



MEMORANDUM

To: CTE Directors, Principals, and Superintendents
From: Sam Rourke, Assistant Commissioner for CTE
Date: July 22, 2024
Re: Guidance for Online and Virtual CTE Courses

The following document provides updated guidance for schools and CTE centers regarding state CTE funding and credit application toward concentrator status for courses offered through various instructional delivery methods. The document was last released in October 2023.

The primary updates are as follows:

- Addition of recently added programs of study approved for virtual and online delivery on page 3
- Minor language updates to clarify guidance

In addition to the guiding principles detailed in previous guidance, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education CTE team considered the following factors while developing this guidance to ensure that CTE funding and CTE courses will continue to serve their intended purposes.

- CTE course funding is intended to offset higher operational costs (i.e. materials, equipment, curriculum, and staffing) schools and career centers incur in facilitating these courses.
- Funding is also provided to incentivize courses that lead to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations that often require certifications and credentials that have hands-on requirements.
- Allowing credits earned in NLPS courses to apply toward concentrator status when the hands-on requirements are not able to be met erodes the desired consistency and meaningfulness of becoming a concentrator which were the central goal of NLPS.

Please note that, as with in-person instruction, we aim to allow local districts/schools the freedom to make curriculum decisions that meet their unique needs. The CTE team does not review, vet, or approve any curriculum vendors for virtual/online instruction.

CTE Funding and Credit Application Guidance Related to Course Delivery Methods

CTE Funding Eligibility: State CTE course funding supports enrollments in CTE courses delivered through the in-person model of instruction and enrollments in a blended (hybrid) format (as long as hands-on requirements are met). **A limited number of approved courses within CTE programs of study are also eligible for CTE course funding when offered in a virtual format.** Online course enrollments remain ineligible for state CTE course funding unless the online course is being offered through a postsecondary institution through a dual enrollment agreement.

Credits Applied to Concentrator Status: Credits attained in NLPS courses taught online only count toward concentrator status if the program of study/course has been approved for virtual delivery or the course is taught online through a postsecondary dual enrollment agreement.

| Course Delivery Method | CTE Funding | Credit Application |
|---|--|---|
| Classroom Course <i>(in-person/ face-to-face)</i> | Fully Funded | Credits count toward concentrator |
| Virtual <i>(online - synchronous)</i> | Fully Funded <i>for approved courses</i> | Credits count toward concentrator <i>for approved courses</i> |
| Blended (Hybrid) <i>(face-to-face/virtual)</i> | Fully Funded <i>must meet hands-on requirements</i> | Credits count toward concentrator <i>must meet hands-on requirements</i> |
| Online Only <i>(online asynchronous)</i> | Not Funded <i>unless postsecondary dual enrollment agreement</i> | Credits count toward concentrator <i>for approved virtual course or online dual enrollment</i> |

Approved Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS) Course List

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education CTE team encourages schools and career centers to offer CTE courses through a classroom (in-person) based or a blended (combination of classroom and virtual) model if possible. These models support the highest levels of engagement for the hands-on nature of CTE courses.

However, schools and career centers sometimes need flexibility to be able to offer courses in an alternative format. **To provide this flexibility, the concentrator courses (Principles, Concentrator A, and Concentrator B) in the NLPS pathways listed in the below table have been approved to be offered virtually.** Approval applies to any course within the pathway, even if the student is using an individual course for a different pathway. Please note that the approval does not include the capstone course.

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Agriscience | Education Careers | Legal Studies/Paralegal |
| Biomedical Sciences | Engineering | Marketing |
| Business Administration | Entrepreneurship | Natural Resources |
| Business Operations | Finance and Investments | Nutrition |
| Computer Science | Hospitality Management | Social and Community Services |
| Criminal Justice | Human Services | Software Development |
| Digital Design | Insurance | |

Dual Credit Eligibility

The approval of a course to be offered virtually does not automatically include approval to offer the course through a virtual format for dual credit. Any decisions regarding the eligibility for virtual courses to be offered for dual credit will be considered on a case-by-case basis with the school or career center's postsecondary partner.

Definitions:

The following descriptions (based on how the method of delivery facilitates the three critical student interactions: with content, the instructor, and other students) are provided to clarify the funding guidance provided earlier in the document and to help schools and career centers better understand the expectations for each model.

Classroom (In-person) Course – course activities are organized around scheduled in-person class meetings. Traditional classroom courses are measured by the number of hours spent in required in-person class meetings in various activities including lecture, labs, and workshops. Such courses may involve the usage of computers, for example software simulations, and the use of online curriculum that is required to complete course requirements. The online curriculum can only supplement the lecture and direct instruction portion of the traditional classroom. Labs and hands-on activities must still comprise a majority (more than 50%) of the classroom experience and the class must be led by a qualified instructor.

Virtual Course – web-based technologies are used to extend classroom lectures and other activities to students at remote sites in real time (synchronous). Students interact with a qualified instructor who is appropriately licensed or has the required work experience and is employed by the school or career center. Interactions with the instructor and other students are in a synchronous manner using webcast technology for at least 50% of classroom activities including real classroom experiences like lectures, small groups, workshops, etc. Other activities may be completed in an asynchronous manner. Students may be required to attend campus to take a proctored exam, complete hands-on activities, or to demonstrate skills proficiencies. This model may mix on-campus and remote students.

Blended Virtual/Classroom Course (Hybrid) - a Blended Virtual / Classroom Course (also known as Hybrid) model mixes in virtual activity with in-person classroom meetings. Virtual activity may be synchronous or asynchronous and must be facilitated by an on-site qualified instructor. Blended courses may involve entire class sections or be provided as an option for individual students. Blended courses are eligible for funding if the number of face-to-face contact hours exceed 50% of the total hours and are sufficient to meet all hands-on, lab contact hours required for dual credit. The classroom instruction portion of any program of study course, virtually approved or not, may be offered virtually if the in-person requirements are met through any one of a variety of options. These options include:

- Lab time at the home high school;
- Completing courses with in-person and/or lab requirements by attending sessions in-person at a career center, postsecondary institution or eligible training provider; or
- An employer provided work-based learning program.

Online Only (Asynchronous) Course – course sessions take place online and there are no required face-to-face sessions (asynchronous). Assignments may have deadlines but there are no scheduled class times. Most, if not all, of the activities of the class are asynchronous. While there may be interaction with an online instructor and other online students, there is little to no real-time interaction with other students or a qualified instructor, who is employed by the school or career center (a paraprofessional or a licensed teacher from another curricular area who is providing supervision is not considered a qualified instructor).

Specific Situations:

1. May a school offer a course online that has not been approved for virtual, such as Culinary Arts?
 - a. A school or career center may offer any CTE course online. However, the course will not be eligible for funding and the credits will only count as elective credits and will not apply toward concentrator status.

2. What happens if a school offers a course approved for virtual, such as Principles of Business Management, online?
 - a. If a school or career center offers a course online that has been approved for virtual delivery, the enrollments in the course will not be eligible for funding but the credits earned in the course will be applied toward concentrator status.

3. How will the application of credits toward concentrator status be tracked?
 - a. The CTE team continues to track the number of credits that count toward concentrator status in InTERS. Schools only need to designate in InTERS that the course session was taught online.

Questions regarding the virtual and online course policy, or other CTE matters can be addressed to CTE@che.in.gov.

