

Sinclair Community College

FlexPace Fosters Innovation in Manufacturing Training

As a result of Ohio TechNet participation, two Sinclair branches — Workforce Development and Sinclair Academia—which have historically worked as separate entities, have come together organizationally and functionally to offer competency-based programs serving Advanced Manufacturing students. A direct result of this collaborative effort, is the creation of a new ATS degree to support the goals of TAA-certified students interested in pursuing a combination of workforce and academic courses. The innovative curriculum is unconfined by academic boundaries, and allows students to mix and match courses from Workforce Development's Industrial Maintenance program with an HVAC academic program to earn an associate's degree.

Additionally, Sinclair's new automatic credit articulation process has enabled all grant-affected Workforce Development students to earn credit toward an AAS degree, which is yet another outcome of the grant-induced collaboration between credit and non-credit programs. To date, over 400 articulated academic credits have been awarded to Workforce Development Industrial Maintenance students.

On the credit side of the house, Ohio TechNet funding has facilitated Sinclair's launch of "FlexPace", a new accelerated certificate model which permits students to start and finish flex-paced, competency-based, hybrid machining courses according to their schedules. At present, this model has garnered significant success.

Here are a few examples:

- Students in the Accelerate MFG Basic Machining program are finishing 16 week courses in an average of 10 weeks.
- To date, the fastest course completion has been 3 days.
- 68 students have accelerated their certificate and degree completions using FlexPace courses as part of their curriculum.
- Flexibility and fewer trips to campus mean that CBE students are retained at a rate 11% higher than traditional Sinclair students.

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