

The History of the MATC Pathway

The initial foray into Pathways began with MATC's work with the RISE (Regional Industry Skills Education) initiative. This initiative was a joint effort of the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development to develop career pathways benefitting low income adults who lack college credentials or have limited English proficiency. However, it became evident that the RISE initiative was just a stepping stone to a model of career education that should be available to anyone.

In 2012 WTCS State Office announced that all colleges should attempt to use a Pathway model in all programs. The WTCS State Office indicated that Pathways was the model that the WTCS colleges should use to allow for more entry points into programs. Therefore, MATC started to consider how they would leverage this model. MATC's Vice- Provost became the champion for Pathways at MATC. The Vice-Provost announced that MATC would be doing business differently – helping students look at a career and its path, not just a job. The Vice-Provost launched an initiative to review all programs and create pathways where appropriate, within a three year window.

As with most successful institutional initiatives, strong support came from the college's senior leadership. All of the Chancellor/President's leadership team affirmed that the college would build Pathways and provided resources to do so. One indication of their support was the assignment of the Director of Articulation and Transfer to oversee progress on Pathway development. With the director leading the initiative, MATC now had someone to research, co-ordinate, and move the Pathways initiative forward.

The other important aspect of the strong senior college leadership was the expectation that all areas of the college must support and take part in the Pathways initiative. Management in various areas of the college began to meet and develop some Truths about Pathways at MATC. These management members believed that these Truths were integral to the successful development and implementation of Pathways at MATC. Most of these truths have remained as originally developed, although a couple truths have evolved as more information was gathered. The first Truths were developed in early 2013.

March 2013 Truths

- Pathway entry will be planned for both HS students and Adults (full admit & precollege admit) (3/2013)
- 4 year transfer options will be identified in pathway (3/2013)
- Pathways are **job based**; there are identified jobs for every exit point (3/2013)
- Curriculum at any given level is embedded into next higher credential (3/2013) (E.g. certificates lead to diplomas which lead to associate degrees)
- Curriculum will 'ladder' preparation (credits are cumulative) negating the need for 'bridge programs' or redundant assessment (3/2013)
- Pathways should be straightforward for accurate advising (3/2013)

These truths helped to shape the initial work and design for the early adopters of the Pathway process (Nursing, Health Services, Culinary Management and Culinary Arts). However, there were other issues developing Pathways, beyond matching industry job exit points and aligning curriculum that needed to be addressed.