**NWCCD Strategy 3.2: Developing or Modifying Courses and Programs**

Industry Context:

Understanding the industry or industries for which the programs being developed under the TAACCCT grant is a critical component for determining the methods for acquiring industry input on curricula through Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) outlines, developing context for program assessments, promotional materials for student recruitment, challenges to offering career awareness events as part of the marketing effort, and more. A thorough understanding of industry growth or retraction in the college’s service area provides a context against which courses and programs are designed and the success of program can be measured.

Stakeholders:

The development of a new program, or the restructuring of an existing program, has a number of stakeholders with varying requirements and objectives. An analysis of the local job market helps determine what companies need to be approached as potential partners. In the case of the Mining Technology program offered by the Northern Wyoming Community College District (NWCCD), a strong relationship with area mines was necessary in order to: determine the need for a program that would train workers in the skills needed for foreman, supervisory, and managerial positions; determine the shift schedules for the various mines, as that would impact the scheduling of courses; develop a partnership whereby mines would refer workers to the program for acquisition of needed skillsets; and develop partnerships whereby mines could contribute supplies for training, staff as adjunct faculty, and preferential hiring for program graduates.

Faculty as a stakeholder in the development of curricula is equally important. In NWCCD’s case, mine-specific courses draw faculty from area mines to develop the curricula, as such individuals have industry-specific knowledge beyond that available to traditional academics. Additionally, faculty that teach courses in general education or classes not directly related to mining technology must be available and willing to modify their courses to fit the needs of the non-traditional student, particularly if the program is to be developed using an accelerated delivery model or designed to be offered in online or hybrid formats.

Administrative staff across various departments within the college itself must be willing to participate as well, even if such participation is in a limited capacity. While the main purpose of a TAACCCT grant is to develop programs that train students for reentry to industry, a side effect of the development process is that inefficient or non-existent policies and procedures that facilitate the development of a program are identified. Unless administrative staff fully buys into the development process and is willing to develop or modify policies and procedures, the grant staff may encounter significant slowdown in the development and implementation of the TAACCCT-funded program(s).

The final, but most important, stakeholders are the students themselves. Analysis of job trends in the industry or industries being served by the TAACCCT grant provides indicators for job demand. If a particular industry does not have a projected growth where demand for qualified workers is evident there will be little demand by potential students for the program. Additionally, an analysis of students’ demand for accelerated programs, flexible scheduling, and openness to online or hybrid delivery models will inform the methods by which various strategies within the TAACCCT grant must be developed to adequately serve the needs of non-traditional students.

Delivery Environment:

The Northern Wyoming Community College District (NWCCD), a two college district, has selected Gillette College as the delivery environment for the accelerated model. Gillette College’s role in the community is to serve the population of Campbell County, Wyoming; with the majority of employment centered in the area mines or in support industries, this facility is ideally situated to develop, test, modify, and delivery a new academic delivery model that best supports both the students and employers.

Process for Developing or Modifying Courses and Programs:

Developing or modifying a course or program requires the involvement of the Curriculum and Standards Committee. NWCCD has provided the 2014-2015 Bylaws and Guidelines manual for inclusion in the TAACCCT grant documentation to illustrate the process for the proposal, review, and approval of new or modified materials.

Timeframe for Development:

Testing and refinement of the Accelerated Mining Technology degree program covers the period of April 2012 through September 2015 under the DOL-ETA TAACCCT Round 1 grant award. Initially developed under the DOL-ETA High Job Growth Initiative grant, the delivery model has been modified to break the program into three certificates that will stack into an Associate of Applied Science degree. Final testing and modification of the program will be complete in March 2015, with the remaining time used to evaluate the efficacy of the model through data analysis and reporting.