

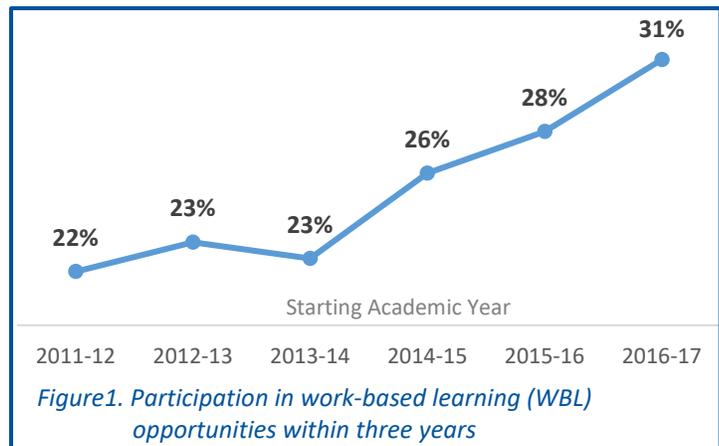
Career Technical Education Students Participating in Work Based Learning

Previous	Current	Trend	Target	Rating
28%	31%	↗	26%	Developed

Mission Fulfillment Indicator (MFI) 18 measures the percentage of new credit Career Technical Education (CTE) students who completed a work-based learning experience (WBL) within three years. A WBL experience is defined as a Cooperative Education internship (COOP 280), a general work experience course (GWE 180), participation in an apprenticeship program, or any other course with an instructional method of cooperative education or medical/clinical.

Discussion

Rates of participation in WBL exceed the initial target and show a strong positive trend. The target of 27% considers that not all CTE programs require WBL and that WBL occurs near the end of programs. The rating considers the fact that pass rates in WBL courses are substantially higher than other types of courses and WBL participation rates are much higher than graduation rates. At the same time, disaggregated data reveal some gaps, and these data have not been extensively integrated with college planning systems.

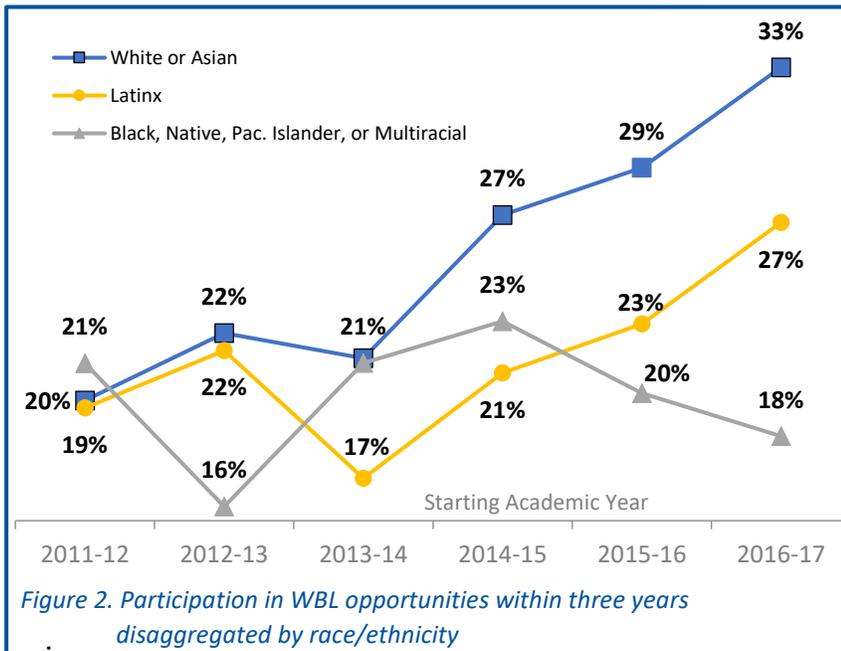


It's important to understand that not all CTE programs have a WBL requirement, and currently this metric includes students in programs without such a requirement, many of whom are in certificate programs of one year or shorter. In AY20, only 53% of CTE programs required a Coop internship or apprenticeship hours, while another 6% included internship as a program elective. However, there is no current summary of how many of the remaining CTE programs required another WBL experience, such as a medical/clinical or practicum course. Furthermore, it is critical to understand that in most CTE programs of study, WBL does not take place until near the end of a student's program, and frequently in the last term prior to graduation. Thus, students who make it to the point of participating in, and who are subsequently able to complete, a WBL course, have progressed almost to the point of graduation from their program of study. For this reason, MFI #18 tracks along the same line as graduation rates, but at a much higher rate. It should also be noted that WBL can adversely affect graduation rates due to the tendency for some students to drop out of school once employment has been secured through WBL. It is also worth noting that completion rates of co-op courses and clinicals are roughly 10% higher than completion rates for other credit courses at the College.

Deeper Data Dive

Disaggregated data for this indicator suggest some notable correlations. Student age and initial part-time status are positively correlated with completion of WBL, while female gender, minority race/ethnicity, and being a first-term Pell Grant recipient are negatively correlated. The associations with gender, race/ethnicity and age align with general trends observed in career-technical education. Older students are more likely to have prior work experience, which may qualify them for WBL experiences at a higher rate. Prior work experiences may have honed professional skills that younger students have not yet mastered, increasing their likelihood of successful completion of WBL courses. The challenges of women in CTE programs are well-

documented, and both LCC and local professional groups (e.g., Women in Trades) are working to increase the recruitment and retention of female students in CTE programs. Part-time students likely have more time in



their schedule for a WBL experience, most of which require at least 10 hours per week. Furthermore, these factors are associated with participation in apprenticeship programs. Apprenticeship programs strongly influence the differences shown here because 100% of apprenticeship students participate in WBL. Apprenticeship students are far more likely to be male, part time in their first term, and far less likely to receive a Pell grant due to alternative funding sources for this cohort. They are also somewhat more likely to be White and over age 25.

Peer Comparisons

The accreditation process calls for evidence-informed self-reflection along with meaningful comparison against peers to provide a contextualized perspective on an institution’s quality. Because Work Based Learning Programs are tailored to meet the needs of specific programs at a given College, appropriate comparison data can be difficult to identify. Lane is in process of reaching out to peer institutions involved with the Cooperative Education and Internship Association (CEIA) in hopes of finding relevant comparator data.

Lessons Learned & Next Steps

Examining these data has clarified a need to inventory and evaluate the WBL requirements for all CTE programs, and to include relevant data into planning systems to ensure sustained improvement. Programs need to review of the availability of WBL opportunities and understand the role of WBL in program completion. Due to the relationship between WBL and graduation, increasing completion rates of WBL courses can be best achieved by increasing rates of progression and completion rates in CTE programs overall. Increased efforts to recruit women and students of color into CTE programs—and apprenticeships in particular—in addition to providing support services throughout their college career would certainly increase retention and increase participation in WBL. College officials overseeing WBL should also identify employer partners who share the College’s values related to access and equity. In addition, career and professional development courses such as the internship seminar, COOP 206, would seem to be particularly helpful for younger students, who may struggle more to compete for WBL opportunities without prior professional experience. Work-based learning programs are an economic engine for LCC’s service area. Thousands of participants in co-op internships, clinicals, and apprenticeship experiences have been hired at local companies, gained professional experience and promotions, and gone on to hire subsequent generations of LCC student interns and apprentices. They have joined the College’s career-technical program community advisory committees and worked alongside faculty to keep programs current with industry standards. The support of work-based learning at LCC is an important value that the College provides its students and community.