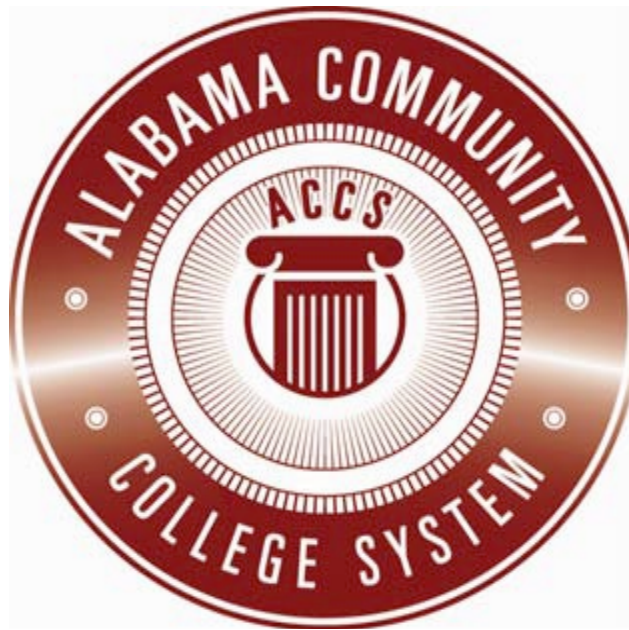


Alabama Community College System



CTE Program Advisory Committee Guidebook

June 22, 2015

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a member of this Career and Technical (CTE) Program Advisory committee. You provide the means for technical education to remain relevant to business and industry needs. Your ability to validate the instruction that students receive is one of the College's assurances that graduates will be capable of performing necessary job skills. As a committee member who is familiar with technology and a potential employer of graduates, you have a unique perspective of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for technical graduates. Your observations and opinions provide an informed viewpoint that is invaluable to the educational process. The instructor uses recommendations made by the Committee to design, develop, operate, assess, and support CTE programs.

CTE advisory committees create partnerships between educational programs and the community. Community members are given the opportunity to become familiar with all the technical programs offered at our college. Both formally and informally, advisory members communicate information about technical education programs to others in the community.

Alabama statutes and State Board Trustees rules also require that advisory committees be appointed to advise instructional staff and administration on the development, operation, and evaluation of programs. Requirements from the federal and state levels have been incorporated into the guidebook. The primary role of the local advisory committees is to advise technical education planners on current job needs and relevancy of courses in the curriculum.

Functions of the CTE Advisory Committee

The Committee plays an important role in bringing education and industry closer together. While it is important that students have an education which is grounded in theory, it is *imperative* that the education be “reality-based.” The technical graduates should be able to function effectively in the workplace with a limited orientation which covers specific policies and/or procedures of the employee agency and reviews specialized skills of which the graduate may have had limited experience. The following activities, although not all inclusive, represent the major contributions of the advisory committee.

- **Assess Occupational Needs** - The advisory committee provides information about the job market and the occupational training needs of the community. Members may be aware of a void in the work place for certain types of technical workers which are needed. Members should make suggestions or recommendations for program accreditation, and credentials expected of students considering the chosen career. Committees also provide information related to occupational information, skill levels, placement, and job-related activities and strategies, new and emerging occupations and technologies, trends and developments in business and industry, and the community.
- **Review Programs** - Members of the Advisory Committee review the technical programs for their selected discipline at least once a year and may suggest changes in theory or lab experiences based on results of follow-up questionnaires, experience with graduates, and/or issues related to program accreditation.
- **Plan for Equipment and Facilities** - The Advisory Committees assists the College in planning for equipment and facilities. Specific equipment may be needed so that graduates requiring extensive orientations to use equipment that is the industry standard. In addition, members of the Committee may identify facilities no longer adequate or safe and may make suggestions for change.
- **Foster Community Relations** - The public’s understanding of the technical programs at the College depends directly on the information emanating from the college. The perception of the community is based on the quality of the graduates as well as on the messages conveyed by members of the Advisory Committee. The advisory committee is an important communication link with the community and the industry that cannot be overlooked.
- **Place Students** - The members of the Advisory Committee work closely with the College about employment opportunities and may assist graduates in securing employment.
- **Recommend Faculty** - Advisory Committee members may recommend qualified professionals for employment as full-time or part-time instructors. Much assistance may be needed to identify faculty who have the experience, initiative, and academic qualifications required to implement new technical programs.
- **Provide Speakers** - Committee members are valuable as speakers due to their familiarity and expertise with the problems of education as well as the problems and opportunities of the work place. In addition, they may suggest other speakers.

Guidelines for Fulfilling the Responsibilities for the Advisory Committee

Curriculum content advisement is vital to an effective technical education program. In its review of curriculum content, an advisory committee focuses on one primary concern: Do graduates possess the job and essential workplace skills needed by employers in the industry served?

Notice that this function is referred to as advisement on content. What to teach is a proper responsibility of an advisory committee, while how to teach is the responsibility of instructional and administrative personnel. However, observations on new instruction methods or use of technology are always appreciated.

An advisory committee might follow these steps in fulfilling the curriculum content advisement function of an existing technical program:

- Review the goals and terminal objectives of the technical program;
- Review the performance objectives for each course;
- Review the employment needs of the community and the skills necessary to meet these needs;
- Compare the content of the technical program to the needs of the industry;
- Recommend optimum length of courses or programs, with suggestions for and revisions in existing programs.

Career Guidance and Student Placement

Advisement on career guidance and student placement begins with a thorough review of the program's activities. After review, the guidance and placement function is a good area for creativity and the development of individual approaches.

In the field of career guidance, committee members may assist by holding regular, informal visits with students; by serving as guest speakers on the subject of job opportunities and the expectations of employers; and by conducting mock interviews.

To assist with student placement, advisory committees may:

- Locate prospective employers to interview graduates for jobs;
- Inform local employers of the capacity of the technical education program and provide information on current graduates;
- Help students locate part-time jobs in their specific technical education field during instruction; and
- Obtain scholarships or awards for outstanding students.

Community Relations

Advisory committees effectively promote public relations for technical education programs. Among the activities the committee might consider are:

- Sponsorship of news releases, special days, programs for civic groups, and open houses;
- Obtaining contributions to promote technical education programs through advertising;
- Participation in presentations to high schools, civic organizations, and;
- Representing the college in professional and trade associations.

The advisory committee itself is a major resource for technical education. It also serves as a coordinator for identifying other available community resources. A community resource can include any person, place, organization, or item that has instructional value. An advisory committee might:

- Locate potential stations for work based learning;
- Locate appropriate local businesses and industries for student tours;
- Identify community representatives as guest speakers for various topics of instruction;
- Identify any community resource that can be used by the technical education program to improve instruction; and
- Arrange for in-service teacher-training clinics or workshops.

Equipment, Facilities, and Resources Review

Adequate equipment and facilities are critical to an effective technical education program. Students must learn to master the equipment they will use after employment. One of the most important functions of an advisory committee is to recommend the equipment and facilities needed to provide students with an optimal learning environment.

Generally, this function falls into three categories:

- Review and evaluation of the available facilities and equipment;
- Survey of businesses and industries to continually identify new equipment and materials used; and
- Establishment of a recommended plan for procuring the needed equipment.

To assist with specific equipment procurement activities an advisory committee might:

- Assist technical education program personnel with surveys to determine types of equipment graduates will be expected to use in industry;
- Recommend facility or equipment improvements needed to bring training to current industry standards;
- Assist instructional personnel in locating sources of donated or low cost instructional supplies and equipment;
- Secure outside opportunities for instructors to attend professional or industrial meeting and training sessions; and
- Obtain current industrial publications and visual aids for the school.

Community Resource Identification Program Review

In reality, all the functions of an advisory committee fall under the umbrella of program review. A group is qualified to give advice only when it has first carefully reviewed the existing situation. In this sense, the advisory committee's program review activities are not separate from but a part of its other functions.

The program review functions of an advisory committee should include:

- Assisting with long-range planning and the formation of goals for the technical education program;
- Assisting in evaluating the technical education program by selecting appropriate evaluation activities, identifying needed data, and interpreting the evaluation information;
- Reviewing placement and follow-up results; and
- Participating in formal program reviews conducted by specialized accrediting/certification agencies, the Division of Community Colleges, and the local college.

Use of Committee Recommendation

The function of an advisory committee is to make recommendations that will assist program personnel and other administrators in developing and improving technical programs. However, in some instances, financial and other considerations may make it impossible to implement all recommendations made by advisory committees. All recommendations will be considered, and the report of the action taken and the reason for that action will be given to advisory committee members.

Program directors follow through by:

- Sending minutes of the meeting, including a recommendation section, to all program personnel, and appropriate administrators;
- Completing equipment recommendation forms for all recommended equipment purchases;
- Working with other college personnel to reach decisions based on the recommendations of the advisory committee;
- Reporting the actions to the committee.

Organization of Advisory Committee

Committee Structure

Race, gender, handicapped, and student representation should be considered on all committees. A program should have a minimum of seven voting members with a maximum of up to 24 non-voting members. The Dean of Instruction or equivalent serves as an ex-officio member and advisor to the Committee and should not count in the maximum or minimum total count. As a minimum membership should include: members from corporations, business and industry, vendors and suppliers, association and affiliate organizations. Also consider including as ex-officio non-voting members other faculty and staff (i.e. related academic instructors, secondary instructors, support services, career coaches). Consideration should be given to having a joint college and secondary education advisory committee.

Selection of Members

Generally, members should have competency in the program specialty area or an understanding of the program and the community at large. An exception to the above may be a lay person directly involved in a related program field such as counseling, public relations, or administration of a business or industry. The member should be interested in participating in the preparation of persons to enter the field and should be actively involved in the specialized field. The individual should have the necessary time and motivation to devote to the committee's functions. Members are selected by the full-time faculty in the specific programs.

Length of Service

Advisory committee members are appointed to serve one to three years with the option to continue based on their availability and active participation. The length of service should be considered so that the tenure of service will not constitute a burden to members and others who are qualified and interested in serving will have the opportunity to do so. The terms of service of committee members may be staggered in the interest of continuity.

Meetings

Advisory committees should meet a minimum of twice per year with additional meetings as needed for effective program coordination. Consider the use of virtual meetings (i.e. Go-to-Meetings ©), conference calls, and other technology based methods.

- The advisory committee elects a chairperson to serve for the duration of the term. The Dean or Instructor may serve as a temporary committee chairperson during the initial establishment of the committee and until a committee chairperson is elected.
- The instructor acts as staff administrator to the committee, recording, typing, and distributing minutes to all committee members including ex-officio members and to site administrators. The instructor also provides other services to the committee as required to ensure effective meetings and flow of information.
- Notice of meetings, including an agenda, is prepared by the chairperson. The instructor distributes notice of meeting with an agenda at least one week prior to the meeting date. It is extremely important that advisory committee members have input into the agenda.
- Minutes should follow a format of action and/or recommendations of all agenda items.
- Minutes should be centrally located and stored for a period of three years. This file will serve as a monitoring system to evaluate effectiveness of the technical program advisory committees.