STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
State Board Reserve Allocation – Credit for Military Training
and Competency Based Education

Request: The State Board is asked to approve $150,000 for development of a system-wide plan to standardize processes for Prior Learning Assessment and Competency-Based Education. At their July meeting, the NC Association of Community College Presidents unanimously supported this request with Fayetteville Technical Community College (FTCC) serving as the lead institution in collaboration with partner colleges who will develop Credit for Prior Learning Assessments (PLA) and Competency Based Education (CBE) models consistent with and supportive of the goals, direction, and competencies developed through North Carolina’s Comprehensive Articulation Agreement, Developmental Education Initiative, Math Curriculum Improvement and Code Green Curriculum Improvement Project. Project partners will be responsible for research, development, field testing, and regional professional development training opportunities for NCCCS staff and faculty to begin implementing customized PLA and CBE programming according to local industry and academic emphasis specific to each college.

Rationale: In 2010, FTCC began Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) programming in partnership with Ft. Bragg Army Installation. As a result, FTCC has developed a successful PLA process specific to workforce and academic programming that covers a broad range of degrees and certifications and has resulted in thousands of armed service members earning credit for military training and demonstrated competency. FTCC has also created a similar process to articulate certifications earned through the college’s Continuing Education courses toward Curriculum credit. With the enactment of S.L. 2014-67 Credit for Military Training, the General Assembly and Governor have instructed the UNC System and NC Community College System to develop programs that convert military training into college credits and work to fill knowledge or skills gaps between military training and civilian licensure requirements. This law takes effect January 1, 2015 and applies to active military, military spouses, and veterans. Each year, the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and University of North Carolina (UNC) serve millions of students in Curriculum and Continuing Education programs. A significant number of these students have military training and experience, but gaps in their military training present barriers to industry certification required for civilian employment. To overcome these barriers, veterans and armed service members currently follow educational pathways that could take 3-6 years to complete. With the Credit for Military Training law, they can earn credit for military experience and demonstrate competency at their own pace, potentially cutting their time-to-completion in half. At this time, PLA and CBE programming on UNC and NCCCS campuses is limited and inconsistent across industry sectors. There is currently no standardized process for colleges to implement PLA or CBE programming to fill students’ knowledge and training gaps toward certification/licensure or continued education and a baccalaureate degree.

Fund Source and Availability: The time period that the funding is available is FY 2014-15. This project will be supported from State Board reserve funds, contingent upon availability.

Allocation Amount and Time Period: The $150,000 allocation is for the period of September 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015.

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