



CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MANUAL

McHenry County College

Mission, Vision and Strategic Goals

Mission

Our focus is learning. Student success is our goal.

Vision:

A Relevant Educational Institution

- Preferred
- Collaborative
- Full service/varied modes of delivery on demand
- Value-based/cost-efficient
- Services all community including K-12
- A leader in sustainability

Strategic Goals:

1. Increase student engagement, completion, and success.
2. Maintain the College's financial stability.
3. Deliver infrastructure and technology to ensure state-of-the-art learning environments.
4. Ensure high-quality services and learning opportunities through a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and accountability.
5. Engage in partnerships that enable McHenry County College students to succeed in a global economy.
6. Attract, develop, and retain quality instructors who are outstanding scholars/teachers and an excellent, diverse staff who are committed to the mission of McHenry County College.
7. Engage and expect student learning through an effective teaching and learning process.

Importance of Advisory Committees

Advisory committees are critical to the success of Career and Technical Education programs at McHenry County College (MCC). These committees are directly tied to the college's strategic goals and objectives, particularly the two below:

- Ensure high-quality services and learning opportunities through a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and accountability.
- Engage in partnerships that enable McHenry County College students to succeed in a global economy

MCC recognizes the need for input from our business, industry, and public service communities to ensure that our programs are designed and delivered in ways that meet the community's workforce development needs. Advisory committee members' expertise helps the college identify current and future occupational skills, knowledge and goals and ensure that graduates will be successful in their chosen field as their knowledge and skills are continuously in line with labor market demands. Advisory committees help the college increase student engagement, completion and success.

Definition of an Advisory Committee

A Career and Technical Education advisory committee is a group of persons who advise CTE educators and administrators on the development, implementation and evaluation of CTE programs to ensure programs are tailored to meet the workforce development needs of the community (2016 Postsecondary CTE Grant Manual). Committee members primarily include practitioners, employers and supervisors in a career occupation field in addition to faculty and administrators working with the program(s). Advisory committees may also include students, parents, and high school faculty and administrators related to dual enrollment opportunities or programs for students. A successful advisory committee ensures that a program has "adequate resources and a well-designed curriculum to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities essential for employment" (Advisory Committee Guidelines: A Handbook for Technical Education Programs, El Paso Community College, July, 2014).

Function of an Advisory Committee

Advisory committee functions fall within three broad areas: Advise, Assist, Advocate. Advisory committee recommendations are documented and college representatives consider them. Recommendations are considered by administrators, department chairs and instructors. Recommendations may be implemented as presented, implemented with stated modifications, or declined. In each case, explanations will be shared with the Advisory Committee.

Advisory committees advise.

The advisory committee assesses specific areas of the CTE program and recommends improvements in areas, such as curriculum modifications, updates to facilities/budget/student competencies, purchase of new instructional materials and equipment, implementation of industry-specific trends, or adoption of a new safety policy.

Advisory committees assist.

The advisory committee helps the instructor(s) and/or administrator carry out specific activities. These activities could include judging competitive skill events, setting up a scholarship program or working to identify and arrange meaningful structured learning experiences for students in the program.

Advisory committee advocate.

The advisory committee promotes the CTE program throughout the community and strives to improve the relationships between CTE educators, business/industry partners, and/or the community. Promotion or marketing could include talking to legislators, speaking for career and technical education at board meetings, writing articles for local newspapers or obtaining media coverage for special events.

Advisory Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Advisory Committee members attend two meetings per year, complete an annual assessment, and advise the College in the following areas:

Curriculum and Instruction

- Identify and expand the use of new technologies in the industry and review technology standards in the curriculum
- Compare course content with occupational competencies and tasks
- Analyze course content and sequence for relevance
- Assist in developing and validating skills tests
- Advise on local labor market needs and trends
- Recommend safety policies and procedures
- Promote and assist in maintaining quality programs
- Review curriculum to ensure that it meets business needs and industry standards
- Assist with incorporating employability skills in the curriculum
- Assist in student competency assessment
- Provide hands-on work based learning and internship opportunities.

Program Review

- Review student performance standards
- Assess, recommend, and/or provide equipment and facilities to replicate industry
- Conduct community and occupational surveys
- Identify new and emerging occupations

Recruitment and Job Placement

- Notify program instructors of entry-level job openings for students
- Provide work experiences, internships/externships, apprenticeships, work/study or work-based learning opportunities for students
- Assist in developing strategies to recruit students into program
- Assist in identifying additional work-based learning experiences

Community/Public Relations

- Promote the CTE program to employers, communities, and the media
- Assist in recognizing outstanding students, teachers, and community leaders
- Conduct workplace tours.

Membership

The advisory committee should be a group of 8-15 employers and employees from differing backgrounds who will provide the program with a broad range of perspectives. No more than one-third of the membership should be made up of adjunct faculty who are working in the field. Additional adjunct faculty, full-time faculty, and college administrators may serve as ex-officio members of the advisory committee.

The composition of an advisory committee should include:

- Supervisors or managers currently employed in the industry directly related to the specific program, preferably those who have recently served as site supervisors for program work experience
- Business owners familiar with entry-level employment requirements
- Non-supervisory employees performing competencies directly related to the program
- Graduates and former students, however, former students/alumni should only serve on the advisory committee if they have several years of professional experience in the industry and are able to focus on the program's future success, rather than past achievements.

Term of Appointment

The most common organization of committees is a three-year membership term of service, staggered so that one-third of the members is replaced each year. While department chairs are encouraged to update CTE Program Advisory Committee membership and recruit new members periodically, they should also encourage effective advisory committee members to serve consecutive terms.

Maintaining Advisory Committee Roster

A list of Advisory Committee members, their contact information, job title, organization that they represent, term for serving on the committee, and other information relevant to the committee will be kept by the division secretary. Advisory committee membership may be submitted for informational purposes to the Board of Trustees or published on the web site.

Organizational Structure

The appropriate department chair or designee as well as the Associate Vice President of Career Education or designee will represent the college on the committee. All full-time department faculty should attend advisory board meetings. Adjuncts are encouraged to attend. If voting is done on recommendations to the college, voting membership is restricted to the business, industry and professional members and excludes the college employees or students.

Programs with accreditation requirements will follow those recommendations for organizational structure.

Subcommittees are a great way to tackle large or specific issues and avoid redundancy during meetings. Subcommittees may be responsible for researching topics and presenting the committee with recommendations for voting or other consideration.

Meetings

Program Advisory Committees must meet a minimum of twice each school year; however, more frequent meetings may be needed. Meeting dates need to be confirmed with the Associate Vice President for Career Education in advance. The department chair or designee will set the agenda and arrange the meeting. The agenda and materials for each meeting should be distributed at least one week prior to the meeting date. In addition to the members of the committee, the President and the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Workforce Development, and the Associate Vice President for Workforce Development should be informed of all meetings and may attend if they so desire.

Most Advisory Committee meetings take place at the college, however, committees are encouraged to vary the location. Meeting at a business or industry site gives recognition to committee members and their organizations and brings instructors to the sites where students may be placed in the future.

Meeting Agenda

Meetings should be well organized with an atmosphere of open participation. Methods for this include using parliamentary procedure for recommendations and an open and informal discussion approach to the remainder of the agenda. Committees are encouraged to consider and resolve one issue at a time. If there are assignments or tasks, leaders should make them as clear and specific as possible, explaining expectations, time lines and products/outcomes.

The following agenda is a sample for use with advisory committees. More examples are provided in the appendices.

1. Welcome and remarks (chairperson, department chair, administrator)
2. Introduction of Members
3. Call to Order
4. Roll Call
5. Purpose and role of the committee
6. Approval of Minutes/Notes from prior meeting(s)
7. Adoption of Agenda
8. Unfinished Business
9. Reports
10. New Business
11. Plans for next meeting
12. Other items
13. Adjournment

Meeting Notes/Minutes

The division secretary will record meeting minutes and distribute them within two weeks after a meeting. An official copy of the minutes/notes will be sent to all members of an advisory committee, the campus Perkins Coordinator and kept on file in the department and the division office.

The minutes should always include any decisions or recommendations made by the committee; responses to questions or recommendations made at previous meetings; assignments to be carried out following the meeting (including what is to be done, who is in charge and the expected date of completion); and items to be addressed at the next meeting.

Getting the most out of the advisory committees (for Department Chairs)

The committee should establish meeting ground rules so that all committee members have common knowledge about how meetings will be conducted. Ground Rules should be agreed upon annually by the committee and kept as part of the committee handbooks. These rules could include the following:

- Encourage everyone to equally participate
- Share ideas freely
- Provide constructive suggestions rather than negative criticisms
- Stay on track and on time
- Be concise

The purpose of the meeting is to get advice from the members of the advisory committee, therefore the department chair's and faculty member's role is to:

- **provide clarifying information** to the members
- **listen** to the committee's recommendations and feedback

Facilitation of the meeting should be done by the department chair or designated advisory committee chair if required by an accreditation organization.

Tips for effective meetings

- Put times for each agenda item on the agenda to keep the committee on task.
- Make sure that any equipment/technology to conduct the meeting is ready to go in advance (i.e. phone conference capabilities are already on.)
- Start and end the meeting on time.
- Try to identify "theoretical discussions" and make sure those items are saved for the end of your agenda. Make sure all "action" items occur toward the first half of the meeting.
- If possible, assign any individual tasks or information gathering prior to the meeting. This will eliminate unnecessary meetings.
- Give an end of meeting evaluation.

NOTE: *Committee members enjoy interactions with the students in the program! Invite students to meetings on a regular basis to: give presentations, allow time for mock interviews or other interactions, and provide students the opportunity to serve on a discussion panels*

Member Appreciation

Rewards and recognition are especially important to advisory committees because members are not paid for their efforts. One of the best rewards is to ask for advice and respond to it. Recognizing significant individual contributions is also important, especially when the individual expends resources in service to a program.

Simple ways to recognize members may include:

- Certificates of Appreciation
- Display names on bulletin board or plaque
- Letter of Appreciation to their employer
- Invitations to events
- Highlight accomplishments in press releases or newsletters
- Invite members to visit programs to see implementation
- Include names in program literature
- Include business member links on program website/communication tools

Appendices

The following appendices are provided to aide and support the department chair in facilitating a program advisory committee:

Appendix A: Sample Advisory Committee Meeting Evaluation Form

Appendix B: Checklist for Managing a Meeting Effectively

Appendix C: Sample Minutes (Example 1)

Appendix D: Sample Annual Report

Appendix E: Sample Letter Confirming Membership

Appendix F: Sample Letter of Recognition/Recruitment

Appendix G: Sample Letter to Inactive Member

Appendix H: Sample Text to Promote Participation in Annual Survey

Appendix I: Annual Survey Questions

Appendix J: ARTICLE: "Advisory Committees DO Make a Difference"

Appendix A: Sample Advisory Committee Meeting Evaluation Form

(Source: National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation, <http://www.natef.org/>)

Below is a guide for rating the effectiveness of the advisory committee meeting. Circle the number that best describes your feelings about each statement.

	Poor (1) to Excellent (5)				
1. I clearly understood the agenda and knew what we were trying to accomplish.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The agenda was well planned and organized	1	2	3	4	5
3. The agenda was received in advance of the meeting	1	2	3	4	5
4. This was an important and productive meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I feel the members of this committee understand their role and assignment.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Members had a chance to speak and made a contribution to items under consideration.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The meeting was well organized.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I felt that the advisory committee's opinions and feelings were understood and accepted by the college.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I feel satisfied with the activities and accomplishments of the advisory committee.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I feel my time and efforts are well spent in serving as a member of this advisory committee.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B: Checklist for Managing a Meeting Effectively

(Adapted from Massachusetts Career and Technical Education Curriculum Resource Center, 2003)

	Yes	No
Agenda prepared		
Agenda distributed to members before meeting		
Room set up comfortably before meeting begins		
Refreshments available		
Meeting begins on time		
Purpose of the meeting and outcomes are stated and agreed upon		
All members participate in discussion		
Group follows agreed-upon decision-making process		
Items on agenda are covered		
Action items and decisions made are reviewed at end of meeting		
Work commitments and timelines are reviewed		
Group gives input on next meeting's objectives		
Meeting ends on time		

Appendix C: Sample Minutes (Example 1)

(Adapted from Nebraska Department of Education, Nebraska Career and Technical Education)

PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date _____

MINUTES

Members present—(List)

Members absent—(List)

Other present—(List)

Call to order—Committee Chair Beverly Smith called the meeting to order at 12 noon and expressed appreciation for attendance and participation. She stressed the importance of the committee’s continuing support and assistance. Dr. Jane Doe, College President, greeted the committee. Her greeting further assured the committee of its importance to the educational goals and program vitality. And so on...

Minutes—Minutes of the last meeting were approved as submitted.

Unfinished business—No unfinished business was brought before the committee.

New business—Ms. Smith asked the committee to make suggestions concerning “What are the new requirements of entry-level employees?” Ben Read indicated that a computer or data processing background would be helpful for employees. Eva Johnson further emphasized the need for computer training. She indicated that a job applicant with computer knowledge has an advantage. It was the consensus of the committee that expanded computer training should be added to the technical/occupational program as soon as possible. The chair was asked to appoint a subcommittee to investigate several kinds of computers and software for possible purchase. It was agreed that the subcommittee would report to the committee at the next meeting.

Adjournment—The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Appendix D: Sample Annual Report

(Adapted from Lane Community College)

Advisory Committee Annual 20XX–20XX

1. Name of advisory committee:

Name of program:

Committee chair [*community member*]:

Committee coordinator [*LCC member*]:

2. Name of program:

3. Number of regular advisory committee meetings held:

Date of 1st meeting and number attending:

Date of 2nd meeting and number attending:

Date of 3rd meeting and number attending:

Number of special advisory committee meetings held: Date and purpose:

Date and purpose:

4. Current program fact sheet from 2002–2003

Staffing—number of contracted faculty positions:

Staffing—number of part-time faculty positions:

Funding—general fund (program) budget: [\$\$\$]

Student fees: [\$\$\$]

Grant funds: [\$\$\$ in grants]

Has your program received Carl Perkins grants or any other grants in the last few years?
If yes, describe the funds used and how they benefited the program.

Additional comments/explanations:

5. Program enrollment trends

	FY14-15	FY15-16	FY16-17	FY17-18
Program headcount				
Number of minority students				
Percent of minority students				
Number of females/number of males				
Percent of females/percent of males				
Number of graduates				
Placement rates for program graduates				
Number of students participating in cooperative education				
<u>Core students</u> : Students with a program major AND completed six or more required core credits in the program				
Number of core students making satisfactory progress				
Percent of core students making satisfactory progress				

Additional comments/explanations:

What is your program's student capacity and how is it determined?

Is your program currently at full student capacity? If so, how many students are on a waiting list?

Have you made program modifications to admit more students?

What adaptations have you made in your program to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

What adaptations have you made in your program to achieve gender balance?

6. Labor market information

What are the future employment opportunities for students in your program?

How does your committee determine your program’s effectiveness in meeting business and industry needs?

7. Curriculum

List any curricular changes/improvements during last year and describe briefly.

How was the advisory committee involved?

What curriculum barriers inhibit students from achieving their goals?
(Example: scheduling requirements)

8. Program planning and design

What are the goals of your advisory committee for next year? What progress did you make toward your goals from last year?

Describe how faculty and advisory committee members worked together to accomplish/identify the items listed above.

Do you and your advisory committee have additional comments regarding equipment, facilities, staffing, funding, etc.?

9. Please list additional comments as appropriate.

10. Signatures of the committee chair, committee coordinator, and the division chair

Other issues that may need to be reviewed:

- What is the student and employer demand for the skills learned through your program, and what happens to students who participate in the program?
- What is your strategy for keeping your program “state of the art,” and what staff development do you and your staff need to meet future program skill needs?
- How would you rate the exit math, writing, speaking skills, and/or other competencies for technical programs of students who complete your program?
- Is there an articulation or secondary program?

Other topics that the committee may wish to explore during an annual review:

- Program marketing activities and public relations
- Needs for equipment, supplies, and staff
- Cooperative relationships between the college and industry
- Ways to support professional technical education, which may be called for by local and state college officials, boards, and legislative groups
- Program advisory committee goals, accomplishments, and barriers to success
- Industry and employment trends in the field

Appendix E: Sample Letter Confirming Membership

(Adapted from Massachusetts Career and Technical Education Curriculum Resource Center, 2003)

Dear _____:

I am pleased to inform you that McHenry County College has accepted your membership in the [advisory committee name] for the next school year.

Enclosed for your information are materials that explain the goals and objectives of our college, the program, and your role as an advisory committee member. I will be contacting you soon, when our first advisory committee meeting is scheduled.

Your experience and expertise will help us provide the high-quality, up-to-date training that is necessary for a student's successful transition to work. I appreciate your interest in our program and college, and I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Department Chair
[Program name]

Associate Vice President for Career Education

Appendix F: Sample Letter of Recognition/Recruitment

(Adapted from Massachusetts Career and Technical Education Curriculum Resource Center, 2003)

Dear _____:

On behalf of *[program and school/college]*, we would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to you for your faithful participation in our advisory committee activities during the past year. Your contributions were invaluable, and resulted in numerous program and curriculum improvements. *[List several examples.]*

The technical/occupational students and faculty who benefited directly from these improvements also wish to express their thanks to you, and encourage your continued support and service.

At this time, we are in the process of organizing the committee for the coming year. We encourage you to remain by nominating an advisory committee member to take your place and to continue to share with us your thoughts and expertise.

Sincerely,

Department Chair

Associate Vice President for Career Education

Appendix G: Sample Letter to Inactive Member

(Adapted from Massachusetts Career and Technical Education Curriculum Resource Center, 2003)

Dear _____:

On behalf of [*program and school/college*], I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to you for serving as a member of our advisory committee.

The [*program*] has benefited greatly from the work of the committee. We realize, however, that our advisors are very busy, with many competing demands on their time, and we have been grateful for your interest and involvement over the past year(s).

Please let us know if you are interested in continuing your work as an active member of the [*program name*] advisory committee.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Division Chair or Department Head

Associate Vice President for Career Education

Appendix H: Sample Text to Promote Participation in Annual Survey

Dear :

In the next few days, you will receive an invitation to participate in a brief survey about the [insert program name] Advisory Committee. This survey will allow McHenry County College to better understand how well we are serving our business partners through providing a trained and skilled workforce.

Thanks in advance,

Department Chair

Appendix: Annual Survey Questions

The Office of Institutional Research will conduct an annual survey of all advisory board members. The purpose of this survey is to understand MCC's advisory board system as a whole and all advisory boards will take an identical survey. Results will be available by advisory board so departments will understand feedback from their particular board.

1. On which of the following Program Advisory Committees did you participate?
2. How well are MCC graduates/students prepared for entry-level jobs in their field?
3. How well are MCC graduates/students prepared for the following in their field?
4. Does MCC have the necessary facilities, equipment, and tools to prepare students to work in their field?
5. Why do you believe MCC does not have the necessary facilities, equipment, and/or tools to prepare students to work in their field?
6. How aligned is MCC's curriculum with your industry's needs?
7. MCC's curriculum provides value for employees looking to advance beyond entry-level positions.
8. Does your participation in this advisory committee allow your industry to help shape the workforce?
9. What changes, if any, would you like to see made to the advisory process?

Appendix J: ARTICLE: “Advisory Committees DO Make a Difference”

by Brian Manley (2001)

(Source: National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation, <http://www.natef.org/>)

As a certified technician and vocational automotive instructor, I’m here to tell you that the single most important component of *any* automotive training program is a diverse, professional, forward-thinking advisory committee.

Seven years ago, when I accepted my job as the vocational auto instructor for five high schools in suburban Denver, Colorado, I inherited a hobby-shop program where students worked on their own vehicles, or didn’t work at all. Books were out-dated, the tool room was decimated, and greasy engines and transmissions gathered in the corners. I had my work cut out for me!

Just as I’d been a professional, ASE certified technician for 15 years, I had a goal for this training program—to create a *professional*, ASE certified program, serving the needs of surrounding repair facilities. I wanted to build a strong program, where students could earn a quality education and begin a successful career.

I soon learned that my greatest allies during this transformation process were the members of my advisory committee. In addition to our vocational director, I had enlisted some of the best technicians, shop owners, dealership management and technician trainers in our city to meet with me and guide the course of our destiny. Here’s the “path to success” that my committee created and helped me carry-out during the past seven years:

- Initial evaluation of hand tools, shop equipment, classroom, training mock-ups, textbooks, and student safety items. A list was made and each committee member gave input and recommendations for program improvement.
- Purchase of state-of-the-art textbooks, tools and equipment. Using my school budget as a starting point, members suggested how best to divide the funds up for each year as I built my curriculum and replaced worn/missing/out-dated tools and equipment.
- Clean-up of the entire shop/classroom area to create a more professional appearance. We’ve thrown away the junk and re-built our classroom. Next on the agenda—new wall and floor paint!
- Evaluation of our program for ASE certification through NATEF. We became certified, and guess what? I have that recognizable blue seal hanging in our training facility, which strikes up conversations with parents and community leaders about the difference between certified and non-certified training programs.
- Assisting with donations of late-model vehicles for training. We used to have
- 10-year-old-cars; now I have a half-dozen late model, OBD II vehicles for training.
- Assisting with judging for our local SkillsUSA-VICA Leadership and Skills contests. Our committee members have judged Job Interview, Auto Tech Hands-On, Related Technical Math, etc.
- Evaluation of our program for Automotive Youth and Educational Systems (AYES) participation. The AYES program creates supervised internships for our students along with Snap-On tool discounts and training for potential mentors.

- Inviting guest speakers (like yourselves) for class, to talk about job potential, attitude, salaries and benefits of becoming a master technician.
- Arranging job shadowing in shops for students, so potential technicians can get a taste of what the “real world” is like.
- Arranging “career days” and back-to-school-night events so our community can see our program and talk to the experts about a career as an auto technician.

Our committee meets once per month, on average, which creates a “closed loop feedback” system between members, my administrators, my students, and myself. Can a committee member give me constructive feedback? Yes. Could one of my students talk to my committee and relate his/her comments or concerns? Yes. Does my committee make recommendations directly to my boss (the guy with the check book)? Absolutely—which makes my boss confident in his decisions when making large purchases, because the needs of my program are coming from our industry professionals, not me.

So, can your advisory committee make a difference to your automotive program? Definitely. Select your advisory committee carefully. Diversity, professionalism, and a willingness to be involved are important characteristics for advisory committee members. A strong and active advisory committee is critical to the success of your program.



McHenry 
County College