



Strategies and Resources to Align Non-Credit and Credit Programs *A Pre-Institute Workshop for the Texas Association of Community Colleges*

Overview

To accelerate recovery from COVID19, community colleges must double down on strategies that quickly prepare individuals for work, while also providing them clear next steps for learning and opportunities for growth. Education Strategy Group will share research on how to align non-credit, industry-aligned programs and credit programs at community colleges, why this is important for post-traditional learners, and ways to promote these offerings as the first stop on a pathway to a good job. ESG will outline four models from colleges and systems leading this work, including credit-based workforce training, institutional restructuring to align non-credit and credit programs, and the use of competency-based education and other innovations to create pathways to credit for students in non-credit programs. College teams will be grouped with others from similar sized institutions to reflect on the value and applicability of the different models for their institution, discuss the best “starting points” for their institution with considerations for post-traditional learners, and identify concrete steps to improve alignment at their institutions.

The workshop will share a [guide](#) on how to connect these offerings to optimally serve students and respond to economic needs. College teams will reflect on the value and applicability of this guide for their institution, discuss the best “starting points” for their institution, and identify concrete steps to improve alignment at their institutions.

Recommended Participants:

Pathways Lead and/or chief academic officer, and dean of workforce, career and technical education and/or continuing education are recommended to attend this workshop. In addition, someone from the registrar's office, financial aid and advising are also invited to attend. Please have at least two people attend this session as there will be time for your college to discuss and plan how to use these strategies and resources.

Goals:

1. Institutional leaders will receive expert resources, guidance and clear steps on how to create stronger and more seamless pathways across non-credit and credit programs; and
2. Institutional leaders will apply that guidance to identify steps, stakeholders, priority programs, and solutions to anticipated challenges toward achieving alignment across non-credit and credit programs.

Pre work:

1. Familiarize yourself with the framework and case studies presented in ESG's [A More Unified Community College: Strategies and resources to align non-credit and credit programs](#).



AGENDA

- 10:00am - 10:10am** **Welcome and Introductions**
Leadership from the Texas Association of Community Colleges will welcome the participants and introduce the team from Education Strategy Group (ESG). The goals for the meeting will be reiterated, including how this session integrates with the November Institute.
- 10:10am - 10:40am** **Presentation: A More Unified Community College**
In October 2020, Education Strategy Group released, *A More Unified Community College: Strategies and resources to align non-credit and credit programs*. ESG will present on this research, including:
- A new framework that systems and institutions can use to facilitate alignment;
 - Four different starting points for institutions to begin implementing the framework, each accompanied by a case study highlighting this work in action; and
 - Three distinct Getting Started Guides for institutions and systems; states; and administrators, faculty, and staff
- 10:40am - 11:10am** **Activity: Size Matters**
An institution's size offers opportunities and challenges for aligning non-credit and credit programs. Institutions of similar sizes will be given 30 minutes for cross-institution discussion. Each table will identify two challenges and two opportunities associated with implementing the framework based on the size of their respective institutions.
- 11:10am - 11:30am** **Activity Report Out**
The opportunities and challenges identified by each table will be shared with the larger group. These challenges and opportunities will be considered during Team Time.
- 11:30am - 1:00pm** **Team Time*: Starting Points & Next Steps**
Institution teams will be given 90 minutes to reflect on and discuss opportunities to better align non-credit and credit pathways. Key topics for discussion will include identifying:
1. Starting points, based off of those in the guide, for alignment that best suit the unique context and strengths of the institution;
 2. Additional stakeholders to be involved in initial planning and implementation efforts, emphasizing operational leaders in financial aid and the registrar; and
 3. Priority programs of study to build alignment, starting with "quick wins" that may be more likely to articulate for credit.



4. How to leverage the opportunities and address the challenges associated with institution size that were identified earlier.

This discussion will be summarized into 2-4 action steps and at least one solution for a challenge.

***NOTE: The Team Time will include a working lunch.**

1:00pm - 1:30pm

Report Out & Closing

Groups will report out on their discussion. A slide will be provided to facilitate the conversation. ESG will close with connections to the institute, equity, enrollment, and completion.