

TO: Woodland Community College Academic Senate (WCCAS)

FROM: President Lizette Navarette, Woodland Community College

RE: Topics for Exploration in Preparation for the WCC Strategic Plan

As we launch the WCC Strategic Plan process, we have an opportunity to align our strategies with shared goals and respond to community needs. A key focus is reengaging adult learners who paused or skipped college post-pandemic and leveraging WCC's strengths to alleviate poverty. This memo outlines several suggested promising strategies to expand access, drive success, and promote socio-economic mobility.

1. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

Many adult learners bring valuable experience from work, military service, or prior education. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) recognizes this by awarding academic credit, helping students complete degrees or certificates more quickly. The recently expanded Mapping Articulated Pathways (MAP) Initiative—now available to more colleges at no cost—is also highlighted in the Governor's Master Plan for Career Education as a priority for future investment. This investment can help expand and enhance WCC's existing CPL infrastructure and strategy.

2. Expanding or Establishing Noncredit Pathways

Noncredit courses have the potential to provide accessible, flexible entry points for adult learners who may face barriers to enrolling in credit-bearing programs. These pathways can include workforce development training and industry-recognized certifications. By expanding or establishing noncredit pathways, we could attract adult learners who need to build specific skills to advance in their careers or enter the workforce. These noncredit pathways could later be linked to credit-bearing programs, providing a seamless transition for students who decide to pursue formal academic qualifications.

3. Developing Apprenticeships or Learn & Earn Partnerships Around Existing Degrees

Apprenticeships and learn-and-earn partnerships offer students the chance to gain hands-on experience and earn a wage while completing their education. Aligning these opportunities with existing degree pathways allows WCC to meet workforce needs while supporting student success. All three counties in our service area — Yolo, Colusa, and Lake — have expressed interest in partnering around pathways to address high-vacancy, high-turnover public sector roles. These partnerships can lower barriers to entry through job placement support and potential waivers of minimum experience requirements.

Next Steps

To prepare for upcoming Convocation and strategic planning sessions, we hope to begin gathering input and preliminary research on these strategies over the next few months. This could

WCC Strategic Plan Strategies to Explore

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include connecting with faculty, staff, and community partners, reviewing relevant models from other institutions, and exploring statewide resources.

Thank you for your attention and support.