



Competency Based Education

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How did we get here?

- Growing interest among community colleges to develop and implement CBE programming.
- Higher education in Illinois is prioritizing equity.
- COVID-19 has disrupted our systems—changing expectations of education, training, and work.
- While enrollment has declined, a Strada survey (2020) revealed adults who want career changes or upskilling are expected to return to higher education in an increase of 25% over the next five years.

What is CBE?

- Competency-based education (CBE) is focused on **actual student learning**, and the **application** of that learning, rather than time spent in class/on material.
- Learners' **progress** is **measured** when they **demonstrate** their competence through a system of **rigorous assessments**, meaning they **prove** they have **mastered** the knowledge and skills, **required** for a particular **competency or area of study**.

Competency Defined





Commonalities Across CBE Definitions

- What you know you can do
- Mastery or proficiency
- Rigorous Assessments
- Focused on the student journey
- Time is variable; learning is fixed
- Flexible, personalized approach

Competency-Based Education



An approach that can educate, equip, and empower thousands upon thousands of students of color to earn needed credentials, while solving historic and persistent inequities.



By making competence a necessary component of completion, learners engage in deeper learning and graduate prepared for future education or employment opportunities.



At scale, this type of teaching and learning can help close equity gaps while raising college completion rates and improving graduates' lifetime outcomes and earnings.

Equity Collaboratory



COMPETENCY-BASED
EDUCATION NETWORK



THE EQUITY COLLABORATORY

Illinois Equity Collaboratory

GOAL

To help institutions and systems action plan in order to use CBE to achieve more equitable outcomes.



THE EQUITY COLLABORATORY

PARTICIPATING COLLEGES

- Black Hawk College
- City Colleges of Chicago
- Elgin Community College
- Parkland College
- Rend Lake College
- Triton College

Why is this important?

- Higher education is meant to be an engine of economic opportunity and mobility; yet, for too long, institutions have struggled to provide equitable access and produce equitable outcomes.
- Black and Latino populations experience wide achievement gaps, underserving many of the learners most in need of higher education to advance socioeconomically.
- High-quality CBE programs that meet the needs of local employers are an essential approach to revamping higher education and expanding economic advancement for all.



Theory of Change

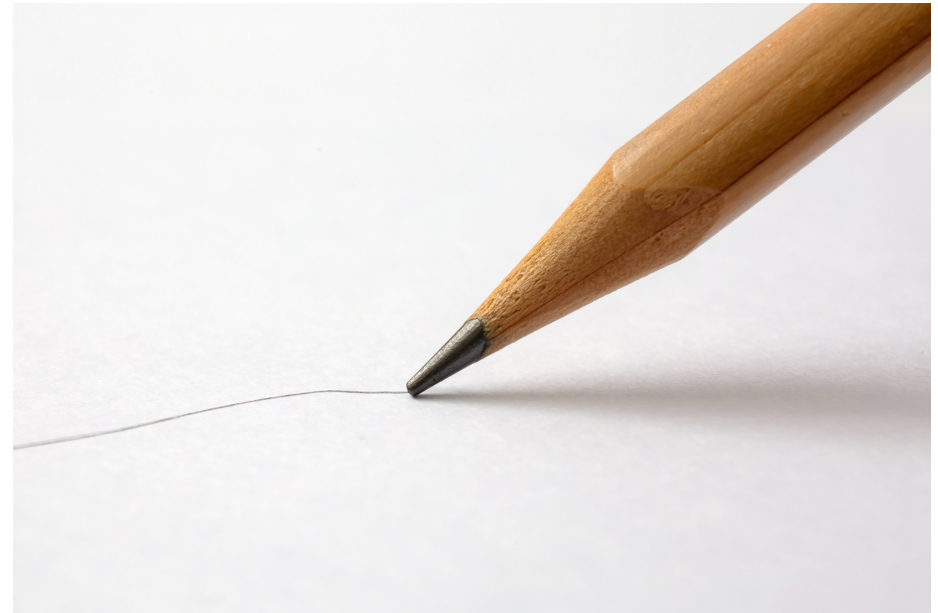
Current State:

Despite decades of research and investment in redesign, postsecondary education redesign, postsecondary education remains deeply inequitable. Students remain ill prepared for their promised jobs or are unable to advance. Economic transformation and the COVID recession are making it harder for colleges to keep up.

Theory of Change

DRIVING CHANGE

- By focusing on teaching and learning, we can drive strong job and career outcomes for students, and as a result, increase equity.



Theory of Change



Outcomes:



Mindset – Learning – Scale –
Equity

Equity Collaboratory: Phase One

Equipping

Equipping institutions for CBE design that is equity-based and rooted in labor market outcomes.

Creating

Creating individualized CBE Action Plans and a field resource for higher education institutions and state systems to do the same.

Equity Collaboratory Requirements

- **Met monthly** to learn about the 9 tenets of quality, equity-based CBE design.
- **Completed guided activities** to assess the institution's current use of the tenet and to explore areas for improvement.
- **Shared findings** the following month and discussed ways to enhance institutional performance.



Equity Collaboratory Tenets and Workshops

- CBE programs must be culturally responsive
- CBE programs must be learner-centered
- CBE programs must be high-quality
- CBE programs must be competency-driven
- CBE programs must be grounded in labor market demand and data
- CBE programs must lead to credentials of value
- Institutions must offer pre-program socialization, career planning, and readiness supports
- Institutions must offer program achievement and persistence supports
- Institutions must offer post-graduation transition and placement supports

Equity Collaboratory Results

- Monthly meetings through November
- Team assignments
- Defining CBE at individual institutions
- Draft of Action Plans



Questions?

