Operating Standard

Title: Continuing Education	**Number:** A2000.45

Type: Administrative
Responsible: VPAA; CAO
Related Policies: A2000, A2100, B1005
Linked Operating Standards: A2000.00, A2000.05, A2000.10, A2000.15, A2000.20, A2000.25, A2000.30, A2000.35, A2000.40, A2000.50, A2000.55, A2000.60,
Related Laws:
Related External Standards: ICCB 1501.301; 1501.309
HLC Criterion: 3B, 4A, 4B

Statement

Shawnee Community College is committed to supporting lifelong learning through accessible, high-quality continuing education programming. Continuing education courses and activities are designed to help individuals upgrade skills for their current job, retrain for new opportunities, pursue personal enrichment, and meet licensure or certification renewal requirements. These programs expand community access to education and contribute to regional economic and civic vitality.

Continuing education programming is guided by the values of accessibility, responsiveness, and equity—ensuring that offerings meet the diverse interests, professional goals, and educational needs of all learners across the College's service area.

Definitions

Vocational Skills Education (PCS codes 1.6)- courses designed to provide short-term job entry training, to upgrade the skills of persons already employed, or to review skills for career re-entry. The training emphasizes hands-on experience and is often aligned with current industry standards to ensure relevance and applicability. While similar to Workforce/Contract Education (A2000.50), **Continuing Education Programming** includes non-academic credit and/or CEU-bearing courses, seminars, workshops, certifications, credentials, and professional development activities that:

- Upgrade skills for current employment
- Retrain individuals for new job opportunities
- Provide pathways to personal or professional advancement
- Support licensure, certification renewal, or exam preparation
- Promote lifelong learning

CEUs/Professional Development Units may be awarded when appropriate and aligned with nationally recognized standards (e.g., CEUs, CPDUs, PDHs, PLUs).

Benefits of Continuing Education

Continuing Education is an essential service that assists students with developing new occupational skills to use in their current and/or future career. When students complete continuing education training, they gain value through:
- Greater employability, career mobility, and earning potential
- Opportunities to document and apply new knowledge or credentials
- Flexibility in course format, scheduling, and location
- Pathways that can link to academic certificate or degree programs
- Offerings that align with nationally recognized criteria, licensure, and/or professional requirements

Employers benefit from workforce development programs that upgrade skills or retrain employees for new assignments, resulting in:
- increased productivity, employability, mobility, and earning potential of employees
- an agile and skilled workforce that brings new ideas and creativity to a rapidly changing market and work
- the alignment of employee skills with business goals and objectives
- improved employee loyalty, morale, job satisfaction, and retention
- a culture of continuity and consistency
- improved productivity and profitability; and the opportunity to develop future organizational leaders

Guidelines

Program Development & Delivery
The College will:

- Design continuing education offerings based on community interest, industry feedback, labor trends, and licensing or credentialing requirements
- Ensure programming is flexible, affordable, and accessible across multiple modalities (in-person, online, hybrid, off-campus)
- Maintain high standards of instructional quality, even in non-credit formats
- Where feasible, align continuing education programming with academic credit pathways, creating stackable opportunities
- Incorporate equity-focused strategies to address barriers to participation (e.g., financial cost, location, timing, access to technology)

Instruction & Curriculum

- Instructors must meet the qualifications relevant to the subject matter, industry standards, and/or licensure requirements

- All content must be reviewed and approved according to SCC's curriculum oversight processes, with input from community or industry partners when applicable
- CEU-bearing courses must comply with criteria established by recognized accrediting or credentialing organizations

Community & Employer Engagement

- Develop courses in collaboration with local employers, civic groups, school districts, healthcare providers, and other partners
- Actively seek input from advisory groups or focus groups to assess emerging needs and opportunities
- Establish partnerships that expand access and ensure relevance of programming to the region's population

Roles & Responsibilities

The oversight of Workforce/Contract Education is structured to ensure strategic alignment, program quality, and responsiveness to community and employer needs.

- **Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)**
  The VPAA provides overall institutional leadership for Continuing Education, ensuring alignment with academic priorities, strategic goals, and compliance with ICCB and other regulatory standards.
- **Dean of Career and Technical Education (CTE)**
  The Dean of CTE supervises the development, delivery, and evaluation of continuing education courses and programs, ensuring they are data-informed, responsive to labor market needs, and integrated where appropriate with academic offerings.
- **Director of Business and Workforce Development**
  Reporting to the Dean of CTE, the Director oversees the daily operations of continuing education programs, including employer engagement, contract negotiation and implementation, program design, and coordination of non-credit training services.
- **Workforce Training and Development Staff**
  Staff supporting the Office of Business and Workforce Development manage and deliver continuing education courses and programs. They ensure high-quality instruction, maintain training records, data tracking, employer communication, student support for courses, and assist in curriculum development.
- **Small Business Development Center (SBDC)**
  As a key unit within the workforce training division, the SBDC supports entrepreneurs and small businesses by offering training, one-on-one advising, and business development resources. It contributes to economic development while providing pathways collaborations for continuing education programming.

Accountability & Oversight

Regular review processes are conducted to ensure all programs remain aligned with industry standards, employer needs, and institutional goals.

- Internal reporting and performance assessments are submitted in the form of monthly reports to the VPAA and the Board of Trustees, an annual board monitoring report, and strategic plan updates.
- External reports are submitted for grants and programs that are accredited, regulated, and/or funded by outside agencies, such as Illinois Small Business Association, Illinois Department of Transportation, American Heart Association, Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and Federal Motor Carriers Association. Disaggregated data on enrollment, completion, CEUs awarded, student satisfaction, and licensure and certification pass rates (where applicable) are reviewed to identify and address equity gaps in participation and success.
- Programmatic and course changes are reviewed and approved through the appropriate chain of command before execution and implementation.
- Program planning includes proactive strategies to recruit and retain diverse participants and ensure training is inclusive and accessible to all learners and areas of the College's district.
- All trainers and staff participating in programs and courses requiring professional licensure are reviewed to ensure they meet the appropriate credentialing standards set by licensing or certifying bodies, and possess the industry experience necessary to deliver compliant, high-quality instruction aligned with regulatory requirements.

Change Log	Governance Unit: Acad Affairs Council
Date	**Description of Change**
4.24.25	Initial Adoption