

The Career Technical Education Virtual Institute

Course Syllabus



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Course Description

This is a virtual survey course on Career Technical Education (CTE) (formally known as vocational education) that describes the past, present and future of the field, dispels common myths, and encourages participants to recognize the role they play in supporting a high-quality CTE system. The course includes seven modules organized around the key principles in Advance CTE's [*Putting Learner Success First: A Shared Vision for the Future of Career Technical Education*](#).

The CTE Virtual Institute is a comprehensive, introductory course for audiences that are new to the world of CTE or have limited expertise. Upon completing the course, participants can expect to be conversant in the elements of high-quality CTE and have an understanding of how CTE fits into their own work.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of the course, participants will be able to:

- Understand the history of CTE in the United States and how it came to be what it is today;
- Recognize what high-quality CTE looks like, both at the program and systems level and at the secondary and postsecondary level;
- Use data and real-world examples to advocate for high-quality CTE;
- Recognize the role that federal, state and local stakeholders play in strengthening CTE;
- Recognize the role they themselves play in supporting high-quality CTE; and
- Network with other professionals learning about high-quality CTE.

Course Requirements

The course is available online and requires:

- A computer with reliable internet access
- Media playing capabilities
- A pdf reader

Admitted participants are expected to stay engaged and complete each module within the allotted time. Each of the seven modules will take up to four hours a week to complete and includes between 50 and 70 pages of readings, plus videos and discussion prompts. Before beginning the course, participants must commit to:

- Completing all modules within the seven-week time frame, which includes watching the corresponding videos and completing readings for each module;
- Staying engaged throughout the course by contributing to weekly prompts in the online forum;
- Joining and participating in conference calls; and
- Using lessons learned through the course to promote or advance CTE in your own work through an end-of-course project or deliverable to be determined upon completion.

Course Schedule

Start Date	Module Description
Kickoff Webinar	
TBD	On the kickoff webinar, participants will learn about the course expectations, hear about the <i>Putting Learner Success First Vision</i> and meet fellow participants.
Module 1: What is Career Technical Education?	
10/23	This module examines what CTE looks like today and equips participants with the vocabulary and real-world examples to get up to speed on all things CTE. Topics covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Career Clusters® Framework • CTE Programs of Study • CTE Delivery Systems • The Perkins Act
Module 2: A Brief History of CTE	
10/30	This module provides an overview of the history of CTE, from Smith-Hughes to Perkins and beyond, addressing the key differences between CTE and “vocational education.” Topics covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The history of CTE • <i>Putting Learner Success First: A Shared Vision for the Future of CTE</i>
Module 3: Rigor and Quality in CTE	
11/6	“Ensuring Rigor and Quality in CTE” defines the key components of a high-quality CTE program of study. Topics covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining high-quality CTE • CTE program approval • Employer engagement and labor market data • CTE standards
Module 4: Career Exploration and Work-Based Learning	
11/13	This module examines different strategies to guide learners along their career pathways, examining middle school career exploration, Career Technical Student Organizations, work-based learning and more. Topics covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Technical Student Organizations • Guided pathways • Career development and advisement • Work-based learning
11/20	Break for Thanksgiving
Module 5: Flexibility in Learning Pathways	
11/27	This module explores strategies for integrating learning experiences throughout the educational continuum — including dual enrollment, competency-based education and integrated academic and technical instruction. Topics covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating academic and technical learning • Prior learning assessments and competency-based education • Dual enrollment and credit articulation
Module 6: Instructors, Leaders and Industry Experts	
12/4	This module describes the continuum of activities that expose learners to industry experts and unpacks common challenges and solutions with recruiting, certifying and training CTE instructors. Topics covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing access to industry experts • CTE teacher certification • CTE teacher professional development and externships
Module 7: Systems Alignment for Learner Success	
12/11	In this module, participants will recognize the role that different systems play in advancing

	<p>high-quality programs of study and the importance of setting a statewide vision. Participants will also differentiate the role of federal, state and local governments. Topics covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting a statewide vision • Accountability • Funding CTE • The federal role in CTE
12/18	Posttest Survey Issued

End-of-Course Project

At the conclusion of the course, participants will be expected to apply what they've learned through either a project, presentation, report or other activity. Each project, along with the deliverable timeline, will be identified on a case-by-case basis in consultation with Advance CTE staff. Projects should demonstrate an intention to connect lessons learned with participants' own work.

Upon completing the end-of-course project, participants will be added to the alumni engagement group and will be invited to download the CTE Virtual Institute web badge.

Alumni Engagement

All participants who complete the course will be added to the CTE Virtual Institute alumni group, where they can access Advance CTE staff, get updates from Advance CTE about the latest news and developments in CTE, and continue to engage with peers in their field.

For additional information contact Austin Estes at aestes@careertech.org.