

## Course Elements and Definitions

### Developing Courses — *Content*

In the context of developing course *content*, curriculum development can be referred to as *the design of teaching/learning experiences for a course, workshop, or seminar*.

Providing form and definition to teaching and learning experiences includes:

- Course Components = a *Course Outcome Summary* with core abilities, and core ability performance indicators; competencies — each with associated learning objectives, performance standards (criteria and conditions), linked core ability(ies);
- Lesson Components = a *Learning Plan* with its associated competency components, learning activities, instructional materials, assessment activities; and
- Classroom/Delivery Components = *Syllabi* and *Lesson Plans* with associated learning plan components, teacher activities, instructional resources, teaching methods.

Instructors are encouraged to apply various teaching and delivery methods to accommodate student learning styles and needs, to facilitate the delivery of instruction, and to provide a variety of opportunities for student mastery of course competencies.

The *Instructional Design and Planning Manual*, collaboratively developed by Wisconsin Technical College districts, describes the principles of instructional design and how to apply them in developing course components. Content development is further facilitated by the use of the *Wisconsin Instructional Design System* Software package, which is jointly-owned and distributed from the technical college system through the Wisconsin Foundation.

Curriculum development funded by the district — e.g., through summer recess projects, Occupational and Academic Currency Program (OACP), or state/federal projects — follow the format and guidelines of the *Wisconsin Instructional Design System's* model.

### The *Course Outcome Summary*

A *Course Outcome Summary* is the official document reporting the content of a program-level, college transfer, adult high school, or basic skills level course. The following elements relate to expectations of student performance and are required on each Course Outcome Summary: at least one MATC college-wide core ability and its performance indicators; competencies; and performance standards (criteria and conditions). Each course is expected to include at least one of the MATC college-wide core abilities. All COS are to be entered into the WIDS. For detailed directions of this process, open WIDS and select the link Milwaukee Area Technical College Help in the upper right-hand corner. Should you need additional help, please seek assistance from the Super User within your division (complete list within the WIDS-MATC Help Section).

### MATC Core Abilities

Milwaukee Area Technical College believes that a common core of abilities — skills, knowledge, understanding, and reasoning — is indispensable for every person as a productive worker and citizen. These

essential skills are present in all MATC courses, from basic skills through adult high school, and associate degree level college through advanced technical programs for people in business and industry. MATC's Core Abilities are based upon the college Mission Statement.

Core abilities go beyond the specific skills and knowledge embodied in the technical courses of the program. They are universal in the sense that they encompass the attitudes, skills, and knowledge needed to successfully obtain and maintain employment regardless of the occupation. Some core abilities focus on attitudes and habits important in the workplace; others focus on skills that are fundamental to functioning in society and in the world today. Within the context of teaching and learning, it is the intent that the instruction in core abilities be integrated within the technical content of a course. Consistent with the instructional design model MATC follows, Core Abilities are listed within the Course Outcome Summary for the course and faculty are encouraged to include it on other instructional materials. MATC's core abilities (with their associated performance indicators) are:

1. Communicate Effectively
  - Follow oral and written directions accurately
  - Write clearly and concisely
  - Speak clearly and concisely
  - Support viewpoints/arguments with evidence and reasoning
  - Apply English language according to standard English principles of spelling, usage, grammar and punctuation
  - Use active\* listening skills (\*may include rephrasing or paraphrasing; making an appropriate response; taking notes; listening without evaluating; an attentive posture; asking questions)
  - Derive meaning from the written word
  - Communicate effectively with people from different cultures
2. Collaborate with Others
  - Respond positively in stressful situations
  - Demonstrate/maintain respectful interpersonal skills with all people
  - Participate in the process of conflict resolution
  - Exhibit cooperative behavior
  - Exhibit skill in problem solving steps and methods
3. Respect Diversity
  - Recognize personal prejudices
  - Communicate without bias
  - Communicate without stereotypes
  - Display an appreciation of diverse perspectives
  - Demonstrate ability to work cooperatively in a diverse group
  - Show sensitivity to ecological issues
  - Demonstrate an understanding of the commonality of human experience across cultures
4. Demonstrate Responsibility
  - Arrive on time and remain until class/work shift is complete
  - Maintain a neat and clean appearance
  - Complete assigned tasks
  - Follow directions
  - Maintain tools, equipment, and work stations
  - Observe safety rules and regulations

- Conform to the technical standards of a profession
  - Take responsibility for personal behavior
  - Adjust to change
  - Be self-directed and take responsibility for own learning
  - Demonstrate civic, global, and cultural responsibility
5. Think Critically and Creatively
- Use problem solving skills in academic and work environments
  - View issues from multiple perspectives (local and global)
  - Evaluate sources of information
  - Present logical arguments
  - Differentiate between fact and opinion
6. Utilize Technology
- Select and use technology appropriate to the task(s)
  - Use technology to evaluate information from multiple sources
  - Use technology to manage information
  - Use technology to communicate
  - Use technology to solve problems
  - Use technology to develop products and/or services
  - Appreciate the impact of technology
7. Apply Math and Science
- Express relationships with mathematical and scientific symbols, expressions and graphs
  - Apply the scientific method and demonstrate scientific literacy
  - Extract meaning from quantitative and scientific data
8. Demonstrate Environmental Responsibility
- Learner models sustainable practices
  - Learner identifies environmental issues
  - Learner practices resource conservation
  - Learner practices environmental sensitivity
9. Embrace Change
- Learner thinks positively of improved outcomes.
  - Learner realistically assesses workplace environment.
  - Learner anticipates challenges and adjustments
  - Learner increases flexibility
  - Learner reflects upon successful outcomes
  - Learner adjusts to changing circumstances
  - Learner celebrates successful change

### Course Structure

Curriculum can also be described in terms of the structure of a course, the descriptive data that summarizes the content and format of the course. These structural components are used in a variety of ways: in

publications; in accreditation; in obtaining internal approval; and in meeting compliance guidelines established by the Wisconsin Technical College System Board.

The structural components of a course include:

1. department number
2. subject
3. prerequisite(s)
4. course number
5. title
6. hours by instructional method
7. number of credits
8. course description
9. textbook(s)
10. supplies

The process of developing a new course or changing an existing course depends upon the *level* of the course, and whether or not the course is required in a program.

### **Course Level Definitions**

Currently there are nearly 4,000 active courses within the following categories; each course is associated with an *aid code* that determines the level of funding provided to the district by the state.

### ***Program Level Courses***

(100-, 300-, and 500-series numbers)

These courses serve as required courses or electives in one of the programs (degree, diploma, or apprentice program), or is designed to serve one of the following purposes:

1. The courses are borrowed from another district because of a short-term need for a body of content not currently in any approved course, but requested by business or industry;
2. The course is a part of an Advanced Technical Certificate;
3. The courses are designed to meet the continuing education needs of business, industry and labor;
4. Transitional courses that are needed together with the vocational course content to equate to a comparable associate degree course.
5. Courses that need to be retained because some program students still need to take the course to meet prior program requirements; or
6. Courses which have been developed and offered in a year prior to being required in one or more curricula in the next academic year.

### **100-Series Courses**

Applies to those courses that are designed as part of an occupational associate degree or at the rigor of courses within associate degree programs (aid code 10);

### **300-Series Courses**

Applies to those courses that are part of a state approved technical diploma program (aid code 30 for diplomas less than a year; 31 for one-year diploma courses; and 32 for two-year diploma courses);

### **500-Series Courses**

Applies to apprentice courses that are part of an approved apprentice program (aid code 50);

### ***College Transfer Courses***

(200-series numbers, aid code 20)

There are only three technical colleges in the state that are authorized to offer college transfer courses — Madison Area Technical College, Nicolet Area Technical College, and Milwaukee Area Technical College. These courses are developed for students who intend to transfer to a four-year university. Generally, transfer institutions accept these courses without question, as meeting the requirements of one or more categories of courses in their curricula. Students in Associate in Applied Arts/Science degree programs may substitute specific 100-series General Education courses for their associated college transfer course. They may also take these courses as electives. Students in the Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degree programs are required to take college transfer courses for all but 16 credits in their program.

### **700-Series Courses**

These are courses that cover adult basic education (aid codes 73, 74); teaching English as a Second Language (aid code 75); or content which will enable the student to achieve a high school diploma (aid code 76), pass the GED (aid code 76), or prepare to enter postsecondary occupation programs (aid code 77).

### ***Adult High School Courses***

(700-series numbers, aid code 76)

These courses provide instruction at the high school level, and are assigned the equivalent in *Carnegie* credit to meet the requirements of a high school diploma. In addition to the distinction by numbers — 700-series — the courses in the General Education subjects include "HS" to the subject abbreviation e.g., MATHHS (High School Math), COMMHS (High School Communication Skills), SCIHS (High School Science). High school courses are also available in occupational areas e.g., OFTECH (Office Technology), AUTO1 (Automotive Servicing), etc.

## **High School Level Courses for High School Graduates**

(700-series numbers, aid code 77)

Courses with subject abbreviations ending in "PH" are designed for high school graduates to meet requirements for entry into, and as supplementary to, completion of occupational education programs. "B3" courses approximate the level of high school caliber instruction.

### ***Basic Skills Level Courses***

(700-series numbers, aid codes 73 and 74)

These courses are designed to meet the instructional needs of adults lacking fundamental literacy skills; the courses are in General Education with subject abbreviations ending in B1 and B2 (e.g., MATHB1, COMMB2, etc.).

### ***Continuing Education Courses***

#### **400-Series Courses**

(aid codes 42 and 47)

These courses contribute to basic education, citizenship and community safety for the general public (aid code 42) or have a definite vocational/technical objective of training for future employment or upgrading individuals in their present occupations (aid code 47). *Continuing Education Credit* is granted for completion of these courses. They are not part of, nor are they transferable to, a degree or technical diploma. With the exception of those courses that are included in certificate programs, 400-series course descriptions are not published in the college catalog. At the completion of a CEC course, students are issued a completion card or certificate.

#### **600-Series Courses**

(aid code 60)

These educational offerings include leisure-time, self-enrichment activities including arts, crafts, games, hobbies, sports, recreation, and foreign language conversation. The college does not receive state financial support for these courses, so MATC's Board of Directors sets the fees to recover the college's expenses in offering these courses.