

North Carolina Community Colleges



SKILLS CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

Challenge

North Carolina Community Colleges have always offered certification programs of one kind or another. However, before partnering with the Manufacturing Institute, they utilized somewhat of a shotgun approach. Now, they build credentials into programs to validate skills and to provide opportunities to use portable and flexible credentials in developing a workforce for the future.

Action

The first step in taking action was to review and revise the current programs. North Carolina Community Colleges engaged in a Curriculum Improvement Project (CIP) in which third party validated credentials were integrated into their programs. In addition, the manufacturing industry was getting more involved in workforce development.

The next steps were figuring out how to build in fees for certifications and getting industry buy-in. After the program was implemented, the benefits and value of certifications were realized.

NC Community Colleges offer certifications the National Career Readiness Certificate, Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC), National Institute for Metalforming Skills (NIMS), American Society for Quality (ASQ), American Welding Society (AWS), among many others.

Results

>> Redefinition of Completion:

Credentialing systems have changed the way completion is defined. It is measured not only in degrees, but also in number of certifications.

>> Company Demand:

Some companies won't even look at students unless they have credentials. Others have built it into their training programs so students are coming to NC Community Colleges for training.

>> Program Marketing:

The certifications become a great advertising tool for the colleges because it indicates that NC Community Colleges offer a nationally portable and stackable credential that is valued in the work place.

>> Positive Student Perceptions:

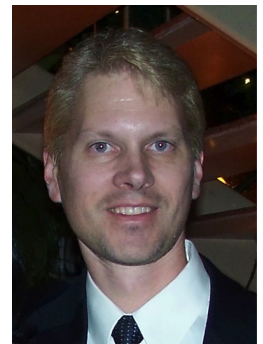
Students understand the value and realize the benefits of being more prepared for work and having the right skills to find jobs.



For More Information:

200 W Jones St
Raleigh, NC 27603
(919) 807-7100
www.nccommunitycolleges.edu

“Students with credentials are more valuable than those with pure associate degrees. The right credential should be something that we are measured on as a sign of success for our students.”



-Matthew Meyer, Ph.D.,
Associate Vice President STEM Innovations,
North Carolina Community Colleges