

Creating Pathways to Degree Completion

Presented by: Kate Dins, PhD

Goals for This Session

- Present the process for developing a Career Pathways roadmaps and certificates utilizing research and application.
- Provide information and strategies for faculty and employer involvement, use of labor market data, and development of alternative curriculum delivery strategies such as “chunking.”
- Discuss successes, challenges, and lessons learned in developing Career Pathways roadmaps and certificates.

Programs Included in Pathways Study:

- Manufacturing Technology
- Visual Communications Technology
- Health Information Technology
- Phlebotomy
- Laboratory Assisting and Histology
- Medical Assisting
- Patient Care Technician
- Bookkeeping
- Criminal Justice-Corrections
- Vocational ESL programs.

Features of Pathway Programs

- Program specific advisors and mandatory student advising;
- Program orientations and cohort groups;
- Materials developed to provide details about pathways;
- Financial aid designed for students in pathway programs.

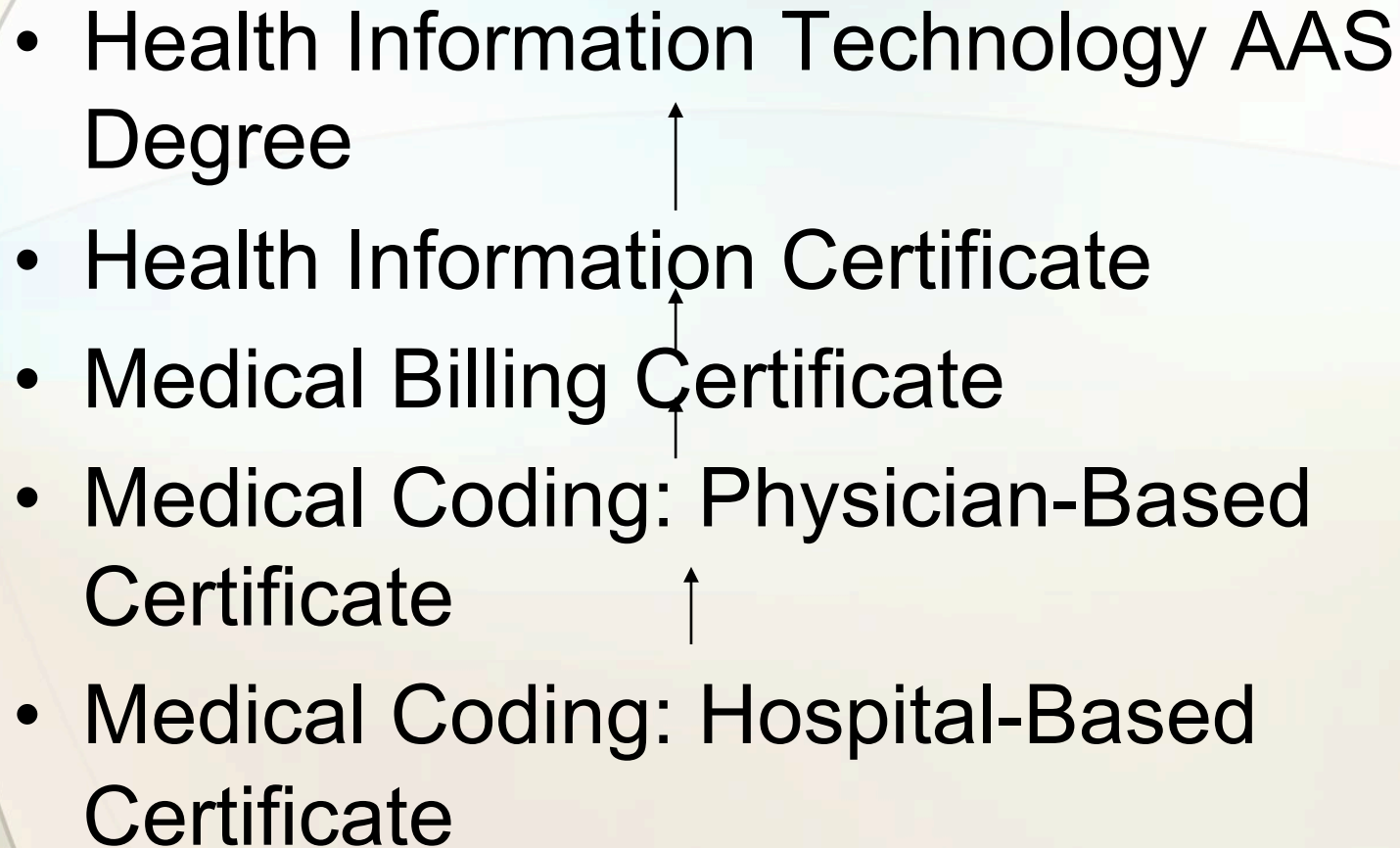
Features of Pathway Programs

- Faculty leadership in curriculum and program changes;
- Strong institutional leadership and administrative support;
- Strong involvement of employers and advisory committees;
- Securing external funding supported development of chunks and pathways;
- Tracking and evaluation provided feedback leading to program improvement.

Features of Pathway Programs

- Changes in how faculty workload was organized and calculated;
- Curriculum focused on skills and outcomes;
- Curriculum and scheduling flexibility:
 - Open-entry, open-exit, self-paced.
 - A compressed, condensed model.
 - Packaging existing courses as a chunk.
 - Redesign and re-packaging of curriculum

Chunking a Degree: One Example

- Health Information Technology AAS Degree
 - Health Information Certificate
 - Medical Billing Certificate
 - Medical Coding: Physician-Based Certificate
 - Medical Coding: Hospital-Based Certificate
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Pathways Approach

GOAL

Apply the concepts of “chunking” and “pathways” to existing College systems in a way that improves student access to:

- Educational opportunity
- Better jobs
- Economic security

Pathways Approach



“The career pathways approach helps community colleges better align their various mission areas of workforce development, academic credentialing and transfer preparation and remediation.”

The Career Pathways How-to Guide, Davis Jenkins and Christopher Spence, October 2006, Workforce Strategy Center

Overview: Training Program Goals

- Upgrade skills so that students are employable within 4-6 months
- A “bridge” between PCC’s academic departments and workforce development programs
- Increase access to academic programs for disadvantaged and immigrant communities
- Serve approximately 240 individuals annually

Occupational Areas

Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL)

Direct Care Worker	High Tech Skills	Nursing Assistant
Health Care	Office Skills	Welding
Institutional Food Service		

Professional/Technical

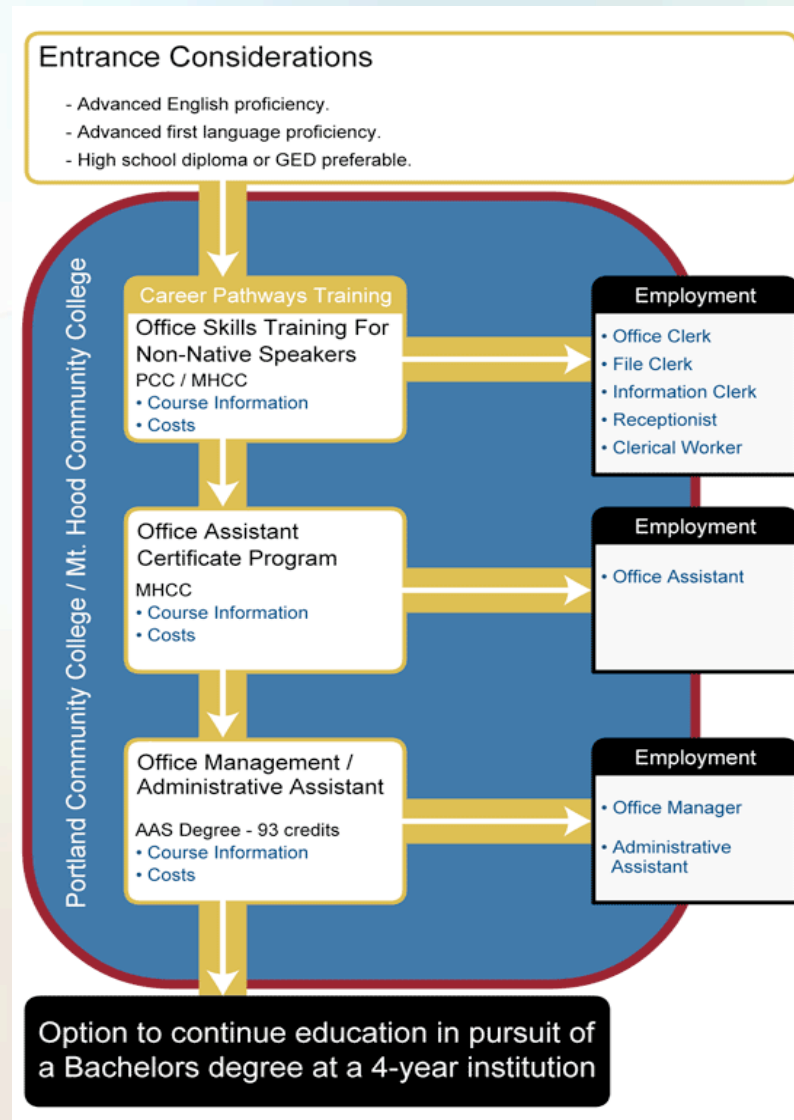
Accounting	Emergency Telecom.	Office Specialist
Comp. Applications	HVAC Installer	Pharmacy Technician
Comp. Support Spec.	Machine Manufacturing	Phlebotomy
C.N.A. Plus	Medical Coding/Billing	Prof. Development
Criminal Justice	Med. Customer Svc.	Retail Sales & Service

Features

Vocational ESL Pathways

- Integrated curriculum
- Cohort learning
- Internships
- Intensive wrap-around student services which include:
 - Staff: Coordinator, Employment Specialist, Instructor, Teaching Assistant
 - 12-20 hours/week instruction for 8-16 weeks, 6-12 hours/week internship
 - Job placement services for at least 2 months post-training

Example: VESL Office Skills



VESL Office Skills: Irina Agarycheva



- Irina Agarycheva immigrated to the United States over 14 years ago.
- She enrolled in the Training to improve her chances of getting employed in a professional workplace.
- Irina completed an internship with a local College in their Athletic department as a program aide.
- Employed in a full time position advocating for victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault at a local social service agency.

VESL Results: 2005-06

- Training options = 7
- Internships completed = 100%
- Employment Rate = 87%
- Total Trained = 120+

Features

Professional/Technical Pathways

- “Chunked” curriculum
- Cohort learning
- Training that leads to State-sanctioned credentials
- Wrap-around student services which include:
 - Recruitment and advising
 - Career Planning course
 - Internships
 - Job placement services

PCC Career Pathways Certificates

Approximately 26 Certificates in process or approved in the following academic areas:

Gerontology (3)

Facilities Maintenance (1)

Computer Applications and Office Systems (6)

Emergency Management Services (1)

Business Administration (2)

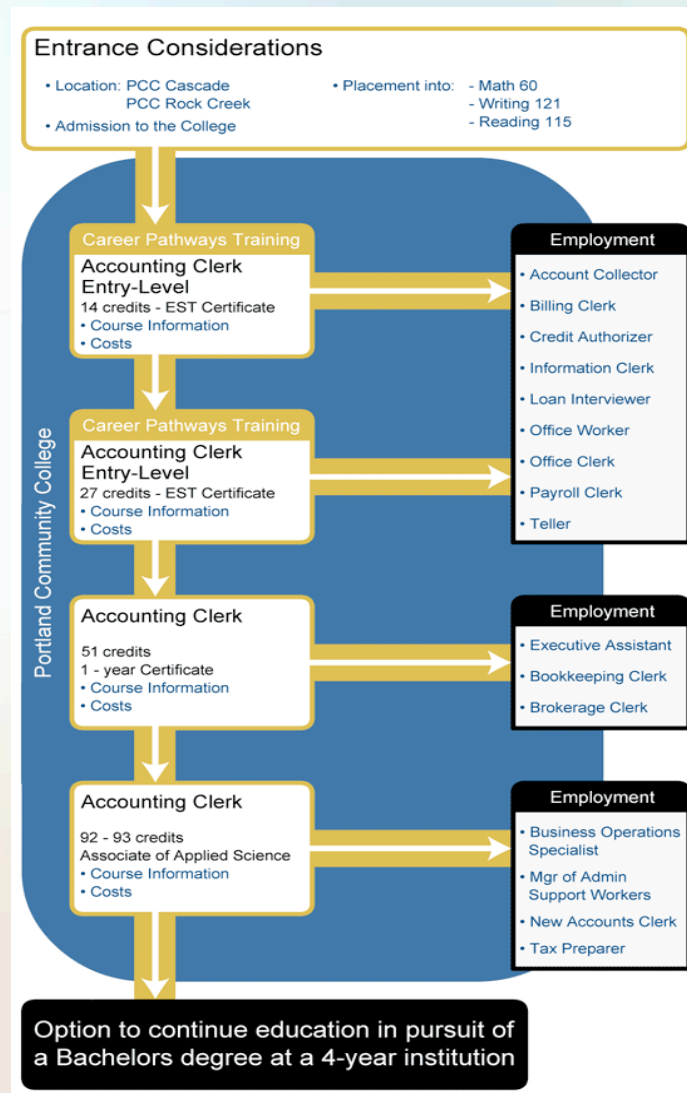
Computer Information Systems (10)

Criminal Justice (1)

Interior Design (1)

Machine Manufacturing (1)

Example: Accounting/Bookkeeping



Example: Chunking

Accounting – Term 1, 14 credits

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	
5-6pm	Intro. to Business (BA 101)	Computers in Business (BA 131)			
6-7pm				Intro. to Accounting (BA 111)	Comp. Accounting Applications (BA 228)
7-8pm					
8-9pm					
9-10pm					

Example: Nedra and Toni



Nedra Lindell

"I am making twice as much as I was before I got my GED and into Career Pathways. I've been wanting to do accounting since I was 23, but I had two kids to raise..."



Toni Hibler

Toni had worked for the airlines for 14 years. Then, after 9-11, she was laid off. At the conclusion of her Pathway she accepted a position with Sun Supply doing accounts payable. She has completed her 1 year certificate in Accounting and is on track to earn her Associates Degree this year.

Results

Accounting/Bookkeeping Pathway 2001-05

3.46 cumulative GPA in 5 core Business courses.

Of the 56 students who completed nearly 79% were employed in jobs related to their occupational training.

Professional/technical Pathways 2005-06

Training Options = 13

Employment Rate = 87%

Total Trained = 120+

Guidelines For Promoting Participation By Faculty And Staff

- Create peer learning opportunities through relationship-building among those who have participated in chunking and those new to it.
- Allocate college resources (+ and -) to encourage activities in support of chunking.
- Present information and examples to faculty and staff to demonstrate the specifics of chunking, particularly course sequencing and scheduling.

Guidelines for Supporting Students

- Effort is needed to complete the chunking of degrees and to offer credentials for each chunk.
- Create clear, understandable roadmaps and other materials that explain pathways to degree completion.
- Outreach to students to return after first and subsequent chunks.
- Create structures that support student retention and persistence – orientations, cohorts, program advising, tutoring, faculty/staff relationships with students, financial assistance.

Guidelines For Selection And Design

- There is no single design for creating pathways – the design must be tailored to student, program, and employer considerations.
- Use existing college committee structures such as curriculum committees to design and implement. Clearly connect the effort to instruction.
- Carefully plan course sequencing to avoid delays in access to required courses.
- Incorporate alternative scheduling and delivery of courses: Condense and accelerate!

Guidelines For Selection And Design

- The success of colleges implementing chunking to create pathways hinges on a sense of ownership over the process among faculty.
- “Incubate” new program designs – give them time to find their customer base.
- Cross-functional teams made up of faculty and staff from instruction, student services, and workforce development – possibly student and employer representatives as well.
- Community colleges must understand the connection between chunking and the development of a holistic, comprehensive educational and career pathway system.

Guidelines For Ensuring Connections To The Labor Market

- Increase labor market and occupational knowledge of faculty and staff. Is there a job available after each chunk?
- College administrators and faculty must stay current in their respective professional fields and must network with professional colleagues and expand their knowledge into new areas as their discipline changes.
- Build substantive industry partnerships, particularly with key business decision-makers.
- Market chunked programs as a benefit to business.
- Develop methods to evaluate the effectiveness of chunking.
- Create tools to explain and market chunks.

For More Information

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