

Guidelines for Labor Market Demand and Education Supply Analysis in Community College Proposals for Bachelor's Degrees

**The Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurement
Florida Department of Education
Jay Pfeiffer
Nate Lassila**

This document is intended to provide community colleges with general guidelines to be used in documenting the need for specific baccalaureate programs in particular institutions.

ESTABLISHING DEMAND

Occupational Demand represents state, regional, and local employer need for specific education or training in the labor force for specific job titles. Occupational Demand has several components, including current and projected growth and job openings. Job openings may be due to growth, retirement, or turn over in the labor market.

- As a general source of information, the Agency for Workforce Innovation, Office of Labor Market Services (LMS) provides an excellent conduit into occupational employment and demand data for the state and community college service regions in Florida. Explanations of the data resources available through LMS are available at <http://www.labormarketinfo.com>. They also may be contacted by calling 850-245-7205.
 - The Occupational Employment and Demand Publications use an occupational taxonomy for approximately 800 specific job titles. These titles can be classified by the level of education necessary for workers employed in them. The data series are updated annually and include projections out ten years.
 - These data are used by the Workforce Estimating Conference to identify and target job titles classed as “high skill/high wage jobs.” These targets are established by substate region and can be accessed at <http://www.labormarketinfo.com/wec/>. Files can be downloaded in Excel formats for use by colleges.
- The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, via its homepage at <http://states.bls.gov/>, provides access to additional resources that may be useful, including the Occupational Outlook Handbook, the Occupational Outlook Quarterly, Wages by Area and Occupation, as well as economic data for the nation, states, and regions.

- Specific data for Florida and substate areas may be obtained at the states site for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. There are sets of “Economy at a Glance” tables that may be useful.
- The United States Bureau of the Census maintains a new statistical program called the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics program (LEHD). Its opening pages are at <http://lehd.dsd.census.gov/led/>. Florida is one of the founding states of this program. It provides data that are rooted in the decennial census but which are updated on a quarterly basis. The quarterly workforce indicators (QWI) may provide helpful labor market data.
- The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) maintained by the Department of Education regularly collects follow-up data on career/technical, community college, and university disciplines. It may be a useful resource in examining associate degree disciplines that are being considered for development into baccalaureate level programs. Contact FETPIP at 850-245-9754.
- Consider all geographic aspects of demand that may be addressed by the proposed degree, state and region.
 - Regional Workforce Boards may be a resource for localized employer demand or initiatives that may generate new demands. Local One Stop offices regularly collect data on job openings that have been listed, including job openings they have been unable to fill.
 - Chambers of Commerce, area universities, or other institutions may have data reflecting job growth/vacancies (demand) locally.
- Complement federal, state and local data with surveys of regional employers.
 - Determine demand for degrees in the specified discipline (e.g. if the baccalaureate proposal is for a degree in law enforcement, the survey should be performed on all local, state, federal, and private sector entities that could serve as a source of hiring to try and establish an indicator for demand).
 - Suggested questions include pending openings due to retirements, turnover rate, where most hires come from (state, city, school, etc), and questions regarding the employer’s need for training in this discipline.
 - Results and specific findings should be provided in proposal.
- Additional insight should be provided from the perspective of students and instructors in related disciplines through surveys and interviews.
- Establish demographic trends.

- Show population change, trends in aging, and other relevant categories (race/ethnicity, income, disabilities) depending on proposed baccalaureate discipline, using census or other related data.

DETERMINING SUPPLY

The goal for establishing a new degree area at the bachelor's level in a community college is to provide a supply line to the labor force which either does not yet exist, or is not adequate. The two types of analysis – demand and supply – should identify significant gaps between employer demands for educated and trained workers in the discipline and the available supply.

- Identify public, private-for-profit, or private-non profit postsecondary institutions with related education in related disciplines throughout the state. Examine their degree or certificate production and their track record in placing students. Request their perspective on the demand for educated workers in the discipline area.
 - This survey of regional CCs, career/technical institutions, and public and private colleges and universities should determine if the discipline is currently offered, how many graduates are conferred each year, and if possible the placement rate in the graduates discipline as well as where (city and/or state) they get employed. In some cases, this may be able to be provided by Department of Education data systems. Contact the Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurement.
 - Survey should include Commission for Independent Education, Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF), local/regional community colleges with similar degrees, and local state universities.
- If, as suggested above in the demand discussion, an employer survey is contemplated, the survey should include a line of questions designed to elicit information as to where most hires in the specified discipline come from (what state, city, school, etc).
- Determine what level of supply does the community college intend to provide (i.e. number of graduates)? What level of the void that has been described will be filled?

WRAP UP DISCUSSION

In many cases, the proposed discipline may not line up exactly with available job titles or the performance history of existing degree areas. In these cases, supply and demand for similar disciplines, perhaps with lower credentials such as associate degrees or vocational certificates may help in making a case for the new discipline.