in conversations;
- Check-ins with participants, expert consultants and the foundation;
- Online surveys of convening attendees;
- Online surveys of webinar participants; and,
- In-depth interviews with all network participants

MEMBERS

Antioch University
Brandman University
Broward College
City University of Seattle
College for America (SNHU)
DePaul University
Excelsior College
South Texas College
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
University of Maryland University College
University of Maine at Presque Isle



OCTOBER 2013: C-BEN officially launched with the appointment of a Steering Committee, which broadly issued an invitation for other colleges and universities working on competency-based degree programs to join through an RFP process.



NOVEMBER 2013: Department of Education issued a Request for Information seeking ideas for federally authorized experimental sites, including ideas for advancing competency-based education and prior-learning assessment.

Program Design Strand

The Program Design strand focused on better understanding the competency-based education landscape in an effort to begin to create shared standards of practice for the design and delivery of high-quality competency-based models capable of scaling to serve many more students from all backgrounds.

The Program Design strand aims to protect the healthy diversity of the field while empowering leading institutions to identify and talk about common features of high-quality programs with respect to curriculum design, assessment of student learning and academic, financial, and social supports for students. This work strand is working on checklists and critical questions that institutions seeking to build strong academic programs must be able to answer thoroughly for students, parents, faculty, employers, regulators, and taxpayers to have confidence in these programs.

During 2014, each C-BEN member engaged in in-depth interviews with Program Design strand participants. They also were surveyed to get a clearer qualitative picture of how field-leading programs are structured and operating.

The objective was to understand how competency-based programs address faculty and staff roles, student learning, curriculum design, and learning assessment.

Through structured interviews with program design leads from every C-BEN member, the group sought to understand both the how and why of program design to ensure that the information gained would contribute to a broader, more coherent description of what design of high-quality competency-based programs entails.

Program Design's Guiding Questions

-  What are the common features of high-quality program design that cut across different competency-based models?
-  How do students in competency-based education programs access and navigate curriculum, and how are they supported during their academic journey by faculty and staff?
-  What are the facilitators of success and obstacles that colleges and universities experience as they work to design and implement competency-based programs?
-  How can what C-BEN is learning be translated into shared standards of practice in curriculum design, assessment and student supports, and how might this knowledge be disseminated to better support a healthy field?

STRAND SPOTLIGHT



“The Program Design strand gathered, analyzed and synthesized large amounts of information gathered through quantitative and qualitative research practices to begin painting a vivid landscape of what competency-based education looks like across the nation. It is through this process, we are able to showcase the diversity along with the similarities embedded in these innovative programs.”

— Krissy Jones, Director of Performance-based Learning Programs at City University of Seattle



JANUARY 2014: More than a dozen colleges and universities submitted a joint response titled “Experimental Sites Concept Paper: Competency-Based Education” to the Education Department proposing ideas for experiments. This paper made the case for experimental sites that waive specific provisions of Title IV law and regulations to test approaches that would enable many more students to benefit from competency-based degree programs.



FEBRUARY 2014: C-BEN's Steering Committee invited the initial cohort of 18 institutions and two public higher education systems to join.

Business Processes and Systems

STRAND MEMBERS

Brandman University
College for America (SNHU)
Excelsior College
Northern Arizona University
Salt Lake Community College
University of Maine at Presque Isle
University of Maryland University College
University of Wisconsin–Extension
Westminster College
Kentucky Community & Technical College System

If competency-based programs are to become widely available, the business processes and the IT applications and software systems that support these processes must be redesigned. Institutions engaging in competency-based education need to have ways to effectively manage registrars' billing systems, financial aid distribution and more. Similarly, a better understanding of sustainable business models for competency-based education will be needed to assure the financial viability of programs. As a result, there is a need both to understand the unique process and system requirements needed to support competency-based programs and to work with private software vendors to create solutions to the array of “back-office” systems challenges plaguing these new models.

The Business Processes and Systems strand participants examined the student lifecycle and conducted “deep-dives” into process areas. Financial aid processes and systems were chosen as the first focus because the administration of federal grant and loan aid for programs that are not tied to the student credit hour is a “pain point” for every institution seeking to build a scalable program. Participants focused on determining the key questions and considerations that have to be addressed to serve students eligible for federal financial aid.



APRIL 2014: C-BEN kicked off the first 90-Day Research and Development (R&D) cycle of work during a two-day convening in Phoenix. Three strands of work—program design, business processes and systems, and communications and storytelling—commenced.



APRIL 2014: C-BEN representatives held initial meetings with vendor representatives to discuss challenges that institutions with competency-based programs face when conforming their legacy back-office systems to support innovative programs that do not rely on the student credit hour to measure student progress.



JULY 2014: C-BEN reconvened in Washington, D.C., with reports on the first round of R&D projects and initiation of a second round of R&D projects.



JULY 2014: The Education Department announced an RFP process for experimental sites with two areas directly related to competency-based education and another related to prior-learning assessment.

STRAND SPOTLIGHT



“We learned in the Business Process and Systems Strand that the lens by which we need to view our work is the student life cycle. Our role in organizing and providing insights and questions from those further along the competency-based education pathway is twofold—we want to drive innovation in systems and processes, so they seamlessly work together and help others who are just beginning their competency-based education journey identify challenges they will encounter in providing the best student experience.”

— Joellen Shendy, Associate Vice Provost & Registrar, University of Maryland University College

To address this task, the strand divided into two working groups, a “scanning group” and a “testing group”. The scanning group worked to articulate the questions using words and phrases appropriate for each program type, whether standard term, nonstandard term, or direct assessment. Further work, resulted in the “Deep-Dive” Financial Aid Questions and the CBE Financial Aid Technical Implementation Questions documents.

The testing group received feedback on these documents from front-line financial aid professionals at their institutions. The group created an additional document with academic calendar definitions, which defines and compares the elements of five possible academic calendar types for competency-based programs.



OCTOBER 2014: C-BEN reconvened in Chicago with reports out on the second round of R&D projects and initiation of a third round of R&D projects. A checklist for financial aid officers resulting from C-BEN’s efforts is used to begin working with the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) about how to improve awareness and understanding in the field of good practices.



NOVEMBER 2014: C-BEN issued Request for Proposals to identify a second cohort of institutions to join.



JANUARY 2015: Education Department issued invitations to institutions to participate in competency-based experimental sites. More than half of invited institutions are C-BEN members.



FEBRUARY 2015: C-BEN invited a second cohort of 13 institutions and two higher education systems to join. Some institutions previously participated in the Next Generation Learning Challenges Breakthrough Models Incubator managed by EDUCAUSE.

Most Recent Work

The work-strand products are being used externally by colleges and universities outside of C-BEN through a partnership with the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) and through ongoing communication and collaboration by the C-BEN Vendor Relations Committee. By building purposeful connections with NASFAA and its members, working with financial aid professionals from participating C-BEN systems and institutions, and opening dialogue with software vendors and solution providers interested in working with competency-based programs, we will accelerate progress on critical challenges facing institutions seeking to build scalable degree programs.

In addition to resolving financial aid issues, four additional areas of work emerged during the year:

- The Student Experience Inventory and implications for Business Processes and Systems
- Marketing and Outreach Processes
- Application Processes
- Student Recruitment Processes

Business Process and Systems Strand Results

Strand participants catalogued issues colleges and universities seeking to build scalable competency-based education models must address when administering federal student aid. Using an inquiry-based approach to understand and document these challenges, the group produced a tool that enables institutions to accelerate progress on putting processes and systems in place to administer financial aid for competency-based degree programs:

- **Competency-Based Education “Deep-Dive”**

Financial Aid Questions: Catalogues the issues institutions must address to accept financial aid, with questions listed in the order in which they appear in the Federal Student Aid Handbook, a publication of the U.S. Department of Education.

- **Competency-Based Education Financial Aid**

Technical Implementation Questions: Lists the financial aid questions and considerations that should be considered when modifying IT applications to support (e.g., store data, track, analyze and report) financial aid data for competency-based programs.

- **Academic Calendar Definitions:**

Defines and compares the key elements of five possible academic calendar types:

- Standard (Semester or Quarter)
- Standard with Modules
- Nonstandard: Mostly Equal Terms
- Nonstandard: Mostly Unequal Terms
- Credit Hour, Non-Term

- **Creation of a Vendor Relations Committee**

composed of C-BEN members from across the strands, and a handful of large and small companies creating systems to support higher education. The committee works to increase understanding among solution providers of the challenges facing CBE programs and to empower institutions to help lead the conversation about system requirements.

Communications and Storytelling

STRAND MEMBERS

Argosy University
Capella University
Charter Oak State College
Excelsior College
Lipscomb University
University of Wisconsin-Extension
Westminster College

“What is Competency-Based Education?”

Academic leaders must answer this question every day. Yet, responses vary among colleges and universities and even within institutions, with each definition reflecting unique characteristics of specific competency-based programs. Because C-BEN institutions had reported significant challenges when trying to explain competency-based education to a variety of audiences, including students, faculty, employers, parents, and policymakers, C-BEN established the Communications and Storytelling strand to help create shared language around this topic.

The goal of this strand was to find clear and informative ways of sharing the competency-based education story. The strand tackled this objective through a variety of channels including: defining key terms, elevator speeches, and the creation of a story bank.

The strand began with definitions of key terms and a taxonomy, or way of classifying, competency-based programs. Early on, the group determined that a lack of consensus around even basic definitions of terms appeared to be the logical result of the diverse field of competency-based education, in which advocates for different models define common terms in conflicting and complementary ways. Although the initial impulse toward reaching consensus on terms and taxonomy had originated from a desire to build awareness, understanding and engagement with competency-based education, the experience of strand participants suggested that pursuit of a uniform terminology and a classification system was not, at this stage, an optimal approach. As a result of making this determination, the group shifted its focus to explaining through storytelling what competency-based education is and why and how students might benefit.

STRAND SPOTLIGHT



“We quickly learned in the Communications and Storytelling strand that it is not about the words that define ‘competency-based education.’ Instead, it is about the difference competency-based education is making in lives of students and the transformation that is occurring in higher education.”

—Dr. Christine Seifert Associate Professor of Communication/Director of the Master of Strategic Communication Program, Westminster College

Members of the strand worked together to develop a clear elevator speech for competency-based education. “Competency-based education is a flexible way for students to get credit for what they know, build on their knowledge and skills by learning more at their own pace, and earn high quality degrees, certificates and other credentials to help them in their lives and careers. Students in these programs show what they know and how well they know it through multiple ways of evaluating learning. This is another choice for learning offered at many institutions, through a variety of programs, with full support to help students when needed.”

In addition, www.cbenetwork.org was launched to help connect participants and the field with C-BEN’s work. During 2015, C-BEN plans to more actively share its work and lessons, making the site a go-to place for colleges and universities interested in developing competency-based programs.

In late 2014, Strand participants created a collection of stories, which can be shared with others to build awareness of the power of competency-based education to educate students, especially those who are not well served by traditional academic instruction. These stories, which reinforce elements of the elevator pitch, focus on unique characteristics of this form of education from student, faculty, and employer perspectives. With these resources in hand, C-BEN can more quickly respond to requests for information from national media outlets, higher education associations, policymakers and C-BEN members. The C-BEN Communication and Storytelling strand had access to the communications expertise of The Hatcher Group, a communications firm based in Bethesda, Md.



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