

Appendix D: Discussion Points for Labor Market Analysis

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Net Job Market

- Given the number of enrollments that are projected for the program and that are necessary to support the program, are there enough openings locally to permit placement of the expected number of graduates?
- Has the job market been declining slowly? Holding steady? Growing slowly? Growing rapidly? Recently emerging?

Earning Potential

- What is the average initial salary?
- What is the average percentage of salary increase in two years? Five years?

Program Credibility /Career Potential

- If advanced degrees are typically needed for career advancement, will the courses required for this program transfer toward completion of the requirements for those degrees?
- Will this preparation permit students to remain current in their field?
- Does the program teach basic principles and theory, as well as application? Is it current and of sufficient rigor? Does it allow for later shifts in career?
- Does this preparation meet the needs of those already employed for upward mobility, entrepreneurship, or a career upgrade?
- Does the program prepare students to work in an ethnically diverse workforce and in an ethnically diverse, global market?

Emerging Occupations

- When job market data are not available or are not appropriate for a new CTE program in an area of emerging social need or technology, it becomes important to provide a careful analysis and explication of the specific demands of this new occupation.
- A carefully designed employer survey (see instructions for Employer Survey/Other Evidence of Need in form instructions) can elicit documentation demonstrating that employers:
 - Share the college's assumption regarding future direction(s) of the field and the skills that this emerging industry will require of employees
 - Recognize the value of the proposed degree or certificate in the hiring or promoting of staff

Competitive Fields

Colleges are often called upon to provide training that students greatly desire, even where the job prospects are limited and the field is highly competitive. In such occupations—often in the arts and entertainment—it is talent rather than education that drives hiring.

While no community college certificate can substitute for talent, a program that is exceptionally well designed to identify and develop talent can still be justified when few programs of similar quality exist in the college service area.

Career Technical Education Skills

Many kinds of certificates are of occupational benefit to students already employed. In such circumstances, the program objectives and design, including the sequencing of courses, must fit the needs of students likely to be already employed. The course sequence must build on students' prior experience, and courses must be scheduled to accommodate working students. A program must not establish provisions that exclude students who are not already employed in a particular industry, unless the college makes available to such students a practicable entry-level pathway that would qualify them, upon completion, for the advanced training.

Small Businesses or Cottage Industries

Entrepreneurial opportunities and the market for cottage industries yield few statistics. Yet entrepreneurial opportunities are of value to an increasingly large proportion of the workforce, especially in rural areas. A proposal for approval of a program designed to meet the needs of students interested in pursuing entrepreneurial activities must include a careful analysis of needs and of the market within which they must compete.

Source: California Community College Chancellor's Office. Program and Course Approval Handbook 4th edition March 2012.