



# 2024 Utilization Report

*State of Illinois Model Programs of Study Guides in  
Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources;  
Architecture, Construction, and Energy;  
Arts and Communications; and  
Finance and Business Services*



**EdSystems**  
EDUCATION SYSTEMS CENTER at  
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

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#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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#### AUTHORED BY

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#### ABOUT ICCB

In 1965, the Illinois General Assembly established the Illinois Community College Board to create a system of public community colleges that would be within easy reach of every resident. Today, the Illinois Community College System covers the entire state with 48 colleges and one multi-community college center in 39 community college districts. Community colleges serve nearly one million Illinois residents each year in credit and noncredit courses and many more through their public service programs. Illinois' community colleges meet both local and statewide needs for education and workforce development through high-quality, affordable, accessible, and cost-effective programs and services. Learn more at [iccb.org](http://iccb.org).



#### ABOUT EDSYSTEMS

Education Systems Center (EdSystems) is a mission-driven policy development and program implementation center based within Northern Illinois University. We work at the state level to create ecosystem and policy change while simultaneously working at the local level to create organizational change. This bi-directional approach allows us to align local efforts to state policy while elevating local experiences and learnings to state tables. Learn more at [edsystemsniu.org](http://edsystemsniu.org).

# Table of Contents

- Introduction & Background..... 1**
  - Purpose & Analyses ..... 2*
  - Key Recommendations ..... 2*
  
- Approach ..... 3**
  
- Findings ..... 9**
  - Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources ..... 10*
  - Architecture, Construction, and Energy ..... 12*
  - Arts and Communications ..... 14*
  - Finance and Business Services ..... 16*
  
- Conclusion & Recommendations ..... 18**
  - Recommendations..... 19*

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# Introduction & Background

The State of Illinois Model Programs of Study Guides were developed in collaboration with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) through a process led and facilitated by the Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University (EdSystems). The process included extensive research into labor market information and credential programs, as well as dialogue across secondary, postsecondary, and employer stakeholders.

With the support of ICCB, EdSystems researched the utilization of the State of Illinois Model Programs of Study Guides in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; Architecture, Construction and Energy; Arts and Communications and Finance and Business Services. This work is a continuation of the researched in 2023 for the State of Illinois Model Programs of Study Guides in Education; Health Sciences and Technology; Information Technology; and Manufacturing and Engineering.

EdSystems consulted with ICCB to receive the Perkins V instructional course sequence submissions for the 2023–24 school year. The team reviewed a series of submissions from various community colleges representing rural, suburban, and urban areas. In this report, EdSystems explains its approach, presents findings, and offers recommendations to improve alignment of future implementation to the Model Programs of Study Guides in service of student success.



## Purpose & Analyses

The first Model Programs of Study Guides were published in 2020. The primary purposes and goals for the guides are to:

- Provide guidance and exemplars for districts, community college and/or regional areas to adopt or customize as they develop programs of study for approval as part of Illinois' Perkins V Plan.
- Establish a framework for state agencies to develop and implement program supports.
- Identify priority dual credit courses that are foundational to the industry area and well-situated for statewide scaling and articulation.
- Define the competencies that should be sequenced across a program of study course sequence to prepare students for the future of work in that industry area.
- Identify entry points for employers to support coursework and related experiences.

Community colleges, high schools, and employer partners use the guides to create various pathways that sequence courses from secondary through postsecondary programs. The guides play a critical role in helping districts identify high priority occupations, academic/technical credentials, strategic dual credit courses, course sequences, and technical competencies.

EdSystems analyzed the utilization of the Model Programs of Study Guides in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; Architecture, Construction and Energy; Arts and Communications and Finance and Business Services. More specifically, the team compared the dual credit courses submitted by various community colleges to the corresponding Model Programs of Study Guide. This process included reviewing course descriptions to validate alignment. The [Illinois Program of Study Expectations Tool](#) was referenced to review each pathway, paying close attention to dual credit courses and submission adherence to the program of study sequence descriptions/mappings. In addition, EdSystems used the tool to categorize each program of study's level of alignment to the corresponding Model Programs

of Study Guide. The alignment categories are as follows:

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Working toward expectations

This analysis enabled EdSystems to provide recommendations on how to increase usage statewide and identify curriculum-related barrier reduction strategies.

## Key Recommendations

Based on the research, EdSystems recommends:

- Explore the course sequences in two of the Model Programs of Study Guides: Arts and Communication and Architecture, Construction, and Energy.
- Deepen community college faculty's understanding and utilization of the guides.
- Support community college participation and leadership in the mapping of regional college and career pathways.

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# Approach

Our review included the following key processes:



## Step 1

### Comprehensive Review of Instructional Sequences

The utilization research consists of a comprehensive review of the Perkins V instructional submissions provided by ICCB. EdSystems compared the dual credit courses submitted by various community colleges to recommendations in the corresponding Model Programs of Study Guide. This data was uploaded into a spreadsheet for analysis. EdSystems reviewed 51 submissions from 22 different colleges and participated in 15 interviews (see Table 2: Community College Pathway Submissions).

## Step 2

### Detailed Analysis Using Illinois Program of Study Expectations Tool

The data were further analyzed using the Illinois Program of Study Expectations Tool as a reference. The tool was created by ICCB and Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support to help community colleges and ICCB review programs of study. This self-evaluation tool was designed to be an interactive instrument to help ensure pathways are meeting both the federal requirements and the high standards set in Illinois. EdSystems utilized the Quality Component 3 (Instructional Sequence) section to review the submissions, paying close attention to dual credit courses and submission adherence to the program of study sequence descriptions/mappings. We noted courses that were comparable to the corresponding Model Programs of Study course sequences. We identified the overlapping components outlined in the Program of Study Expectations Tool and Illinois Model Program of Study Guides (see Table 1: Overlapping components outlined in the Program of Study Expectation Tool and Illinois Model Programs of Study Guides)

## Step 3

### Classification of Sequences by Quality Rubric

The components listed in Step 2 were used to categorize institutions programs of study level of alignment to the corresponding Model Programs of Study. The categories are exceeds expectations, meets expectations, and working toward expectations; these correspond with the level of alignment categories outlined in the Illinois Program of Study Expectations Tool. The community colleges pathway submission alignment are categorized by color in Table 2: Community College Pathway Submissions.

## Step 4

### Interviews & Deeper Analysis of Select Institutions/Programs

EdSystems selected ten institutions with various levels of alignment for an interview and deeper analysis. The purpose of the interview process was to better understand the various institutions' course sequence decision making process. The interview participants consisted of discipline-specific faculty, dual credit/early college staff, and an upper-level college administrator such as a dean, vice president, or provost. The colleges selected for an interview along with the industry sector were:

- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources:
  - Black Hawk College
  - Danville Area Community College
  - Highland Community College
  - Joliet Junior College

- Architecture, Construction and Energy:
  - College of Lake County
  - Harper College
  - Kaskaskia College
  - Lewis and Clark Community College
- Arts and Communications:
  - College of DuPage
  - Heartland Community College
  - Moraine Valley Community College
  - Southwestern Illinois College
- Finance and Business Services:
  - Elgin Community College
  - John A. Logan College
  - Parkland College

We asked the participants the following questions:

- Tell us more about why this institution selected these particular courses for dual credit. Please walk us through this course sequence. How did you decide to offer the selected dual credit courses?
- How has your college navigated teacher credentialing for the dual credit courses offered?
- What is your college’s and/or department’s philosophy on dual courses in this pathway?
- How did the college navigate student eligibility requirements for the dual credit courses offered?
- Did your department reference the Illinois Model Programs of Study Guides? How helpful was the guide?
- Were other courses considered? If so, what were they? Why were they omitted?
- What steps are being taken to provide equitable access to dual credit courses?
- *Fun question:* Your institution has an unlimited amount of funds to implement dual credit courses. How are you going to spend the money?

## Step 5

### Summarized Data & Synthesized Recommendations

The findings include the number of colleges that submitted pathways, general information about the submissions, and an analysis of dual credit course alignment based on the Model Programs of Study Guides course sequence. In addition, each section includes a narrative that discusses the qualitative data gathered from the interviews. Lastly, the report shares synthesized recommendations.



Table 1: Overlapping components outlined in the Illinois Program of Study Expectations Tool and Illinois Model Programs of Study Guides

DESIGN ELEMENTS	EXPECTATION
<p>The program of study curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consists of aligned and non-duplicative secondary and postsecondary elements</li> <li>• Includes a coherent sequence of courses that may lead to an associate degree or higher</li> <li>• Includes strategic dual credit opportunities in CTE and/or academic courses</li> <li>• Incorporates work-based learning opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sequence aligned with Illinois standards.</li> <li>• Sequences are coordinated and non-duplicative across the specific high school and college (may include career exploration activities in middle school).</li> <li>• Completers are prepared to attain a postsecondary credential, certificate, associate degree, or higher.</li> <li>• Local dual credit agreement reflects the strategic dual credit opportunities in the program of study curriculum.</li> <li>• Evidence of alignment efforts aimed at reducing remediation.</li> <li>• Sequences are aligned with industry standards.</li> </ul>
<p>The program of study allows for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple entry and exit points stackable credentials.</li> <li>• Students to build and/or increase their “college knowledge” in order to make informed decisions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sequence demonstrates evidence of curricular mapping.</li> <li>• Program of study is part of a larger “stackable” curriculum.</li> <li>• Informing all students of postsecondary and career options is infused into the program of study which may include the use of the framework.</li> <li>• Where appropriate, includes entry and exit points that accelerate opportunities for adult education learners, veterans, and students in non-credit programs.</li> </ul>
<p>The program of study is supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulation agreements.</li> <li>• Data-sharing agreements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program of study based on articulation or agreements are regularly reviewed and updated.</li> <li>• Program of study uses relevant local data.</li> <li>• Dual credit agreement is in place.</li> </ul>

Table 2: Community College Pathway Submissions

SECTOR	ACADEMIC PROGRAM	LEVEL OF ALIGNMENT
AFNR *	<a href="#">Equestrian Science</a>	● Meets Expectations
	<a href="#">Horse Science Technology</a>	● Meets Expectations
	<a href="#">Veterinary Technology</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
A&C	<a href="#">Art, Audio/Video Technology &amp; Communications</a>	● Meets Expectations
FBS	<a href="#">Business</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
ACE	<a href="#">HVARC</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
A&C *	<a href="#">Fashion Merchandising †</a>	● Meets Expectations
	<a href="#">Fashion Studies †</a>	● Meets Expectations
	<a href="#">Interior Design</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
	<a href="#">Motion Picture</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
ACE *	<a href="#">CAD</a>	● Meets Expectations
	<a href="#">HVAC</a>	● Meets Expectations
A&C	<a href="#">Graphic Design</a>	● Meets Expectations
FBS	<a href="#">Business Administration</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
AFNR *	<a href="#">Agribusiness †</a>	● Meets Expectations
A&C	<a href="#">Digital Marketing</a>	● Working Toward Expectations
	<a href="#">Marketing †</a>	● Meets Expectations
FBS *	<a href="#">Accounting</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
ACE *	<a href="#">HVRAC</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
A&C *	<a href="#">Digital Media Communications</a>	● Meets Expectations
AFNR *	<a href="#">Agribusiness †</a>	● Meets Expectations
AFNR	<a href="#">Agricultural Production</a>	● Meets Expectations
AFNR	<a href="#">Agricultural Business †</a>	● Meets Expectations
	<a href="#">Agricultural Studies †</a>	● Meets Expectations
	<a href="#">Agronomy †</a>	● Meets Expectations
FBS	<a href="#">Business Administration †</a>	● Meets Expectations
ACE	<a href="#">Automotive Services</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
FBS *	<a href="#">Accounting</a>	● Exceeds Expectations

Continued Table 2: Community College Pathway Submissions

SECTOR	ACADEMIC PROGRAM	LEVEL OF ALIGNMENT
AFNR *	<a href="#">Agricultural Business</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
	<a href="#">Veterinary Medical Technology †</a>	● Meets Expectations
ACE	<a href="#">CAD</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
	<a href="#">HVAC</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
FBS	<a href="#">Accounting</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
AFNR	<a href="#">Agriculture Business †</a>	● Meets Expectations
ACE *	<a href="#">HVAC †</a>	● Working Toward Expectations
AFNR	<a href="#">Horticulture</a>	● Meets Expectations
A&C	<a href="#">Graphic Design †</a>	● Meets Expectations
FBS	<a href="#">Business/Court Reporting</a>	● Meets Expectations
ACE *	<a href="#">Drafting and Design</a>	● Meets Expectations
A&C	<a href="#">Radio Broadcasting</a>	● Meets Expectations
A&C *	<a href="#">Digital Art/Design</a>	● Meets Expectations
A&C	<a href="#">Media Arts and Production †</a>	● Working Toward Expectations
	<a href="#">Media Production †</a>	● Working Toward Expectations
	<a href="#">Photography †</a>	● Working Toward Expectations
FBS *	<a href="#">Business</a>	● Meets Expectations
FBS	<a href="#">Business</a>	● Exceeds Expectations
A&C	<a href="#">Media Production †</a>	● Working Toward Expectations
A&C *	<a href="#">Marketing/Graphic Communication</a>	● Meets Expectations
FBS	<a href="#">Business Management</a>	● Meets Expectations
A&C	<a href="#">Visual Communication †</a>	● Working Toward Expectations

Notes:

- The sector abbreviations are: agriculture, food and natural resources (AFNR); architecture, construction, and energy (ACE); arts and communications (A&C); and finance and business services (FBS)
- An asterisk (\*) Indicates interview participants
- A dagger (†) indicates received [updated dual credit course list](#) from ICCB. The courses were received during a second round of pathway submissions from the community colleges to ICCB.

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## Findings

In this section, we share the results of our research organized by industry sector: agriculture, food and natural resources, architecture, construction and energy, arts and communications, and finance and business services. We share the number of colleges that submitted pathways, analysis of dual credit course alignment based on the Model Programs of Study Guides course sequence, and a narrative that discusses the qualitative data gathered from the interviews.





## Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources











For the agriculture, food, and natural resources sector, EdSystems received 14 pathway submissions from eight different community colleges. Of the submissions received, eight are in agribusiness, agricultural production, or agricultural studies. The remaining pathways include agronomy, equestrian science, horse science technology, horticulture, and veterinary technology.






The analysis of course offerings across eight community colleges revealed that agribusiness is the most popular academic program, particularly in rural institutions. EdSystems interviewed four colleges that offer at least one dual credit course in their pathways. The most popular dual credit course of the submissions is Agricultural Business Management, offered by five colleges. This course aligns with the Model Programs of Study Guide; it is a recommended skill development course. Introduction to Animal Science emerged as the second most popular course offered among this grouping, in spite of two community colleges struggling to find eligible teachers to teach the course. Only one college submitted a horticulture pathway.

The findings suggest a strong alignment to the Model Programs of Study Guide in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources and a focus on dual credit courses, with an opportunity to expand offerings in horticulture and plant science pathways.

One college distinguished itself by submitting pathways in horse science technology, equestrian science, and veterinary technology, pathways not represented in the Model Programs of Study Guide. However, a course within the veterinary technology pathway aligns with the agribusiness pathway.

Figure 1: Model Programs of Study Career-Focused Courses for Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources

	GRADES 9–10 <b>Orientation</b>	GRADES 10–12 <b>Skill Development</b>	GRADE 12 <b>Capstone</b>	 1ST YEAR* <b>Postsecondary</b>
<b>Agribusiness</b>	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic Agricultural Science</li> <li>Intro to the Agricultural Industry</li> </ul>	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture Business Management </li> <li>Intro Economics of Food, Fiber, and Natural Resources </li> </ul>	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intro to Animal Science </li> <li>Intro to Soil Science </li> </ul>	Intro to Microcomputer Skills in Agriculture
<b>Horticulture &amp; Plant Science</b>		Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Horticulture Production &amp; Management </li> <li>Intro to Horticulture </li> </ul>	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intro to Soil Science </li> <li>Intro to Crop/Plant Science </li> </ul>	Intro Economics of Food, Fiber, and Natural Resources 

KEY:  AP or dual credit course       Dual credit course       College & Career Pathway Endorsement  
 Dual credit course with IAI       Postsecondary course with IAI

\* If credit was already earned through an early college course, take the next requirement in the sequence or, if none, additional AAS or major courses

Table 3: Colleges offering aligned courses for agriculture, food, and natural resources pathways submissions

COURSE	N	%
<b>Agribusiness</b>		
Agriculture Business Management	8	57%
Introduction to Animal Science	4	29%
Introductory Economics of Food, Fiber, and Natural Resources	2	14%
Introduction to Soil Science	0	0%
<b>Horticulture and plant science</b>		
Horticulture Production & Management	2	14%
Introduction to Crop/Plant Science	3	21%
Introduction to Horticulture	2	14%
Introduction to Soil Science	0	0%

Note: 14 submissions received from 8 community colleges.



## Architecture, Construction, and Energy

For the architecture, construction, and energy sector, EdSystems received nine pathway submissions from seven different community colleges. Of the pathways submitted, five are in heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration (HVACR). The remaining pathways represent computer-aided drafting (CAD) and one in automotive services technology.

Community colleges offering credential courses at the high school level is a strategic move that has significant benefits for students. By aligning high school courses with college degree programs and industry credentials, students can accelerate their progress towards degree completion and enter the workforce with valuable skills and certifications. This type of alignment is highly valued, especially in this industry sector. For example, College of DuPage offers the opportunity for students to earn a refrigerant certification via a dual credit course.

According to the submissions received, there is low pathway alignment to the Model Programs of Study Guide in Architecture, Construction, and Energy. In this sector, community colleges have the opportunity to select strategic dual credit courses that are sequenced, embed a credential, and align with the recommended programs of study.

Figure 2: Model Programs of Study Career-Focused Courses for Architecture, Construction, and Energy








	GRADES 9–10 <b>Orientation</b>	GRADES 10–12 <b>Skill Development</b>	GRADE 12 <b>Capstone</b>	 1ST YEAR* <b>Postsecondary</b>
<b>Trades &amp; Technicians</b>			Choose 1–2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction Trades II </li> <li>Electrical Trades I &amp; II </li> </ul>	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apprenticeship Training</li> <li>Certification Program</li> </ul>
<b>HVACR &amp; Maintenance</b>	Computer Applications for Business  Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intro to Technology, Trades, and Engineering</li> <li>Intro to Engineering Design</li> </ul>	Construction Trades I  Intro CAD 	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HVACR I &amp; II </li> <li>Beginning Welding </li> </ul>	
<b>Architecture &amp; Drafting</b>			Civil Engineering and Architecture 	Course Sequence
<b>Construction Management</b>		Intro to Business 	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intro to Management </li> <li>Financial Accounting </li> </ul>	

Table 4: Colleges offering aligned courses for architecture, construction, and energy pathways submissions

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>General courses</b>		
Computer Applications for Business	0	0%
Construction Trades I	0	0%
Introductory CAD	3	33%
<b>Construction trades and energy technicians</b>		
Construction Trades II	0	0%
Electrical Trades I & II	0	0%
<b>HVACR and weatherization</b>		
Beginning Welding	0	0%
HVARC I	0	0%
HVARC II	1	11%
<b>Architecture and surveying</b>		
Civil Engineering and Architecture	0	0%
<b>Construction and energy management</b>		
Introduction to Business	0	0%
Introduction to Management	0	0%
Financial Accounting	0	0%

Note: 9 submissions received from 7 community colleges.





## Arts and Communications

For the arts and communications sector, EdSystems received 18 pathway submissions from 11 different community colleges. The submissions represent art, audio/video technology & communications, digital art and visual communications, digital marketing, digital media communications, fashion design and merchandising, interior design, graphic design, marketing, media arts and production, motion picture television, and photography.

The submissions present low pathway alignment to the Model Programs of Study Guide in Arts and Communication, with a significant number of submissions that do not align with the guide's recommended pathways of fine arts & design, performing arts, and mass media & communications. There is an opportunity to evaluate if the submitted course sequences offer significant value to students and should be added to the programs of study.

Figure 3: Model Programs of Study Career-Focused Courses for Arts and Communications


















	GRADES 9–10 <b>Orientation</b>	GRADES 10–12 <b>Skill Development</b>	GRADE 12 <b>Capstone</b>	 1ST YEAR* <b>Postsecondary</b>
<b>Fine Arts &amp; Design</b>	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beginning Digital Graphics</li> <li>Beginning Graphic Communication</li> </ul>	Drawing I  or Drawing  Intro to Digital Design  or Digital Graphics	2-D Design  or 2-D Art & Design  Graphic Communications I & II	Drawing II  3-D Design  Graphic Design I
<b>Performing Arts</b>	Intro to Performing Arts	Stagecraft 	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acting I </li> <li>Art, Music, Dance, Film, or Theater Appreciation </li> </ul>	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acting II</li> <li>Performance of Literature </li> </ul>
<b>Mass Media &amp; Communications</b>	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beginning Audio/Visual Production</li> <li>Production Technology</li> </ul>	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intro to Media and Communication Arts </li> <li>Audio/Visual Production I &amp; II</li> </ul>	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intro to Broadcasting </li> <li>Multimedia Production </li> </ul>	Intro to Audio Production Writing for Multimedia  Interpersonal Communication 

Table 5: Colleges offering aligned courses for arts and communications pathways submissions

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Fine arts and design</b>		
2-Dimensional Design	0	0%
Drawing I	0	0%
Introduction to Digital Design or Digital Graphics	3	17%
<b>Performing arts</b>		
Acting I	0	0%
Art, Music, Dance, Film, or Theater Appreciation	2	11%
Stagecraft	0	0%
<b>Horticulture and plant science</b>		
Introduction to Broadcasting	0	0%
Introduction to Media and Communication Arts/Mass Communication	0	0%
Multimedia Production	0	0%

Note: 18 submissions received from 11 community colleges.



## Finance and Business Services

For the finance and business services sector, EdSystems received 12 pathway submissions from 10 different community colleges. Of the submissions, nine pathways are in business, finance, and accounting and only one represents management.

The pathways submitted show a particular emphasis on foundational accounting courses. While there is substantial alignment with key introductory courses, there is room to increase the alignment of specialized courses such as Financial Accounting. The high rate of course transferability to four-year colleges and strategic course selection highlights the strength of these pathways in facilitating continued education. The pathway courses submitted show a strong alignment to the Model Programs of Study Guide in Finance and Business.

Figure 3: Model Programs of Study Career-Focused Courses for Finance and Business Services














	GRADES 9–10 <b>Orientation</b>	GRADES 10–12 <b>Skill Development</b>	GRADE 12 <b>Capstone</b>	 <b>1ST YEAR*</b> <b>Postsecondary</b>
<b>Business, Finance, &amp; Accounting</b>	Intro to Business 	<i>Choose 1:</i> • Entrepreneurship 	Financial Accounting 	Ethics  Managerial Accounting 
<b>Management &amp; Marketing</b>	Computer Applications for Business 	• Intro to Accounting 	<i>Choose 1:</i> • Intro to Management  • Intro to Marketing  • Business Law 	Ethics  Financial Accounting 

Table 6: Colleges offering aligned courses for finance and business services pathways submissions

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>General courses</b>		
Computer Applications for Business	2	17%
Entrepreneurship	3	25%
Introduction to Accounting	5	42%
Introduction to Business	3	25%
<b>Business, finance, and accounting</b>		
Financial Accounting	1	8%
<b>Management and marketing</b>		
Business Law	2	17%
Introduction to Management	3	25%
Introduction to Marketing	2	17%

Note: 12 submissions received from 10 community colleges.

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## Conclusion & Recommendations

In conclusion, EdSystems' research of the utilization of the Model Programs of Study Guides leads to various recommendations on how to improve community colleges and their partner districts' dual credit course alignment. In addition, the research supports increasing the overall usage of the guides statewide.



## Recommendations

The recommendations are listed in no particular order below.

**Explore the courses sequences in two of the Model Programs of Study Guides: Arts and Communication and Architecture, Construction, and Energy.** The pathway submissions received in these sectors present low pathway alignment. Further exploration is needed to understand the lack of pathway alignment and selected course offerings.

**Deepen community college faculty's understanding and utilization of the guides.** Community college faculty and other college staff play a critical role in the successful implementation of Model Programs of Study Guides. We have the opportunity to ensure faculty can effectively utilize these guides by sharing objectives and practical applications of the guides.

**Support community college participation and leadership in the mapping of regional college and career pathways.** This work can be implemented and led by a college in partnership with relevant high school districts and other regional partners. In interviews, EdSystems found that high school districts generally drive the selection of dual credit course offerings as opposed to the community colleges. It is important for community colleges to be an active partner in the selection of strategic dual credit courses that aim to accelerate students within a pathway. Strategic dual credit courses are grounded in labor market data, sequenced to accelerate students in a pathway, and are easily accessible. This selection process should go beyond general student interest and include promising practices. Based on the findings, community colleges have the opportunity lead this effort along with their strategic partners.



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