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To: [ProvostNotes](#)
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Attachments: [video.mp4](#)

Good morning!

Welcome to a special Tuesday edition of *Provost's Notes*. I hope you all enjoyed the long holiday weekend.

Changes to Short-Term (Noncredit) Education

On the heels of the Labor Day weekend, it seems fitting to discuss how OTC builds and serves the local workforce. This summer, the college made the decision to move short-term, noncredit workforce training to a more central place in the college. While the Center for Workforce Development (CWD) was previously housed within the Technical Education division, it now reports directly through Academic Affairs just as the other academic divisions of the college do. This allows us to focus on more integration of noncredit and credit offerings. Why is this important?

- Enrollment in higher education nationwide is on the decline. While there are many reasons for this, one major reason is that **Americans are increasingly unconvinced of the need for a college degree**. This is true not only of the general population, but employers as well. Because of the workforce shortage, employers are not as concerned with hiring people with degrees, and prospective students are able to earn higher wages without them. However, [a recent survey of Americans by Strada-Gallup](#) indicates that while only around 50% agree or strongly agree that getting an associate or bachelor's degree is valuable, **by contrast around 67% believe that some type of education or training past high school is worth the cost**.
- CWD, housed for the last few years in Technical Education, produced great collaborations within that division. But there has been a **disconnect with other areas of the college**.
- [As other colleges and universities are doing](#), we decided it was time to **merge CWD faculty in with their credit program colleagues** and move the administration and oversight to Academic Affairs. The benefits of this are twofold:
 - Students are better served by offering them the full menu of options within each division. We have found that our **students don't know the difference between noncredit and credit**. Now that Student Success is nearing full implementation, Navigators in each area can explain to students the various pathways that exist.
 - **All faculty are better served when they are joined together with their discipline-specific colleagues**. For example, the CWD Allied Health programs (Medical Assistant, Pharmacy Tech, Nursing Assistant, etc.) now operate alongside their Health Sciences counterparts in practical nursing, etc. instead of siloed within another area of the college.

This is quite a culture shift for the college, but one that is necessary. This work will be ongoing for the next several months as we move to fully incorporate short-term offerings into our college catalog, develop curriculum processes and assessment measures, refine outreach to employers to educate them on what OTC can offer, and develop more robust course offerings.

My question to you is: **Where are our next opportunities?** We've typically concentrated on technical and health professions short-term credentials, and there is still room to grow in those areas; however, there are opportunities college-wide for students to grow their professional opportunities through certifications or skills training. For example, in General Education the Teacher Education department offers EDU 130, which serves as not only the introductory class for the Teacher Ed program, but students also leave with substitute teacher and paraprofessional certifications. These are industry-recognized credentials that lead to immediate employment. I've already had some faculty reach out with ideas, so please **email me if you can think of short-term offerings that would be valuable to students and employers alike.**

Support our PTK Chapter and Get Your Free PTK T-Shirt!

Phi Theta Kappa was kind enough to hand out free t-shirts before the semester began. Didn't get one? No problem! Just email honors@otc.edu or swing by ICE 354 on the Springfield campus. The Honors staff will get you fixed up. Also, PTK Awareness Week is coming up, so you'll be encouraged to wear your t-shirt on designated days that week. More info is forthcoming.

OTC Cares

Dr. Higdon shared with me the attached video from @weareteachers on TikTok. I thought it was a nice reminder that we don't always need to understand our students; giving them the freedom to show up how they want to is sometimes quite enough.

Have a great (short) week!

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