

# Work-Based Learning

The Work-Based Learning (WBL) Program gives students the opportunity to integrate classroom study with practical work experience in their major field. Generally, students alternate study and work periods or work part time while enrolled at the college.

## Student Eligibility Requirements

1. Minimum age to participate in work-based learning is subject to the rules and regulations of the North Carolina Department of Labor (NCDOL) Youth Employment Laws, the United States Department of Fair Labor Standards Act, as well as State Board of Community Colleges Code that apply to students participating in curriculum courses in general. Colleges should inform students under the age of 18 that they must complete an online NCDOL Youth Employment Certificate. The responsibility for filing the certificate lies with the employer.
2. A student participating in a WBL course must be enrolled in the appropriate program and be considered in good academic standing and progressing in the program. Normally, this means that the student maintains a GPA of 2.0 or better in the program courses and has completed or is currently completing prerequisite and corequisite courses. Colleges must ensure that students take WBL courses in sequence with other program courses to enhance student learning.
3. Students must have completed a minimum of nine semester hours within the appropriate program of study and a minimum of three semester hours from core classes within the major.
4. Students must be recommended by their advisor as having the skills to be suitable employees.

## Insurance Requirements

There are several types of insurance coverage for which students and employers must be provided information before accepting any WBL position.

1. **Accident Insurance.** The student is highly encouraged to be covered by adequate health and accident insurance during a WBL experience. WBL students are highly encouraged to purchase their personal "accident" insurance, either through the college or through an individual policy. This insurance should cover the WBL student en route as well as on the work site. The WBL student may be required to provide the name of the insurance company and policy number on the "Placed Student Information Worksheet" prior to beginning the WBL activity, if not automatically covered by the college student insurance policy. This information should be placed in the student's WBL file.
2. **Workman's Compensation Insurance.** The employer may be required to provide "workman's compensation" coverage at the place of employment for the WBL student (for paid positions) during the entire length of the WBL activity. North Carolina law requires all employers to provide this coverage if employing three (3) or more employees.
3. **Unemployment Insurance.** By action of the federal government and the North Carolina General Assembly, WBL students may not apply for unemployment insurance based upon WBL employment. Therefore, unemployment insurance premiums shall not be paid on WBL students working in the state. NOTE: Reference the General Statutes of NC, 1974 Cumulative Supplement, Chapter 96-8, Section G, No 16 and the ratification of HB247, on April 2, 1985, Section 1.G.S.
4. **Additional Insurance Information**
  - A college may require WBL students to obtain professional liability insurance from the college (in addition to accident insurance). Typically, this requirement is for early childhood, human services, and nursing curriculums.
  - An employer may provide health and accident insurance for WBL students as a benefit of employment.

- An employer may require that a WBL student enrolled in an Early Childhood Program be covered by a “Child Care liability” insurance policy. If so, the provision of this insurance becomes the responsibility of the employer.

## Academic Credit

Credit of one semester hour is awarded for satisfactory completion of each 160 hours of work experience. The WBL coordinator or faculty advisor will assign a grade for the WBL class based on reports submitted by the student, on-site visits, and employer evaluations.

A maximum of three credit hours may be earned in WBL per student per semester. The total maximum academic credit that may be earned through WBL depends on the credential. For the Associate in Applied Science degree, 8 SHC may be earned; Associate in General Education, 7 SHC; diploma, 4 SHC; and certificate, 2 SHC.

## Application Procedure

1. Students should obtain a “Work-Based Learning Application” form from their advisors or WBL coordinator and make an appointment to review the completed application, along with a current resume and college transcript.
2. The advisors or WBL coordinator will conduct an in-depth interview with students regarding career interests and possible work assignments.
3. The advisor or WBL coordinator will work with students to locate appropriate training positions and to complete appropriate documentation.

For further information, students should contact any division dean/director or the WBL coordinator.