

TAACCCT Partnership Status Report and Work Plan

Lord Fairfax Community College
and Microsoft

6/7/16

Introduction

This document describes the work of Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC) with Microsoft as part of the college's U.S. Department of Labor TAACCCT grant entitled Knowledge to Work (K2W). As part of this grant, K2W has two initiatives:

- (1) Offer accredited, online, direct assessment, competency-based education degree and certificate programs in information technology, health information management, supervision, and administrative support technology;
- (2) Create an online portal and learning ecosystem at highered.org with an educational search engine and software that lets users curate their own learning with personalized learning plans tied to national competency frameworks using free/low-cost open educational resources (OER).

Status Report

Microsoft first approached the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) in spring 2014, looking to partner with VCCS institutions on round four of the TAACCCT grant. Microsoft signed a commitment letter (attached) to partner with LFCC as part of its Knowledge to Work proposal, which was funded by DOL and started 10/1/14.

A series of emails and calls occurred during the first year of the grant with Jeff Johnson of Microsoft, sharing information about the funded proposal and discussing next steps. However, the college was just getting up to speed with its personnel and technology and the planning stage took longer than anticipated. The project timeline was changed in the DOL statement of work to develop the portal after the college initiated its direct assessment CBE programs. In addition, DOL conducted a comprehensive review of the grant proposal and stated that both the portal and other software developed for the CBE programs needed to be created with open source tools instead of the Microsoft technology stack which was planned in the proposal.

The college's CBE programs were created in 2014-15 and accredited in July 2015 by the regional accreditor SACSCOC. Students were enrolled and started their personalized learning plans on 9/15/15. The portal was launched in beta in March 2016 and is now live in production using PHP, MySQL, and Centos. Press releases and national marketing efforts are imminent - one reason why it is important to be able to tell others about the partnership between LFCC and Microsoft on this grant.

Microsoft's Heidi Johnson was added to the calls in the second year of the project and she has served as the most recent point of contact. An additional staff member (Rob from Boston) was added for the most recent call held 5/3/16. The outcome of the last call was for LFCC to share documentation about the project and next steps.

Most recently, Knowledge to Work's Executive Director, John Milam Ph.D. attended the IMS Global Learning Impact Leadership Institute in May in San Antonio. He met and talked with Microsoft Learning Technology Architect TJ Vering. TJ stated that he knew the work of Jeff Johnson and Heidi Johnson and that there were several ways in which he could help move this partnership forward. TJ offered to work with LFCC in any way he could.

LFCC has made significant progress in its grant activities and deliverables, developing seven, regionally accredited direct assessment CBE programs. The college created middleware software for personalized learning plans, managing competencies, case management, and extended competency-based transcripts. The college is a member of the Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN) of invited, early adopter institutions and John Milam was recently elected to C-BEN's board of directors. LFCC participates in IMS Global as an institutional affiliate member and Dr. Milam serves on the IMS CBE data record workgroup and the extended transcript workgroup. LFCC also participates as a member of the Community College Consortium of Open Educational Resources. A deck from a recent presentation to IMS Global, highlighting the Knowledge to Work grant effort, is attached.

At this stage of the grant, LFCC has completed development of both grant activities and is working to promote the higher.org portal. The purpose of the portal is to essentially take everything created for the direct assessment, CBE programs and make it available for free to all on the web in English and Spanish versions of the site. A deck describing the portal, from a recent presentation to the Global Healthcare Workforce Council, is attached. Note: the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) is also a national partner on the grant and part of this international Council. LFCC is working with AHIMA to develop a national competency framework, exam, and curriculum for IT in HIM.

LFCC's plan has been to include a myriad of IT-related instructional resources and content in the portal, such as those of the Microsoft Virtual Academy. An MOU for partnership with the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP) is currently being signed and IAAP resources and its certification credential will be added to the portal resources and pathway descriptions. OER and digital learning resources have been added from many other sources. Where possible, these are mapped to the national competency frameworks used in LFCC's CBE programs. These include AHIMA, IAAP, and the Association of Computing Machinery. SHRM mappings are being put in place this summer.

LFCC is now looking to engage Microsoft more fully as a partner in the portal, working with TJ Vering, Heidi Johnson, Jeff Johnson, or others. A suggested work plan with next steps is provided in the next section.

Work Plan

In moving forward, LFCC would like to work as soon as possible with Microsoft on the following activities:

1. Collect metadata on relevant OER and digital learning objects in grant-related industries and occupations to share in the portal.
2. Assist in mapping these resources to the existing national competency frameworks of ACM, IAAP, AHIMA, and SHRM, as well as to other Microsoft frameworks.
3. Assist in mapping these resources to relevant credentials, including badges and certifications.
4. Continue the display of the Microsoft logo and promote this partnership on the portal, including creation of a Microsoft landing page.
5. Assist with marketing, outreach, and promotion of the portal.
6. Participate in a pilot project to map military job codes to the national competency frameworks being used.
7. Assist in developing other types of partnerships and revenue streams which will help this non-profit portal be sustainable after the period of the grant.

The portal incorporates IMS Global metadata standards for OER and the U.S. Department of Education's Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) for its data structure. An XML structure of the OER currently being curated in the portal has been created with several sample records and a copy is attached. LFCC would like Microsoft to review this file and provide metadata for as many OER and digital learning resources as possible related to IT, particularly relevant to entry- and two-year college level learning. An Excel file with the current competency maps of the LFCC direct assessment CBE programs is attached. These are mirrored on the portal.

The commitment letter suggests that Microsoft would be willing to share its certification roadmap, with underlying competency frameworks and pathways, in the targeted sectors of the grant. In March 2015, Jeff Johnson shared some basic resources and links from Microsoft Learning Experiences. LFCC would like Microsoft's assistance in mapping the OER metadata it supplies to one or more of the competency frameworks.

In addition to the portal competency frameworks mentioned above, these could include Productivity/Information Worker certification, Entry-Level IT certification, and Advanced-Level pathways, as well as the Microsoft Virtual Academy (MVA) for individuals and the Microsoft IT Academy (ITA) Program for Schools. It is recognized that these structures and labels may have changed over time. While this effort is ambitious, LFCC would expect this to begin with a proof of concept demonstration using one or more sets of OER and one or more pathway/framework, mapping the two together in a way

which may be displayed on the portal. See <https://www.highered.org/it-competency-framework.php> for an example which shows how the ACM competency framework is displayed with links to related OER.

Showcasing its national partners, the Microsoft logo is prominently displayed on the portal at: <http://highered.org>. LFCC would be very grateful for assistance in promoting the portal to a variety of learner-focused audiences, both through individual communication through email and lists and through conference presentations and related publications. Any and all help in marketing the portal to individual learners worldwide would do much to ensure the sustainability of this non-profit effort once the grant ends. Assistance in bringing other content, assessment, and credential providers to the portal would also be appreciated.

A range of Microsoft credentials could conceivably be promoted through the portal, hopefully linked wherever possible given different levels of granularity through competency maps. These would be documented with metadata so that a full range of search filters may be applied. The portal's interest is initially on promoting free and low-cost OER. However, wherever Microsoft sells its learning resources, assessments, and credentials, LFCC is interested in linking and potentially generating any affiliate sales revenue which is possible. The college has applied for an affiliate sales account with Microsoft at <http://microsoftaffiliates.com>, but the data feeds of products do not appear to be comprehensive or specific enough for this purpose.

A special Microsoft landing page will be created for the portal which states the nature of the partnership and provides descriptions of the competency frameworks, OER, other digital learning objects, assessments, and credentials available. LFCC would like Microsoft to provide input on the contents of this page.

In addition, LFCC has been in preliminary discussions with staff from the American Council of Education, the University of Maryland University College (the largest U.S. military enrollment worldwide), the Badge Alliance, IAAP, AHIMA, and the U.S. Army on ways to map military job codes and education to the national competency frameworks and industries targeted with this grant. Given the limited duration of the grant, a pilot project is desired using one of the competency maps to develop a proof of concept for a limited number of job codes and competencies. Microsoft's assistance in thinking about this effort and helping to jumpstart the effort nationally is much desired.

LFCC would like to leverage Microsoft resources in building other types of partnerships and a shared vision for personalized learning tied to competencies using OER. This could include grant funding opportunities, networking, advertising, affiliate/referral sales, cobranding opportunities, CBE-related consulting, and other types of strategic planning which will help sustain this non-profit portal.

Based on this discussion, the following action items by Microsoft are presented for consideration:

Action items

- (1) A Microsoft landing page will be created by LFCC with input on the contents and display.
- (2) Microsoft will review the metadata XML file with sample records (attached) and use it to submit metadata for as many OER and digital learning resources as possible related to the grant industries and occupations.
- (3) Microsoft will provide assistance in mapping the OER metadata it supplies to one or more of its own or the competency frameworks used for the K2W programs (attached).
- (4) Microsoft will promote and help market the portal to a variety of learner-focused audiences with individual and group communication through email, lists, conference presentations, webinars, publications, and other venues.
- (5) Where a Microsoft learning object, assessment, or credential is promoted, affiliate sales revenue will be generated when appropriate and possible.
- (6) Opportunities for Microsoft and its companies to advertise on the portal for content and services will be explored. (Rate card attached).
- (7) Microsoft will assist in a pilot project to map military job codes to IT-related competencies.
- (8) Microsoft will help K2W leverage other types of partnerships for this shared vision for personalized learning tied to competencies using OER. This could include grant funding opportunities, networking, advertising, affiliate/referral sales, cobranding opportunities, CBE-related consulting, and other types of strategic planning to help sustain the portal.

Knowledge to Work (K2W):

A Portal for Competencies and Individualized Learning

Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC)

173 Skirmisher Lane

Middletown, VA 22645-1745

KnowledgeToWork.com

HigherEd.org

LFCC.edu



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

This work was funded in part by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. This work was created by Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC) and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership.