



Tab 9

Fast Track Academic Program Approval

Coordinating Board for Higher Education

March 5, 2024

BACKGROUND

The legislation establishing the Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant program (§ 173.2553, RSMo) authorizes the Coordinating Board to “designate eligible programs of study ... in connection with local education institutions, regional business organizations, and other stakeholders.” The legislation also directs that “the Coordinating Board shall annually review the list of eligible programs of study and make changes to the program list as it determines appropriate.”

On June 5, 2019, the Coordinating Board approved the initial list of instructional program areas eligible for the Fast Track grant. Each year at the March CBHE meeting, staff bring forward information about requested changes to the list of designated Fast Track program areas (four-digit Classification of Instructional Programs codes) gathered from various constituencies. This agenda describes the process followed to develop potential revisions to the list of eligible programs from academic year 2024-2025 and recommends approval of revisions.

CURRENT STATUS

The authorizing statute defines an eligible program, in part, as one “that has been designated by the Coordinating Board as preparing students to enter an area of occupational shortage as determined by the Board.” To construct the original listing as well as subsequent updates, department staff reviewed long-term occupational projections used by a variety of agencies to understand the changes and trends within the state’s workforce. Using those projections, staff developed a list of the most in-demand occupational categories, nationally standardized crosswalk to establish which instructional program area(s) are connected to the identified occupational area.

Beginning in December, DHEWD reached out to the presidents and chancellors of our participating colleges and university, owners, and directors of approved training providers and to the business community to solicit suggestions for changes and additions to the approved program list. Because the prior approvals have been based on four-digit CIP categories, which provide some flexibility relating to specific program eligibility, staff recommendations continue to follow that format. The summary tables below provide the staff recommendations for changes to the list of Fast Track approved program areas. Attachment A provides additional detail including the submitting institution/organization, program name, description provided by submitting entity, and basis for staff recommendation. Attachment B is the existing listing of designated programs to which these programs would be added.

Table 1 displays program areas proposed through the feedback process already approved by the Coordinating Board and are being funded during the 2023-2024 academic year. No action is required for these program areas to remain as part of the Fast Track approved program listing. All the programs within each of these subject areas would be included as part of this approval.

Table 1 – Currently Approved and Funded Fast Track Program Areas

CIP Code	Program Area
51.08	Allied Health and Medical Assisting Services
51.39	Practical Nursing, Vocational Nursing, and Nursing Assistants
52.07	Entrepreneurial and Small Business Operations

Table 2 lists program areas that were not included as part of the current list of approved program areas, but that staff recommend for inclusion within the program for academic years 2024-2025 and beyond based on occupational demand and projected salary levels. All the programs within each of these subject areas would be included as part of this approval.

Table 2 – Recommended for Approval as Fast Track Program Areas

CIP Code	Program Area
15.00	Engineering Technologies/Technicians
52.11	International Business

Table 3 lists program areas suggested for inclusion as part of the feedback process that staff do not recommend for inclusion in the approved program listing at this time. Each listing includes a brief explanation of why it was not recommended for inclusion. As a note, program title changes and similar revisions do not require approval through this process as those updates are made as part of the academic program actions.

Table 3 – Not Recommended for Approval as Fast Track Program Areas

CIP Code	Program Area	Rationale
01.00	Agriculture Science	Associated occupations are not identified as high career grade/high demand in Missouri
01.05	Agricultural and Domestic Animal Services	Associated occupations are not identified as typically requiring additional education beyond high school
12.04	Cosmetology and Related Grooming Services	Associated occupations are identified as moderate demand in Missouri, but low wage
16.01	Linguistic, Comparative, and Related Language Studies and Services	Associated occupations are not identified as high career grade/high demand in Missouri
26.01	Biology, General	Associated occupations are not identified as high career grade/high demand in Missouri without additional education
26.02	Biochemistry, Biophysics, and Molecular Biology	Associated occupations are not identified as high career grade/high demand in Missouri without additional education
27.05	Statistics	Related occupations tend to be high wage but low demand

CIP Code	Program Area	Rationale
30.70	Data Science, General	While the skillset may be valuable, the degree area in and of itself is not in high demand. Net change in employment is currently relatively small in absolute numbers.
40.05	Chemistry	While the skillset may be valuable, the degree area in and of itself is not in high demand. Net change in employment is currently relatively small in absolute numbers.
43.99	Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Related Protective Services, Other	The MDHEWD has generally not approved General/Other CIPs for Fast Track eligibility. A number of specific protective services CIPs are approved for funding.
45.06	Economics	Associated occupations are not identified as high career grade/high demand in Missouri without additional education
45.10	Political Science and Government	Associated occupations are not identified as high career grade/high demand in Missouri without additional education
50.04	Design and Applied Arts	Associated occupations are not identified as high career grade/high demand in Missouri
51.35	Somatic Bodywork and Related Therapeutic Services	Associated occupations are identified as moderate demand in Missouri, but low wage
52.18	General Sales, Merchandising, and Related Marketing Operations	Associated occupations are not identified as high career grade/high demand in Missouri. Entry for many occupations does not require postsecondary education.
52.19	Specialized Sales, Merchandising, and Marketing Operations	Associated occupations are not identified as high career grade/high demand in Missouri. Entry for many occupations does not require postsecondary education.
54.01	History	Associated occupations are not identified as high-career grade/high-demand in Missouri without additional education

While regular review and revision of the list is necessary, staff believe the above list of additional approved programs is consistent with the intent of the legislation and adequately covers the scope of programs for which Missouri is experiencing the greatest shortage of available labor.

NEXT STEPS

Once the list of designated instructional program areas is finalized, staff will update the program listings for each participating institution and share the list to verify that the program information

is correct and complete. That process should be completed by April 15, 2024. Once all revisions and corrections have been made, the application, which is in the student portal, will be updated by June 1, 2024 and revised listings of eligible programs will be available on the DHEWD website.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend designation of the instructional programs classified within the program areas listed in Table 2 above as additional programs eligible for the Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant beginning with the 2024-2025 academic year.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Proposed 2024-2025 Fast Track Program Additions
- Attachment B: 2023-2024 Fast Track Program Area Listing