

Work-Based Learning Online Course

Information and FAQ

The NIU Illinois CTE Project Team, in collaboration with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), has designed an online course for CTE educators to complete the required learning experience to lead Work-Based Learning (WBL) programs in their schools and districts as defined on the state's work-based learning continuum and the Perkins V State Plan. This document is intended to provide general information about the Work-Based Learning Online Course.

Why is this course being offered?

The state of Illinois has moved away from the traditional cooperative education model for workplace experiences and has implemented a more comprehensive Work-Based Learning Continuum, which includes activities ranging from career awareness to workplace experience courses. The Work-Based Learning Continuum allows increased opportunities for students to learn about college and careers. These changes created a need for the state of Illinois to offer a more extensive educator course that reflects these reforms in Work-Based Learning education.

What does the course entail?

The Work-Based Learning Online Course outlines new guidelines and provides in-depth knowledge, programmatic resources, and learning materials on topics required for the successful management of the WBL continuum and WBL Workplace Experiences in the state of Illinois.

Participants will progress through eight modules that extensively cover topics related to Work-Based Learning. In these modules, participants will review content, participate in knowledge checks, engage in discussion forums, and complete relevant assignments. The final module (module 9) leads participants through the completion of a comprehensive WBL Portfolio that can be readily used to support new/ongoing Work-Based Learning within their schools.

The course requires a significant time commitment and is labor intensive, so allocating time for participation and quality completion of assignments is important. The Work-Based Learning Online Course is of comparable rigor to two graduate-level courses.

Who should take the course?

This course is one option for educators who are seeking the educator-coordinator designation to lead work-based learning within their school or district. See page 26 of the [ISBE Work-Based Learning Manual](#) for more details outlining who is required to complete additional coursework in order to be an educator-coordinator for WBL.

Opportunities for Success



When is the course offered?

The Work-Based Learning online course will be offered three times each school year - summer, fall, and spring. In the summer, at least one cohort will be offered over a period of approximately 9-10 weeks. In the fall and spring, there will typically only be one cohort offered over a period of approximately 15 weeks.

Course Cohort	Registration	Course Timeframe
Fall 2024	Until August 16	September 9 - December 20
Spring 2025	Until January 10	January 21 - April 25
Summer 2025	Until May 1 (registrations are through inquiry and approval through local EFE)	May 26 - August 15

*Spots may be limited and registration dates may be closed earlier due to filled courses

How do I sign up for the course?

All interested participants can sign up using the [ISBE 2024-2025 Professional Learning Calendar](#) searching for the course on **September 9th, 2024** and **January 21, 2025**. Once those links are found, potential participants are encouraged to read through the various documents shared in the initial enrollment process. Each cohort will have limited capacity.

What is the format of the course?

This is an online course, offered via Moodle - the course management platform. Each cohort has a start and end date. There are no synchronous meetings. Optional virtual office hours will be held on a weekly basis. No special software is required.

What is the benefit for educators?

This course is offered to educators in the State of Illinois **free of charge**. Successful completion of this course will earn participants an ISBE special designation on their professional educator license to serve as the teacher-of-record for Perkins-funded Workplace Experiences. This designation is equal to the recognition of teachers who successfully complete the two Work-Based Learning-focused (previously Co-op) graduate-level courses. In addition, educators who successfully complete the course will receive 60 professional development hours (PDHs). Other benefits include knowing the newest information on Work-Based Learning and having strategies through the completion of the course to implement successful Work-Based Learning initiatives and programming.

Questions?

Please contact Bill Rose at the NIU Illinois CTE Project with additional questions.

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