

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Modernization of Degree Program Competencies
FY 2025-26

Request

The State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) is requested to allocate \$40,000 from the State Board Reserve Fund to Gaston College and Mayland Community College, in partnership with the System Office, to co-lead a statewide initiative to review, revise, and update the competencies in 1D SBCCC 400.10 for degree programs, and to support implementation across the colleges.

Strategic Plan Reference

Goal 4: Provide education, training, and credentials to develop the most competitive and agile workforce in the nation.

Objective 4.2: Respond to employment preparation opportunities with instruction focused on relevant skills, credential attainment, and competency development.

Background / Rationale

Current SBCCC Code (1D SBCCC 400.10(e)) mandates that programs "include opportunities for the achievement of competence in:

- reading
- writing
- oral communication
- fundamental mathematical skills, and
- basic use of computers.

Workforce skills and employer expectations continuously evolve and as a System we must ensure our colleges produce graduates with the durable skills that will remain relevant long-term as this evolution takes place. To remain responsive to industry, the competency language should be reviewed and modernized and then codified via a formal Code amendment. Doing so will ensure that all 58 community colleges operate under updated, consistently defined expectations for student competency development in degree programs.

In addition to reviewing and updating the statewide general education competencies for degree programs outlined in *1D SBCCC 400.10*, the working group will also explore the development of institutional-level competencies. These institutional competencies could provide colleges with the option to identify additional areas of focus that reflect local workforce needs and institutional missions. The group will develop recommendations for both statewide revisions and institutional framework options to ensure consistency, relevance, and adaptability across the system.

Project Scope & Activities

The lead colleges, in collaboration with System Office staff and faculty SMEs from at least 8–12 colleges statewide, will coordinate the following:

Task Force Formation & Governance

- Work with the System CAO to assemble a representative faculty task force (general education disciplines + workforce programs).
- Engage external workforce/employer advisors.

Environmental Scan & Needs Analysis

- Review peer competency frameworks, accreditation standards, and employer skills reports.
- Conduct stakeholder input (employers, advisory boards, faculty, students).

Drafting Updated Competencies & Code Language

- By April 2026, propose revised competency language
- Work with SO staff to draft proposed replacement language for 1D SBCC 400.10(e)(3)(C).

Field Review & Revision

- Work with SO staff to circulate drafts to CAOs, faculty, discipline groups, employers, and presidents.
- Collect comments via surveys, listening sessions.
- Incorporate feedback and refine final draft.

Code Amendment Submission & Approval

- Work with SO staff to submit final drafts to the SBCC.
- Provide a rationale document to accompany the amendment request.

Implementation Support & Training

- Provide input and support to the NC Student Success Center to develop professional development help colleges embed and assess new competencies.
- Provide input on the deployment of resource templates (rubrics, curricular maps, assessment tools).

Anticipated Outcomes

- Regular progress updates to the System CAO to be shared regularly with stakeholders (presidents, CAOs, faculty, SBCC, etc.)

- Modernized, workforce-aligned competencies codified in the SBCCC Code by Fall 2026
- Uniform expectations across all degree programs in the community college system.
- Faculty-ready resources and professional development to embed and assess competencies available in 2026-27.
- Stronger alignment between degree programs and employer expectations for future workforce skills.

Budget & Resource Use Projections

Lead Colleges Coordination/Project Management	\$20,000
Faculty subject matter experts (SMEs) travel support	\$10,000
Student Success Center, Regional Professional Development sessions	\$10,000

Evaluation & Impact

- A formal report on the revision process and adoption of the new Code language.
- Metrics such as number of colleges adopting the new competencies, faculty training participation and feedback, and alignment of course outcomes.
- Feedback from employer partners on improved alignment of graduate skills.
- System Office monitoring assessment results (e.g. WBL integrations, efficiencies, etc.) in subsequent years to ensure continuous relevance—note that these assessment metrics will be dependent on the competencies defined by the work group.

Funding Availability

FY 2025-26 funding is available from the State Board Reserve from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. G.S. 115 D-5(j) provides that "[t]he State Board of Community Colleges shall use its Board Reserve Fund for feasibility studies, pilot projects, start-up of new programs, and innovative ideas." The State Board Reserve is a recurring funding source with \$250,000 annually.

Contacts

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