

Retail  
Management  
Certificate

Community College  
**Toolkit**



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# What is the RMC Program?

The Retail Management Certificate (RMC) is a community college business program where students learn the key skills needed for retail management success. Classes are currently available at a growing number of community college campuses throughout the U.S. and 100% online.

## Why Implement the RMC Program?

Retail employs over 42 million people\* in the United States and the need for people with skills in marketing, management, technology, budgeting, and leadership is at an all time high.

By offering the Retail Management Certificate for college credit at your community college you are able to provide your students with the core competencies defined by industry as the most relevant and focused for success in retail.

Additionally, your college will receive a number of benefits.

- Help to close the skills gap for business and industry by providing in-demand skills employers need.
- Link students to a career pathway in one the nation's largest sectors.
- Provide students with skills and competencies that are transferable across multiple sectors.
- Increase college completion rates, because the Retail Management Certificate is an industry specific certificate that can be completed in as little one year.
- Students earn 2 certificates, one from your college and one from industry (WAFC).
- Receive access to a prescriptive course structure and OER curriculum aligned directly with student learning outcomes.
- Be part of a network of community colleges across the nation for support and partnership.
- Gain direct access to over 7,500 leading retailers and the opportunity to link students directly to jobs.

*\* Source: PwC. The Economic Impact of the US Retail Industry, September 2014.*

# Flow of Action Steps





# STEP 1:

## Identify Labor Market Need

Community Colleges have a long history of partnering with business and industry to create programs that meet regional job market needs. But never before has the link between college education and postgraduate job prospects been more important.\* Colleges must ensure that the programs they offer meet the needs and expectations of employers, states and students. Labor market research can help you meet these

needs. This research can help you better understand and improve the link between what programs you offer and what happens to your students after graduation. It will also help you develop a winning statement of need about why your college should launch a Retail Management Certificate program.

### Labor Market Data & College Structure Considerations

- Is retail a major economic sector in your area?
- Have you been contacted by retailers to start a program?
- How many retailers are in your community? Are they hiring? Can they guarantee jobs for graduates? If so, how many? What do these jobs pay? How are they currently educating their workforce? Visit [www.RetailManagementCertificate.com](http://www.RetailManagementCertificate.com) to download an “Expression of Interest Form” to use as a tool to measure demand in your area.
- Do you or does someone at you college have relationships with the retailers in your community?
- Do you already have an existing retail management or similar business program? What are the enrollment rates for these programs?
- What would it cost to develop a new program or modify an existing one?
- Do you have staff to support a new program?

In addition to these questions, you will also want to consider any unique aspects of the local labor market and industry trends. Engaging with the local community is one of the best ways to ensure you are meeting the needs of employers, the state and most importantly, your students.

\* Source: *The Aspen Institute. Using Labor Market Data to ensure student success. 2012*

# STEP 2:

## Align Curriculum with Established Outcomes and Competencies

**Our goal is to provide our students with the most relevant and comprehensive education experience.**

To ensure we are meeting this goal, the Retail Management Certificate program was recently revalidated by a panel of industry experts made up of retailers and community college faculty. The result of this process included incorporating technology, and enhancements to accelerate students' learning and increase certificate completion rates.


Additionally, it included the creation of an academic panel and a formal curriculum alignment and review process for all approved retail management certificate college partners.

### Steps to complete the Curriculum Alignment and Review Process

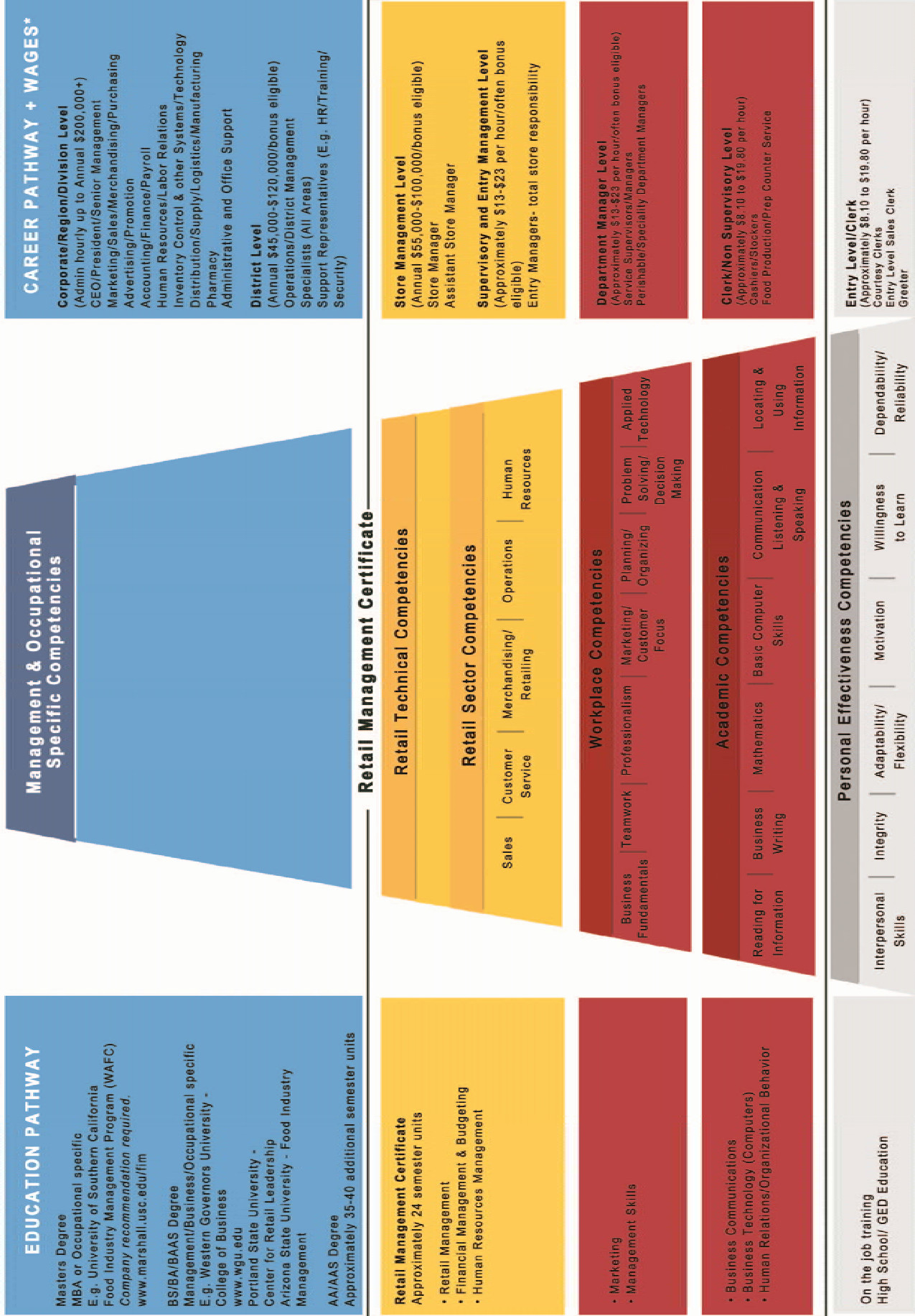
Visit [RetailManagementCertificate.com](http://RetailManagementCertificate.com) for details.

1. View a complete list of competencies and course outcomes.
2. Complete the curriculum crosswalk form to assess where your college is in relation to meeting the required course outcomes. Courses must meet a minimum of 75% match for all outcomes.
3. Return via email to [wafc.consortium@gmail.com](mailto:wafc.consortium@gmail.com) or submit online through the RMC website.
4. Once received, our academic panel will review your crosswalk and provide feedback or approval.



See how your curriculum aligns with the Retail Competency Model. 

# Retail Management Certificate Aligned with Retail Competency Model



For more information visit: [www.retailmanagementcertificate.com](http://www.retailmanagementcertificate.com)

\*Source: United States Bureau Labor Statistics  
Pyramid Source: [www.careeronestop.org/competencymodel](http://www.careeronestop.org/competencymodel)  
Graphic Last Updated: 06/18/16

# Complete your Curriculum Crosswalk

Community Colleges seeking Approved Partner College status must demonstrate that each of their selected courses contain a minimum of 75% of the required outcomes. The outcomes are divided into eight sections, reflecting the "ideal" 8-course program.

To complete your crosswalk, download a copy from the RMC website and follow the instructions provided. The following is an example of how to complete the alignment for each course.



## How to complete course alignment

1. Identify the courses at your college that most closely align with the WAFC course outcomes. Please include only one course per column.
2. Type course name and number in the provided field.
3. Indicate next to the competency if your course aligns with an x.
4. Tally the total percentage match for each course.

WAFC requires the following Course Outcomes - Goal is 75% match per course/topic area	Course Name & Applicable Course #	Course Name & Applicable Course #	Course Name & Applicable Course #
<b><u>Human Relations/Organizational Behavior</u></b>	Human Relations in Business – BUS 110	Business Supervision – BUS 201	Introduction to Human Relations – BUS 105
Identify the challenges and opportunities of managing a diverse workforce	x	x	x
Define how individual and group human behavioral theories and concepts are applied in the workplace	x	x	
Apply different motivational theories, reward strategies, and life-work balance considerations to maximize individual and group performance	x		x
Identify strategies that address the challenges of interfacing technology and employees	x		
Select different leadership styles and management models in order to respond to a variety of situations	x		
Select optimal methodologies to deal with change-management and conflict resolution in the workplace	x	x	x
<b>Percent match per course</b>	100%	50%	50%





# STEP 3:

## Apply to Become an Approved College Partner

Join community colleges across the nation in offering the Retail Management Certificate program

- 1 Complete market data research and develop a statement of need.
- 2 Solicit support or approval for launching a new certificate from your college leadership.
- 3 Submit your curriculum crosswalk for review and approval.
- 4 Once approved, complete your college landing page form and submit a college logo. Your college will be added to the RMC website and the bi-annual advisory meeting invitation list.

### College Criteria

Be an accredited community or junior college in the U.S.

Offer Retail Management Certificate program for academic credit.

Meet the industry-approved competencies and course outcomes through a series of 8-9 courses.

Award a Community College Certificate to students successfully completing the program.

Recognize many Retail Management Certificate program students are working adults and course format and scheduling should reflect that.

# STEP 4:

## Determine Your Outreach Plan to Students, Employers & Community Partners

### Marketing Materials



Tri-fold Brochure



Postcard

Customizable print materials, including brochures, postcards and more, are available online for you to download and share.



Download marketing materials at [RetailManagementCertificate.com](http://RetailManagementCertificate.com).

### Outreach & Student Recruitment

Promoting your RMC program to leadership, students and retailers will be essential for launching and growing your program.

#### Strategies for engagement include:

##### Leadership

- Provide labor market data highlighting the value of retail in your community (jobs, economy, etc.)
- Share student completion rates and success stories

##### Students

- Promote campus-wide, in catalog, on social media and on website
- Educate student advisors about the program
- Highlight career opportunities in retail industry (salaries, growth, opportunities)
- Share student success stories
- Support students in making connections with retailers
- Encourage current students to pursue dual certifications

##### Employers and Community Partners

- Connect with local and regional employers and establish partnerships
- Demonstrate value of program to employers
- Build relationships with workforce investment groups, economic development and chambers of commerce

# STEP 5:

## Analyze Results & Manage Sustainability



Our most successful partner colleges understand that building a robust program takes time and requires ongoing analysis and fine tuning to meet the needs of the local labor market and to ensure students are receiving the best quality education possible. For example, many of our colleges now offer the program 100% online based on feedback from students and student enrollment tracking.

### Strategies for assessing and building a robust program include:

- ❑ **Actively Participate in State-wide or Regional Retail Management Certificate Advisory Meetings (in-person or by phone)**  
Stay current on the latest retail trends and participate in a dialogue about the curriculum.
- ❑ **Investigate and Partner with all Types of Retailers**  
The skills and competencies in the RMC program translate to all areas of retail and business.
- ❑ **Evaluate Performance**  
Continuously assessing the performance of your instructors and the quality of your courses, ensures student retention and ongoing success of your program. Student surveys offer an excellent source for this type of information.
- ❑ **Track Enrollment and Program Completion**  
Keeping a running count of the number of students enrolled and completing the program, and any employment details (employer name, position, years of experience, etc.) helps you demonstrate the value of the program to key stakeholders (employers, academic senate, leadership, and economic development organizations).
- ❑ **Monitor Student Completion and Success**  
Creating a system to check-in with students and provide counseling as needed adds a personal touch to your program and can be a key factor in a student's overall success in the program.

# Best Practices

The following are some strategies for a successful Retail Management Certificate program at your college.

## Operations

- Appoint dedicated faculty & staff.
- Offer the re-validated 8-course curriculum.
- Create a program that includes flexibility for varying schedules and allows students to complete the program quickly. Most students are working adults.
- Provide affordable tuition & textbooks. For example, use open education resources when possible.
- Partner with local retailers.

## Student Support

- Simplify application process.
- Offer academic/career planning.
- Provide students with a single point of contact.
- Waive placement tests whenever possible.
- Track and monitor student performance. Provide counseling when needed.

## Student Success

- Encourage students to take Human Relations course first.
- Promote teamwork and collaboration.
- Provide flexible course scheduling.
- Teach courses 100% online and on site.
- Create cohorts with retailers on campus or satellite locations (job site).
- Provide master schedules and block registration.

# Quick Links

## **Retail Management Certificate Website**

[www.RetailManagementCertificate.com](http://www.RetailManagementCertificate.com)

## **Video testimonials from retailers, students, colleges and other advocates in the industry.**

<http://retailmanagementcertificate.com/for-employers/videos/>

<http://retailmanagementcertificate.com/for-students/testimonials/>

## **Participating Retailers**

<http://retailmanagementcertificate.com/about-us/participating-employers/>

## **Participating State Associations**

<http://retailmanagementcertificate.com/about-us/state-associations/>

## **Participating Community Colleges**

<http://retailmanagementcertificate.com/for-students/participating-colleges/>

## **National Online Providers**

<http://retailmanagementcertificate.com/national/>

# FAQs

## **Can I offer the program through contract education?**

No. The structure of the program is not intended to be offered as a contract education program but rather as a launching point towards an associate or bachelor's degree.

This model has been proven over the 15 years of working directly with industry partners that are seeking education for their employees over training. It also helps keep costs lower for employees and companies as contract education tends to be more expensive.

## **Do I have to offer the program in a face-to-face format?**

No. Colleges may choose to offer the program 100% online.

## **Does my college need to be located in the Western United States?**

No. Originally established by the Western Association of Food Chains, the program continues to gain endorsement from leading organizations, including the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) and National Grocers Association (NGA), and is expanding nationally.

## **Must the program be for college credit?**

Yes, all courses must be available for college credit. The program is intended to serve as a launching point towards an associate or bachelor's degree.

## **What companies support the program?**

We are adding new companies all the time and encourage you to invite local retailers to participate. See a current list of participating employers online at [RetailManagementCertificate.com](http://RetailManagementCertificate.com).

## **Is the program only relevant to the grocery industry?**

No. The approved curriculum is relevant to all areas of retail and business. View the course listing online at [RetailManagementCertificate.com](http://RetailManagementCertificate.com).

# Industry Support



Food Marketing Institute (FMI) - The Food Marketing Institute proudly advocates on behalf of the food retail industry. FMI's U.S. members operate nearly 40,000 retail food stores and 25,000 pharmacies, representing a combined annual sales volume of almost \$770 billion. Through programs in public affairs, food safety, research, education and industry relations, FMI offers resources and provides valuable benefits to more than 1,225 food retail and wholesale member companies in the United States and around the world. FMI Membership covers the spectrum of diverse venues where food is sold, including single owner grocery stores, large multi-store supermarket chains and mixed retail stores. To learn more about FMI visit [www.fmi.org](http://www.fmi.org).



Western Association of Food Chains (WAFC) - Established in 1921, the Western Association of Food Chains is a non-profit organization comprised of retailers and wholesalers in the Western United States representing over 7,500 supermarkets and \$200 billion dollars in annual sales. The WAFC's primary mission is to provide educational and leadership opportunities for food industry associates that help advance employees into successful careers.

The WAFC's most far reaching educational program is the Retail Management Certificate, an accredited community college program that provides the core skills and knowledge to move into a management role in the retail industry. The WAFC's education efforts are guided by their board of directors, which includes many of the food industry's top leaders. WAFC company employees are strongly encouraged to earn the Retail Management certificate and receive special benefits upon completion. To learn more about the WAFC visit [www.wafc.com](http://www.wafc.com).

*This workforce solution was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The solution was created by the grantee 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. This solution is copyrighted by the institution that created it. Internal use, by an organization and/or personal use by an individual for non-commercial purposes, is permissible. All other uses require the prior authorization of the copyright owner.*

# Retail Management Certificate

