

Next Steps

While much has been done in the development process for the Pathway Model, there are still unanswered questions and work to complete. Sixteen programs have been reviewed and examples of four of them can be found in the Appendix. Fifty-one more programs will be reviewed in FY15 and FY16.

Advising is an area that has not yet been discussed at length. Training will be required for advisors for those programs that are implementing a Pathway in their program. This training will need to go beyond training in just the new processes, by helping advisors understand and embrace the cultural changes that coincide with the model.

Curriculum design and approval will need to provide more assistance. As faculty approach the task of aligning their curriculum to industry jobs that may require less than a 2-year credential, aligning the job skills and tasks to the competency level may require “breaking apart” current courses and repackaging. This will require assistance and guidance from the curriculum and instructional design staff.

While there has been interaction between Developmental Education and programs working on pathways, to this point it has generally been advice and counsel from a Developmental Education staff member. How the entire department and all program areas will continue to develop the various approaches to integrating instruction is as of yet unknown. At this point, both developmental and program faculty have indicated strong support for student success and are taking steps to try this approach.

The impact of articulation relationships is yet to be uncovered. While the high schools are embracing the pathway concept, there have not been any changes at the Associate Degree level that have impacted articulation agreements with 4 year degree granting institutions. As more programs begin review for a Pathway and courses change within the A.A.S. degree, work may be needed to adjust articulation agreements.

Credit for Prior Learning is another component that needs to be integrated into the Pathways model. Students who drop out and work with their initial credentials will need to be assessed to determine if they have added to or lost skills needed to continue within the pathway. Currently there is a dedicated team at MATC studying Credit for Prior Learning. Programs intend to utilize the approaches suggested by this committee and incorporate them into the Pathway. This will also impact the students that utilize the transfer-in option to leverage their General Education courses from a B.S. degree back into an AAS degree.

The college is currently using data from EMSI (Economic Modeling Specialists International) to indicate the jobs and salaries available along a pathway. The use of this type of economic modeling data may be used in two ways. One way is to inform. The data shows the jobs and pay rates, so that staff at the college and students alike can see the options along a career pathway. The data and information related to the skill levels required for each credential can also help programs to determine which credentials are truly valued in the work place. In this way industry economic and job forecasting can be used to provide the information needed to build and modify programs.