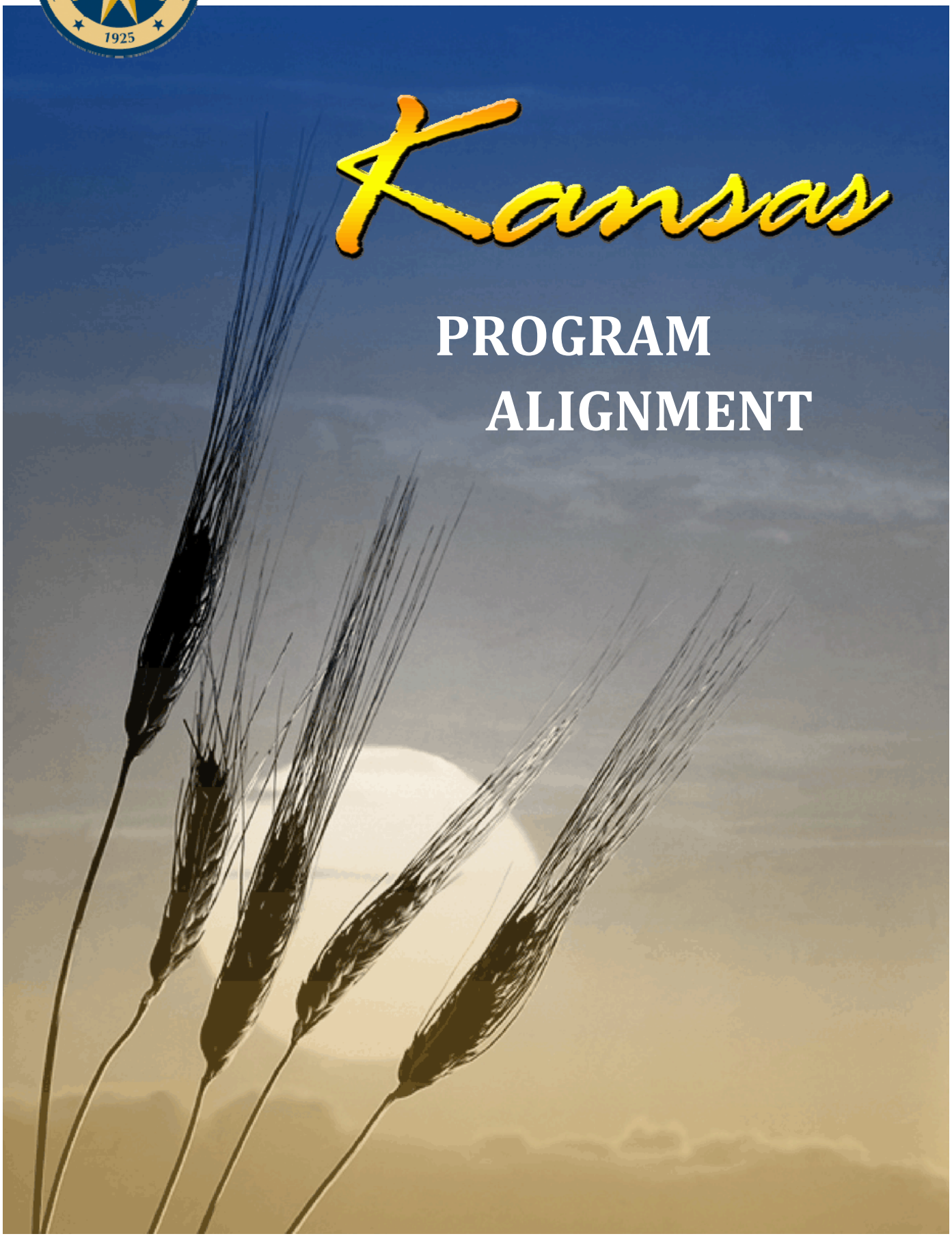
KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS



Kansas

PROGRAM ALIGNMENT

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What is Program Alignment?

One of the initiatives underway by the Post-Secondary Technical Education Authority (TEA) to enhance technical education in our state is the alignment of specific technical programs. This project is driven by the needs of business and industry in the state. Groups of business leaders are convened by the Kansas Department of Commerce and the Kansas Board of Regents with participation by program advisory committee members from our colleges to essentially "map" a preferred outcome for an occupational category (Phase I).

The Alignment Process has four primary objectives:

1. Allow business and industry to identify value-added exit points within programs,
2. Identify and support student acquisition of nationally recognized 3rd party industry credentials,
3. Identify a "few" common courses that can serve as a bridge for articulation opportunities with K-12 and
4. Decrease the variability in program length.

Program Alignment Phases

Phase 1—Research and Industry Engagement

- Research/compile existing business and industry standards (competency/tasks lists, program certification requirements, industry-endorsed credentials, etc.)
- Establish state business/industry committee for each program area to
  - define competencies and standards for the program area
  - recommend appropriate industry-based certifications and program accreditation
  - identify future projections for specific occupations for which the program will be preparing graduates
  - recommend equipment, facilities, software, instructor qualifications and certifications, etc.

The first phase of the alignment process includes researching/compiling existing business and industry standards and engaging business and industry leaders from across the state to identify specific needs of business and industry including the core skills and appropriate industry-based certifications/credentials graduates should possess at various program exit points.

State business and industry committees, established for each program area, identify competencies and recommend specific industry-based credentials within an occupational area. Membership consists of employers representing the industry or occupations for the program area for which the committee is established and, where appropriate, includes representatives of trade or professional organizations, and labor. The Authority is focused on delivering outcomes to be utilized statewide; therefore, every effort is made to select members that provide for geographic differences within an occupational area.

A list of potential members is generated with input from local postsecondary institutions (representing local advisory committees), members of the Authority, industry member organizations, state staff and other stakeholders.

The Authority remains committed to providing technical education that delivers the standards established by business and industry for the competence and performance level of graduates. As a result, state business and industry committees also provide input and recommendations regarding facilities, research, standards, staff certifications, equipment, evaluation and other pertinent areas contributing to quality technical programs.

Potential benefits of state business and industry committees:

State business and industry committees do not exist in isolation. Their value resides in their contribution to an overall plan for program improvement. Potential benefits to the technical education system resulting from the establishment of state business and industry committees include:

- Creating a sharper knowledge base in, and commitment to, the technical education system by interest groups who are prepared to organize support
- Providing a working forum for both educators and employers to discuss human resource development issues including specific academic and functional work skills
- Contributing to the configuration/validation of existing skill inventories, including type and level of knowledge and skills required for job entry, retention, or career advancement
- Participating in a viable network to share curriculum information
- Expanding the industry and education partnership by providing a larger frame of reference incorporating private sector input for local advisory committees

Phase 2—Faculty Engagement and Aligning Curriculum with Certifications

- Establish state faculty committee
- Utilizing the industry standards, faculty committee reaches general consensus on
  - Overall program title and program description
  - General education and/or applied academic courses for the program
  - Foundational occupational courses—courses applicable for each award/certification level for the program
  - Occupationally-specific courses for the program
  - Advanced technical, concentration courses, or elective courses for the program area
- Identify potential "value added" exit points and Identify required competencies and courses for each based on credentialing requirements

The second phase of the alignment process includes faculty engagement and the alignment of course curriculum with the competencies and industry-based certification/credentials identified by the business and industry committee. Common core courses, appropriate courses for potential high school articulation, program exit points and maximum program length are also established. Some programs may have a core that is the same for nearly all regions and all institutions where program areas may be so regionally specific that a common core may consist of only a few common courses. Aligned programs also include some flexibility for courses to reflect additional regional emphasis in course content and delivery. These differences are determined collaboratively with input from both the state business industry committee and the faculty committee.

Faculty committees serve as a forum for discussion and consideration of issues (policies, procedures, and curriculum designed to meet program standards) of interest to technical program faculty and development of proposed changes for standards, if necessary.

Phase 3—Approval of New Program Structure and Curriculum

- Newly aligned program is reviewed by the state business and industry committee, KBOR staff and the Authority Program/Curriculum committee,
- New program structure and curriculum approved by Authority and KBOR

The newly aligned program structure and curriculum is then reviewed by the state business and industry committee to ensure the proposed alignment meets the specific needs of business and industry including the core skills, exit points and appropriate industry-based certifications/credentials that were

identified in Phase 1. After this review, the program begins the normal program approval process as established in KBOR policy.

Phase 4—Implementation

- Colleges enter the new program structure and courses into Kansas Higher Education Database System
- Revisions made to institutional catalogs
- New program structure/courses implemented at institutions and faculty document issues which may require revision—structure, content, related area

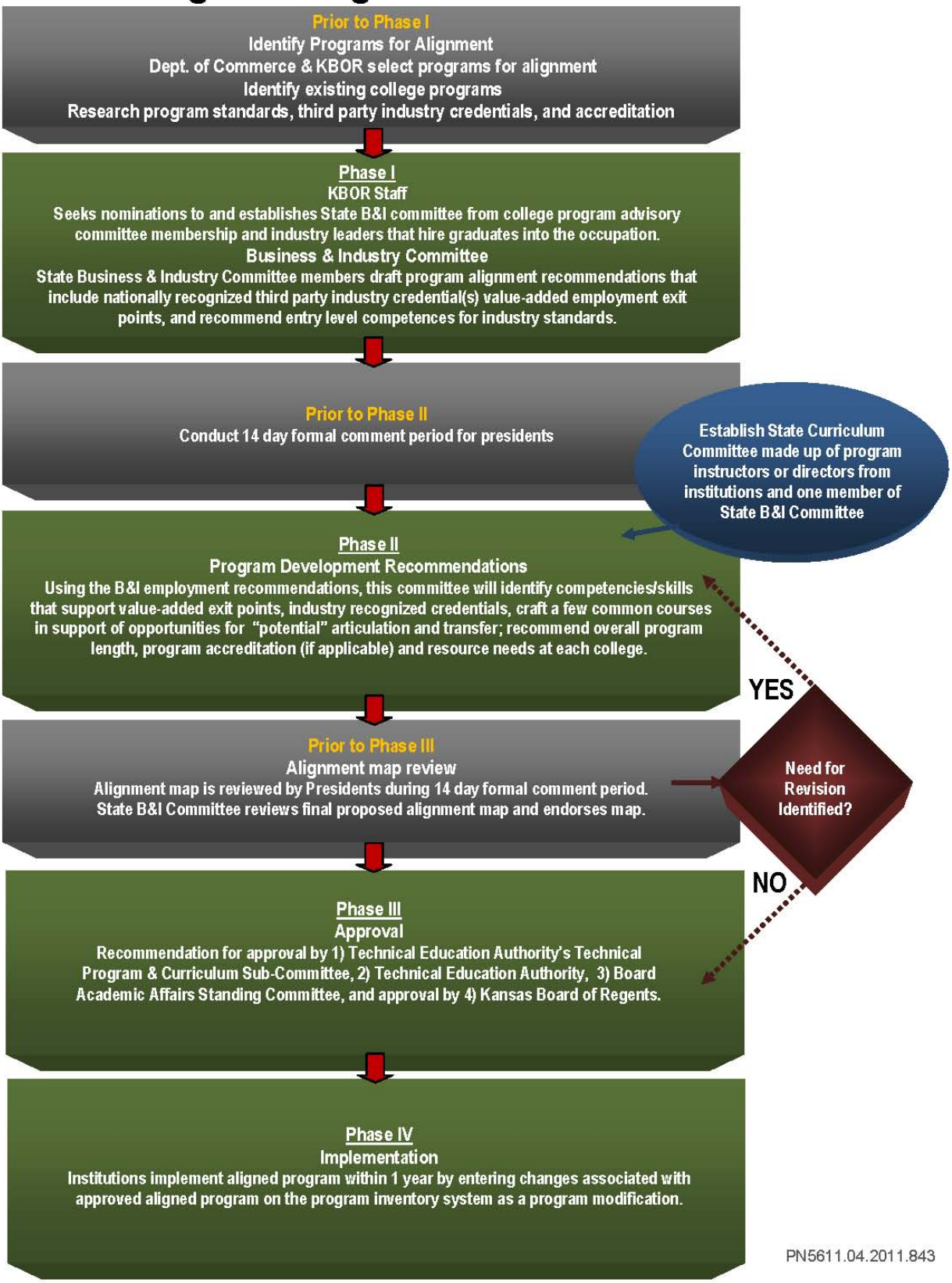
Colleges have approximately one year from the KBOR approval date to complete local activities necessary to implement any program modification/changes in existing programs to meet the agreed upon requirements of the newly aligned technical program. During the implementation year, instructors are asked to note and document any issues or difficulties with the content and/or delivery of the aligned program which will be addressed during the program review phase.

Phase 5—Standards Revision Process

- State faculty committees meet to determine any necessary revisions and/or issues and make recommendations for improvements
- Recommended revisions are forwarded to and reviewed by the state business and industry committee, Authority Program/Curriculum committee and state staff
- Revisions recommended by the state business and industry committee, Authority Program/Curriculum committee and state staff are forwarded to the Authority and KBOR for approval

The established program review cycle is utilized to address changes or updating of competencies as identified by business and industry based on industry changes as well as issues or difficulties with the content and/or delivery of the aligned program identified by program faculty.

Program Alignment Process Flowchart



PN5611.04.2011.843

What will be Aligned in a Technical Education Program

- Program Common Courses
  - Course titles
  - Course credit hours
  - Course description
  - Course Competencies
  - Other components (if needed)
- Program length – maximum total credit hours
- Accrediting bodies and/or certification/s (as identified by the B&I Committee)

What will Not be Aligned in a Technical Education Program

- Configuration of credit hours (lecture/lab) may vary to meet the needs of the individual colleges as long as the competencies are met and the credit value is the same
- Delivery modes (i.e. on-line, face-to-face, 8 week sessions, 16 week sessions…)
- Course order (as long as the college meets the established requirements within each certificate level)
- Learning and assessment activities
- Textbooks
- Course numbers
- Order of addressing competencies within a course
- General education courses
- Institutional flexibility courses

Specific Alignment Guidelines

Associate of Applied Science Degree Program – An A.A.S. program, according to Kansas Board of Regents policy, will be a credit hour range of 60-68 credit hours unless otherwise determined by accrediting bodies or the alignment process.

Certificate Programs – Technical education certificate programs can include any of the following to meet industry request for multiple exit points:

Certificate A – 16-29 credit hours
Certificate B – 30-44 credit hours
Certificate C – 45-59 credit hours

At each certificate level a determination will be made as to whether there is "value-added" in allowing for additional certificate levels. The framework for "value-added" exit points includes:

- An initial exit point is established based on the best estimate of the amount of instruction required for a student to acquire the competencies necessary to attain entry-level employment, where no credential exists.
- Other agreed upon program exit points are then identified based on additional certifications and/or competencies (beyond the entry-level) valued and identified by business and industry (additional certification/nice to have skills that increase employment opportunity/security).

Program "Common" Courses are common to all institutions offering the program with the total number of credit hours in the core being the same and will transfer among all institutions offering the program. The aligned technical program courses can be based on national accreditation organization curriculum. Agreed upon **common courses ARE required to have the same course title, description, competencies,**

and objectives at each of the affiliated institutions where the aligned program resides. Institutional course syllabi for these courses will include all four components. Institutions may **also** include additional competencies and/or objectives for these courses. For example – College A course syllabus for *"Safety Orientation (OSHA 10)"* will include the same information (course title, description, competencies, and objectives) as College B uses in their *"Safety Orientation (OSHA 10)"* course syllabus. However, College A's syllabus may also include additional competencies and objectives that are not identical to the additional competencies and objectives that College B uses in their syllabus.

Support Courses – Agreed upon **support courses ARE NOT required to have the same identical title, description, competencies* and objectives** at each of the affiliated institutions. *Only the agreed upon competencies (which may be worded differently at the local level) need to be included along with any already established institutional competencies for each of the support courses. For example: *"Anatomy and Physiology"* (for a program going through alignment) may have the following two competencies identified: *" 1) Students will use terms and discuss concepts of gross and microscopic human anatomical structure, physiologic functioning, and homeostasis and 2) Students will appropriately select and use medical reference materials (i.e. word books, dictionaries, internet and electronic resources)."* Institutions with the aligned program will need to assure that these two competencies are covered in the *"Anatomy and Physiology"* (titles may differ) course being offered by their institution but do not need to use this specific wording. **The bottom line is this** – KBOR must be able to look at a course syllabi from any of the aligned programs at the affiliated institutions and determine that it meets the competency requirements for the agreed upon support courses.

General Education Courses are required for an A.A.S. degree with a minimum of 15 credit hours – if an individual college requires more than 15, the extra credit hours can be part of that college's Institutional Flexibility component.

Institutional Flexibility Courses can be added to an individual college's program up to the aligned maximum program length.

Sample Program Alignment Map – Kansas Board of Regents
CIP: ##.####

Year
KBOR Approval Date

Prerequisites
Will be aligned if required for program

Exit Point + Industry Credential
(if one exists)

→ **Certificate Level**
Maximum # Credit Hours

Additional "Value Added") Exit Point
(if one exists)

→ **Certificate Level**
Maximum # Credit Hours

Additional Levels (if they exist)……

Additional General Education
(Minimum – 15 credit hours)

→ **A.A.S. Degree**
Maximum # Credit Hours + Industry Credentials for State Funding

Required Courses within Program

Common Courses	***# credits***
Course Title	*# credits*
Course Title	*# credits*
Course Title	*# credits*
Etc.	

Course list sequence has no implication on course scheduling by colleges.

Institutions may add additional competencies based on local demand.

Notes

Specifics pertaining to "Sample" programs:

Terms & Definitions Associated with Program Alignment

Term	*Definition*
Accreditation	Overview: Accreditation is provided by regional and national associations of schools and colleges. There are six regional associations, each named after the region in which it operates (Middle States, New England, North Central, Northwest, Southern, Western). The regional associations are independent of one another but they cooperate extensively and acknowledge one another's accreditation. Process: The act of granting credit or recognition with respect to educational institutions that maintain suitable standards, The process of accreditation fosters self-examination by learning institutions to develop an exchange between constituents of education programs on content, methods, and outcomes and to encourage continuous improvement of academic programs, The accrediting process requires institutions and programs to examine their own goals, operations, achievements, and then provides the expert criticism and suggestions of a visiting evaluation committee, and later, the recommendations of the accrediting body. Since the accreditation is reviewed periodically, institutions are encouraged toward continued self-study and improvement. For more information, please reference the Higher Learning Commission website: http://www.ncahlc.org/ *Sources*: https://content.springcm.com/content/DownloadDocuments.ashx?Selection=Document%2C19508682%3B&accountId=5968 http://www.thefreedictionary.com/
Area of Service	Associated with technical colleges, the phrase denotes the local communities served by a technical college or technical institute. *Source*: Program Alignment Team @ the Kansas Board of Regents
Articulation	Articulation is a systematic, seamless, student transition for course credit from secondary to postsecondary education that maximizes use of resources and minimizes duplication. *Source*: http://butlercc.edu/career_pathways/tech_prep_what.cfm
Articulation Agreement	An articulation agreement is an officially approved agreement that matches coursework between schools. These agreements are designed to help students make a smooth transition between schools. The agreement is designed to provide students with a non-duplicative sequence of progressive achievement leading to technical skill proficiency, a credential, a certificate or a degree and is linked through credit transfer agreements between the institutions. *Source*: http://www.kansasregents.org/resources/PDF/1986-Handbook3rdrevision0712.pdf
Certificate Levels	Community and technical colleges may offer two types of certificates based upon the number of credit hours required of the student. A Career and Technical Education Certificate may be granted for programs of instruction that are less than 60 semester hours in length but more than 15 semester hours. These certificate programs require approval by the Kansas Board of Regents and are classified into three categories based on the number of credit hours contained within the certificate: Certificate A – 16-29 credit hours, Certificate B – 30-44 credit hours, and Certificate C – 45-59 credit hours. Stand-Alone Parent Programs (SAPP), formerly Certificates of Completion, may be awarded for a course or sequence of courses not exceeding 15 semester hours. SAPPs are not approved by KBOR and do not receive Perkins funding. *Source*: http://www.kansasregents.org/resources/PDF/1986-Handbook3rdrevision0712.pdf
Collaborative Program	Collaborative programs/degrees are defined as programs/degrees developed and/or approved jointly by more than one institution; students from each participating institution may study parts of the program/degree at the collaborating institutions. In this policy, "program" refers to a formal academic course of study. Although most programs result in a degree or a major within a degree, in some cases, such as teaching endorsements, a program does not result in a major or a degree, but may result in a certificate. *Source*: http://www.kansasregents.org/resources/PDF/890-041510PolicyManualrevisedlinks_2_.pdf
Common Courses	Common courses essentially offer the same content (subjects/breadth) and level of instruction (depth) as a course offered by another institution. Furthermore, common courses may have

	common prefixes, course numbers, course titles, course descriptions, course competencies, and credit hours. Common courses may provide an avenue to establish articulation agreements with secondary institutions, incorporating these courses. *Source*: http://www.sdbor.edu/services/academics/AAC/documents/common_course_guidelines.pdf
Core Competencies	The concept of core competencies is an area of specialized expertise that is the result of harmonizing complex streams of technology and work activity. Core competencies serve as aggregates of capabilities, where synergy is created that has sustainable value and broad applicability. These competencies serve as the backbone of learning a given subject and provide the largest window for increased learning in a given subject matter should change occur within the subject matter. *Source*: http://www.stanford.edu/dept/SUL/library/institute21/summer/speakers/trelstad_mag.html
Credit Hour	Credit for lecture, laboratory, and other classes. Each community college shall record one semester hour of credit for any student attending a lecture class, if the student has made satisfactory progress in the class and the class consists of at least 750 minutes of class instruction, plus time allocated for a final exam. Each community college shall record one semester hour of credit for any student attending a laboratory class, if the student has made satisfactory progress in the class and the class consists of at least 1,125 minutes. Each community college shall record one semester hour of credit for any student who completes a minimum of 2,700 minutes in on-the-job training, internships, or clinical experiences in health occupations. The number of semester hours of credit recorded for each distance education course shall be assigned by the community college that provided the course, based on the amount of time needed to achieve the course objectives in a face-to-face format. *Source*: (Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 71-201, K.S.A. 72-7514, and K.S.A. 74-32, 140; effective Oct. 29, 2004.)
Distance Learning	Distance learning is a field of education that focuses on the pedagogy/, technology, and instructional system designs that aim to deliver education to students who are not physically onsite. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, it "is a process to create and provide access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance, or both Distance learning credit as an actual component of the approved degree curriculum, making extensive use of telecommunication and essentially identical to courses the institution has already offered face-to-face, may be offered if there will be sufficient interaction between students and faculty and, if possible, among students." Geographic service areas do not apply to distance education courses or programs. *Source*: http://www.kansasregents.org/resources/PDF/890-041510PolicyManualrevisedlinks_2_.pdf
End-of-Program Assessment	A form of assessment used to validate program outcomes across a group of students which generates a composite score for the group. *Source*: Program Alignment Team @ the Kansas Board of Regents
Industry-Recognized 3rd Party Credential	An industry-recognized credential represents a declaration that an individual has met nationally recognized standards in a particular industry and culminates in the awarding of a certification or other credential commonly recognized in that industry. A credential can only be awarded to an individual. Furthermore, some professions require a credential for employment. In some professions, eligibility to obtain a credential requires graduation from an accredited educational program. The value of an industry-recognized credential is it provides companies with the kind of talent they need to maintain and increase their competitiveness in the global economy, and demonstrates to consumers that the professional has met a standard of competency. *Source*: http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Text_HTML/2007_SESSIONS/RS/bills/hb2187%20intr.htm http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/DefiningCredentials.pdf
Industry Standard	An industry/technical standard is an established norm or requirement about technical systems. It is usually a formal document that establishes uniform engineering or technical criteria, methods, processes and practices. In contrast, a custom, convention, company product, corporate standard, etc. which becomes generally accepted and dominant is often called a *de facto*

	standard. A technical standard can also be a controlled artifact or similar formal means used for calibration. Reference Standards and certified reference materials have an assigned value by direct comparison with a reference base. A primary standard is usually under the jurisdiction of a national standards body. Secondary, tertiary, check standards and standard materials may be used for reference in a metrology system. A key requirement in this case is (metrological) traceability, an unbroken paper trail of calibrations back to the primary standard. A technical standard may be developed privately or unilaterally, for example by a corporation, regulatory body, military, etc. Standards can also be developed by groups such as trade unions, and trade associations. Standards organizations often have more diverse input and usually develop voluntary standards: these might become mandatory if adopted by a government, business contract, etc. *Source*: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technical_standard
Institutional Accreditation	**Institutional Accreditation** is a status accorded an institution of postsecondary education that embraces the whole institution as it defines itself and therefore includes all areas and activities except discipline specific curricular content. Normally, institutional accreditation testifies to 1) the appropriateness of the objectives of the institution; 2) the advocacy of its organization, program, and resources, both material and human, when viewed against its objectives and generally accepted accrediting standards; and 3) evidence of the accomplishment of institutional objectives in reasonable measure. Moreover, the criteria of eligibility provide that degree programs, however specialized, must rest upon a base of liberal or general studies required of all or most students. However, accreditation of the institution as a whole is not, and should not be interpreted as being equivalent to specialized accreditation of a part or program of the institution and should not be represented as such. The Commissions of the six regional accrediting associations accredit a variety of institutions within their geographic regions. Also, several national accrediting bodies provide institutional accreditation for special-purpose institutions throughout the United States. And, finally, specialized accrediting bodies, when they accredit single-purpose institutions, provide institutional as well as programmatic accreditation. *Source*: http://nasm.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp?page=Definitions
Online Course	Online Education which generally refer to purely web-based learning. Online learning is frequently coined as “e-learning” which refers to a learning environment where the students rarely or never meet face-to-face, nor access on-campus educational facilities, because they study online. *Source*: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-learning
Programmatic Accreditation	Specialized or programmatic accreditation normally applies to programs, departments, or schools that are parts of an institution. The accredited unit may be as large as a college or school within a university or as small as a curriculum within a discipline. Most of the specialized or programmatic accrediting agencies review units within an institution of higher education that is accredited by one of the regional accrediting agencies. However, certain accrediting agencies also accredit professional schools and other specialized or vocational institutions of higher education that are freestanding in their operations. Thus, a "specialized" or "programmatic" accrediting agency may also function in the capacity of an "institutional" accrediting agency. In addition, a number of specialized accrediting agencies accredit educational programs within non-educational settings, such as hospitals. *Source*: http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg2.html
Program Alignment	Program Alignment is composed of 4 salient elements: 1) Allow business and industry to identify value-added exit points within programs, 2) Identify and support student acquisition of nationally recognized 3rd party industry credentials, 3) Identify a “few” common courses that can serve as a bridge for articulation opportunities with K-12 and 4) Decrease the variability in program length. *Source*: Program Alignment Team @ the Kansas Board of Regents

Stand Alone Parent Program (SAPP)	Stand-Alone Parent Program (SAPP) A program which is (1) less than 16 credit hours, (2) not associated with another program of 16+ credit hours and (3) (generally) leads to an industry recognized credential, license or certification. *Source*: http://www.kansasregents.org/resources/PDF/1986-Handbook3rdrevision0712.pdf
Support Courses	**Support courses ARE NOT required to have the same identical title, description, competencies* and objectives** at each of the affiliated institutions. *Only the agreed upon competencies (which may be worded differently at the local level) need to be included along with any already established institutional competencies for each of the support courses. KBOR staff must be able to look at a course syllabi from any of the aligned programs at the affiliated institutions and determine that it meets the competency requirements for the agreed upon support courses. *Source*: Program Alignment Team @ the Kansas Board of Regents
Third-Party Industry-Recognized Student Credential	A credential is an attestation of qualification, competence, or authority issued to an individual by a third party with a relevant de jure or de facto authority or assumed competence to do so. Thus, a credential inherently is issued by a third party and within the context of postsecondary technical education is issued to a student. *Source*: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Credential
Value-Added Exit Point	An initial exit point is established based on the best estimate of the amount of instruction required for a student to acquire the competencies necessary to attain entry-level employment, where no credential exists. Other agreed upon program exit points are then identified based on additional certifications and/or competencies (beyond the entry-level) valued and identified by business and industry (additional certification/nice to have skills that increase employment opportunity/security). *Source*: Kansas Board of Regents