

Minnesota Business, Marketing, and Information Technology Frameworks:

Career Exploration Cluster [Updated March 2024]



Career Exploration Cluster

The Career Exploration Cluster includes courses in which students explore and prepare for career opportunities in business-related fields, and identify alignment of their current skills and aptitudes to these opportunities. A wide range of experiential learning, mentor connections, and postsecondary visits are typically utilized to help students develop personal and professional career development plans for post-graduation career and college readiness. Students develop skills including verbal and written communications (resumes, applications, information and job interviews), organization and time management, and technology applications. Students who enroll in Career Exploration Cluster courses develop a plan for further pursuit of careers in administrative support, accounting and finance, business management, hospitality and tourism, information technology, or marketing.

Cluster Courses

Introductory Courses	Intermediate Courses	Advanced Courses
01 Introduction to Business Careers (140710) OR 18 Introduction to Marketing Careers (040800)		02 Emerging Career Pathway Studies (140710) OR 19 Emerging Career Pathway Studies (040800)

Experiential Learning and Work-Based Learning

Experiential Learning opportunities should be embedded throughout a CTE Business and Marketing program, and could include industry tours, job shadowing experiences, service learning experiences, and student-led business operations. Work-based Learning (WBL) experiences as a continuation and application of classroom learning can also be developed. Work-based Learning includes both internship and Youth Apprenticeship opportunities for approved WBL programs with licensed WBL coordinators. Experiential Learning is a required component of every business, marketing, and instructional technology education program, with the intention that opportunities will be available for every student. Through involvement in Experiential Learning activities, students experience multiple career pathway occupations, learn expected workplace behavior, develop industry-specific technical skills, and are given opportunities to apply academic and occupational skills in the workplace or a simulated workplace environment.

Social-Emotional Learning

Helping students develop social and emotional competence is an essential component in their preparation to be successful adults. Career and Technical Education (CTE) classrooms and workplaces should foster the acquisition and application of the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for social and emotional development. These include: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Explicit teaching of, and regular student rehearsal of, these skills will lead to greater academic, social, and career outcomes.

Career Technical Student Organizations: Business Professionals of America (BPA) and DECA

Student participation in career technical student organizations (CTSOs) is considered as essential component of a quality career and technical education program. Minnesota Business Professionals of America (BPA) and Minnesota DECA provide students with opportunities for growth through education, competition, community service and professional development. Career and leadership development activities are embedded throughout the entire career cluster through classroom instruction and projects, as well as the DECA and BPA competitive event programs.

Assessing Competencies with Formative and Summative Assessments

Employability skill performance indicators and benchmarks (found at the beginning of this document) are typically assessed with “formative assessments.” The goal of formative assessment is to monitor student progress during an instructional unit to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. Formative assessments help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas of needed improvement. They also help teachers recognize where students are struggling so that problems can be addressed in a timely manner. Formative assessments generally have low or no point value.

Career pathway technical skill performance indicators and benchmarks (identified by Table C course name and code later in the document) are typically assessed with “summative assessments.” The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against the performance indicator or benchmark to which the unit was aligned. Summative assessments have point values which generally are factored into a final course grade.

Resources Utilized in Frameworks Development

Performance Indicators/Standards and Measures/Benchmarks were developed from the following sources:

- Minnesota Common Core Competencies
- National Business Education Association Standards
- Minnesota Work-based Learning Frameworks
- National Council of Economic Education
- States’ Career Clusters Initiative
- Minnesota Career and College Readiness Resource Guide
- MBA Research National Standards for Business Administration

Career Field: Business, Management, and Administration

Cluster: Career Exploration

Program: 140710 or 040800

Course Title: Introduction to Business Careers/Introduction to Marketing Careers

Course Code: 01 or 18

Course Description: The emphasis of career pathway study in this course is focused on careers in the Business, Management and Administration field found on the Minnesota Career Wheel. In the Business careers course, students explore career opportunities in three business clusters: Finance; Hospitality and Tourism; and Business, Management and Administration. In the Marketing careers course, students explore career opportunities in Marketing cluster pathways (Merchandising; Marketing Management; Marketing Communications; Marketing Research; and Professional Sales). Key areas of focus will include: developing self-knowledge of strengths and career interests through personal interest and skills inventories; participating in career fairs, industry tours, and job shadowing opportunities; conducting an informational interview with an employer in each business career cluster; and developing career goals and action plans for achieving them. Using the “All Aspects of Industry” framework, students will develop knowledge in the following areas related to business cluster careers: principles of technology; labor issues; technical and production skills; and personal work habits. Students receive opportunities to practice communication skills through real or simulated job interviews. Participation in student organizations such as DECA and Business Professionals of America (BPA) may be embedded within course activities and objectives.

CTSO Competitive Events:

DECA: Principles of Business Administration events (Management and Administration; Marketing; Hospitality and Tourism; and Finance)

FCCLA: Career Investigation

Suggested Certification or Industry-Recognized Credentials:

[NOCTI Micro-Credential: Work Ethics](#)

[NOCTI Exams: 21st Century Skills for Workplace Success](#)

Instructional units in this course may include:

- Preparing for the World of Work
- Knowing Your Strengths and Interests
- Personal Financial Planning
- Exploring Career Clusters in the Business Career Field
- Seeking, Applying, and Obtaining Employment
- Academic Planning for Career Development

Topic/Strand 10: Technical Skills

Performance Indicator/Standard	Measures/Benchmarks	Sample Learning Targets
CE01.10.01 Describe characteristics of the work environment and personal qualities needed to be employable.	CE01.10.01.01 Describe academic knowledge and technical skills necessary to obtain and retain employment. CE01.10.01.02 Describe personal qualities and employability skills necessary to obtain and retain employment. CE01.10.01.03 Explain OSHA standards and common safety concerns in the workplace. CE01.10.01.04 Compare and contrast rights and responsibilities of employers and employees in the Fair Labor Standards Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and Minnesota Child Labor laws.	I will be able to describe academic knowledge and technical skills I should develop to increase my employability potential. I will be able to describe personal qualities and employability skills most sought after by employers. I will be able to explain the implications of OSHA standards on preventing common workplace safety concerns. I will be able to compare and contrast employer and employee rights in law.
CE01.10.02 Identify personal skills, interests, strengths, values, motivations and preferences as they relate to career planning.	CE01.10.02.01 Identify personal traits, interests, and preferences aligned to potential career pursuits using personal inventory tools. CE01.10.02.02 Identify knowledge and skills aligned to potential career pursuits using skills and aptitude assessments.	I will be able to complete a personal interest survey (such as CAREERwise or Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory) to identify interests and preferences that may align to potential careers. I will be able to complete a skills and aptitudes assessment (e.g., Myers-Briggs MBTI Career Aptitude Test, Holland Code Career Aptitude Test, Motivational Appraisal of Personal Potential (MAPP) Career Aptitude Test) to identify skills that may align to potential careers.
CE01.10.03 Develop financial plans with employment income to accomplish personal financial goals.	CE01.10.03.01 Calculate wages, taxes, and deductions to estimate financial resources available from work in various jobs and career pathways. CE01.10.03.02 Compare and contrast direct deposit, bill pay, and online/mobile banking services of financial institutions. CE01.10.03.03 Develop a personal budget to manage employment income aligned with personal short-term and long-term goals.	I will be able to explain typical earnings, deductions, and net pay terminology and calculations on a paycheck. I will be able to compare and contrast banking services I may use to manage my employment income. I will be able to create a personal budget to help me accomplish short-term and long-term financial goals.

Performance Indicator/Standard	Measures/Benchmarks	Sample Learning Targets
CE01.10.04 Explore career opportunities in one or more business career pathway to identify opportunities that align with personal career interests and aptitudes.	CE01.10.04.01 Identify educational requirements and technical skills needed for business career pathways of interest. CE01.10.04.02 Analyze local and regional business career pathway job growth and labor market information to evaluate potential career pathways. CE01.10.04.03 Analyze and match personal career interests and aptitudes to potential career opportunities of interest in each business career cluster pathway.	I will be able to identify how knowledge and skills learned in high school are utilized in business occupations. I will be able to analyze labor market data as I consider future demand for careers of interest. I will be able to analyze results of my career interest and aptitude surveys for potential career pathway alignment with my life and career goals.
CE01.10.05 Develop job application documents and interview skills to prepare for obtaining desired employment positions.	CE01.10.05.01 Identify multiple print and digital resources for locating information on available career opportunities. CE01.10.05.02 Develop a resume to highlight academic, technical, and personal employability knowledge and skills. CE01.10.05.03 Complete error-free print and electronic job application forms to seek interviews for desired employment. CE01.10.05.04 Develop job interview skills through mock interview and information interview experiences.	I will be able to locate, interpret, and evaluate career and employment opportunity information. I will be able to develop a resume which highlights my academic and career preparation. I will be able to complete job application forms highlighting my qualifications with no errors. I will be able to participate in multiple mock job interviews and information interviews to improve my interviewing skills.
CE01.10.06 Develop an education and career plan to meet personal and career goals.	CE01.10.06.01 Develop a career preparation action plan with both short-term and long-term action steps identified to accomplish career goals. CE01.10.06.02 Create a personal learning plan (PLP) for high school academic course taking based on needed preparation for desired career opportunities. CE01.10.06.03 Compare current personal academic achievement to levels needed for career pathway success. CE01.10.06.04 Explain how participation in activities offered through student and civic organizations can provide valuable career preparation. CE01.10.06.05 Identify postsecondary admission requirements for institutions and programs aligned with career goals. CE01.10.06.06 Compare employment and postsecondary education options available to pursue career interests. CE01.10.06.07 Develop a career portfolio to document knowledge, skills, and experiences.	I will be able to develop a career preparation action plan. I will be able to develop a personal learning plan to organize high school graduation requirements and career preparation action steps. I will be able to compare my current academic performance to levels needed for desired career pursuits and identify steps for needed improvements. I will be able to explain how participation in BPA or DECA can provide valuable career preparation experiences. I will be able to identify postsecondary admission requirements aligned to pursuit of my career goals. I will be able to analyze the potential costs of postsecondary education and potential sources of funding to pay for my education. I will be able to develop a career portfolio that demonstrates my academic achievements and career preparation.

Career Field: Business, Management, and Administration

Cluster: Career Exploration

Program: 140710 or 040800

Course Title: Emerging Career Pathway Studies

Course Code: 02 or 19

Course Description: This course assists students in the development of job-specific knowledge and skills related to a specific career pathway of personal interest. The course should allow students to develop a customized learning experience to study emerging career pathways and/or career pathways with non-traditional combinations of technical skills across multiple career pathways. Students will research certifications, industry-recognized credentials, and postsecondary credentials important to starting and advancing opportunities in the selected career pathway. Instruction should prepare students for an industry-recognized credential certification exam. Mentorship with a local business leader working in the career pathway of interest is encouraged. Using the “All Aspects of Industry” framework, students should develop knowledge in the following areas related to business cluster careers: business planning; management and organization structure; finance; health, safety and environment; and career pathway technical skill development. Participation in student organizations such as DECA and Business Professionals of America (BPA) should allow for embedded authentic assessments of career pathway technical skill development through competitive events and/or real-world projects.

CTSO Competitive Events:

Contact local BPA or DECA advisor for list of potential events aligned to career pathways study subject matter.

Suggested Certification or Industry-Recognized Credentials:

Contact supervising teacher for list of potential credential exams aligned to career pathways study subject matter.

Topic/Strand 10: Technical Skills

Performance Indicator/Standard	Measures/Benchmarks	Sample Learning Targets
CE03.10.01 Analyze non-traditional combinations of technical skills across multiple career pathways through student-designed research.	CE03.10.01.01 Research and present industry data and employment projections for businesses employing workers in an emerging career pathways of interest. CE03.10.01.02 Analyze causes of the emergence of the career pathway of interest and explain existing and new technical skills that will be required for successful pursuit of career pathway development. CE03.10.01.03 Conduct information interviews with employers working in emerging career pathways of interest to identify industry-recognized credentials (IRC) valued by business and industry which may improve personal qualifications for employment. CE03.10.01.04 Establish a mentoring relationship with a business and industry partner to assess career pathway growth opportunities and stages of career preparation needed.	I will be able to present research on employment projects for a business career pathway of interest. I will be able to analyze causes of growing employment opportunities for a business career pathway of interest. I will be able to identify professional assessments and credentials which may improve my personal qualifications for employment in a desired career pathway.
CE03.10.02 Develop personalized plans for career entry and advancement in non-traditional or emerging career pathways of interest.	CE03.10.02.01 Compare and contrast current, non-traditional, and emerging career pathways using the All Aspects of Industry (AAI) framework. CE03.10.02.02 Research and present information on the projected academic and work experience background suggested for successful emerging career pathway entry. CE03.10.02.03 Develop a personalized learning plan (PLP) demonstrating academic and employment steps needed to pursue the emerging career pathway of interest.	I will be able to develop a personalized plan for education and training needed to prepare for entry in a business career pathway of interest. I will be able to identify how my intended independent study course will increase knowledge and skills I need to prepare for desired business careers.
CE03.10.03 Demonstrate unique connections between emerging career pathways through CTSO competitive event project development.	CE03.10.03.01 Analyze available CTSO competitive event project opportunities and develop a proposal for participation in a combination of events to provide preparation for an emerging career pathway. CE03.10.03.02 Develop CTSO competitive event projects that align to preparation for an emerging career pathway.	I will be able to select CTSO competitive events that align to career pathway development in an area of interest.
CE03.10.04 Develop technical skills for non-traditional or emerging career pathways of interest through experiential learning opportunities.	CE03.10.04.01 Analyze data from industry research and information interviews to identify local/regional industries and businesses as potential employers of workers in a non-traditional or emerging business career pathway of interest. CE03.10.04.02 Develop and apply technical skills for non-traditional or emerging business career pathways of interest through experiential learning opportunities.	I will be able to develop skills needed in a business career pathway of interest through work experience opportunities with companies working in my area of interest.