Slide 1 \_Introduction

Welcome to the Workforce Education Information Session. Today we are going to be talking about the WorkFirst program, Basic Food Employment and Training (or BFET), Opportunity Grant, and Worker Retraining program.

Slide 2\_What is Workforce Education

Workforce Education is here to help you gain skills to return to the workforce. Training options are posted on our website. You can view our approved programs by visiting bellevuecollege.edu/we and choosing “Approved Programs” from the menu. Included in our approved programs are Professional/Technical degrees and certificates, ABE (Adult Basic Education), GED or High School Completion, ESL (English as a Second Language), and IBEST (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training). One of our funding programs – BFET – can also approve transfer degrees related to a specific career field, provided a student has an employment goal directly related to the degree. So for example, BFET could **not** enroll a student pursuing a general transfer degree or a student whose goal is to transfer to a university rather than looking for work. Our other three funding programs **cannot** approve transfer degrees. Most Continuing Education programs, such as the ones offered through BC’s Tombolo Institute, are also not approved.

Slide 3\_Workforce Education Funding

This slide provides information about the different types of Workforce Education funding. All four of our programs offer tuition funding for credit classes required for your program of study, unless you are eligible for Financial Aid grants or scholarships. If you have grants or scholarships, then in most cases they will pay school expenses first, and Workforce Education becomes a backup funding source. Two of our programs, Opportunity Grant and WorkFirst, may be able to continue providing tuition funding even if you get financial aid awards. All four of our programs can help with waiving admissions fees and paying assessment fees, if you don’t have other funding available.

Prerequisites courses for competitive-admission medical programs are approved for funding by all of our programs except Opportunity Grant. If you’re interested in medical program prerequisites, please note that there are additional requirements to be eligible for funding. You need to place into at least ENGL 92/93 (one level below ENGL&101) and you need to place into at least MATH 99, which is Intermediate Algebra (one level below college level algebra). If you have not yet placed into those levels, you may choose another program of study, or you may choose not to enroll in our programs right now and take classes through another resource until you place into the required levels of math and English, and then check back in with our office.

Funding for required textbooks is available through BFET, WorkFirst, and Opportunity Grant. However, please note that BFET cannot pay for books if you receive enough funding from Financial Aid awards to cover those costs. Worker Retraining does not offer book funding.

Slide 4\_Workforce Ed Resources

Workforce Education also offers some additional support resources, including:

* An item loan program. Our students can apply to borrow laptops, graphing calculators, and digital drawing tablets.
* Workforce Education has its own homework lab, which is a computer lab for our students that offers access to basic software programs and general homework support.  This lab is next door to the Workforce Education office, in the U Building, Room 211.
* We offer financial coaching services. Workforce Education’s Financial Aid Specialist, Greg Short, can provide one-on-one financial coaching and offer guidance on a variety of financial topics. Some common topics include:
  + developing a budget,
  + building and repairing credit,
  + creating a savings plan,
  + and options for managing debt.
* Workforce Education may also be able to help students with funding for one-time, unexpected financial emergencies, on a case-by-case basis.

Slide 5\_Other Resources

- Workforce Education can also make referrals and help connect students to other college and community resources. Employment resources include BC’s Center for Career Connections. The Career Center can help with resume building, practicing interview skills, and job search. Workforce Education and the Career Center are both WorkSource Connection sites, and WorkSource is another community resource that provides services to job seekers, including workshops and hiring events. Most of these services are currently provided remotely.

- BC's Disability Resource Center, or DRC, also supports students. The DRC can assess a student’s need for accommodations and help with making classes and services more accessible.

- Another potential resource at BC is the United Way Benefits Hub. Benefits Hub coaches provide one-on-one help with applying for assistance such as discount utilities, low income housing, food benefits, and more. To schedule an appointment, visit the BC Benefits Hub website.

- Depending on a student’s needs, Workforce Education can also help with making referrals to external, community-based organizations.

Next, we’re going to go over the eligibility details for each of Workforce Education's funding programs.

Slide 6-7\_Intake Eligibility Form

You can download our intake forms at the Workforce Education Website [www.bellevuecollege.edu/we](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/we) then click on Application Process on the left hand side and scroll down for our intake forms. To get started we will have you fill out the Intake and Eligibility Form. Please print clearly when filling out your forms. First, at the top, we have your basic information. You do not need to include your Social Security Number at this time, we will gather that information later. Please include your Bellevue College Student ID if you have it. If you don’t have it, don’t worry, we’re going to go ahead and assign that to you when you apply to the college. Please also include your birthdate, address, phone and email address.

On the next part on your eligibility information we are going to ask you a few questions, YES or NO. If it doesn’t apply, please write N/A or leave it blank and we’ll go ahead and work with you later on what we need for you to reply to us.

(See Form for full questions – See notes below for expanded definitions on certain categories)

Immigration Status: If Other, please write in type, such as Visa holder, I-94, etc.

Family Income: See the chart on right hand side. Please note this is the Gross Family Income, before taxes.

Working with Layoff Notice: Please note we can start with the layoff notice, but you must plan to open your Unemployment claim after layoff. Please speak with your WE Advisor about details on when to open your claim.

Applied for Unemployment: You can check YES, if you have applied for Unemployment (UI) but are not yet receiving UI.

Discharged from the Armed Forces: Please note, it doesn’t matter what type of discharge.

Displaced Homemaker: Dependent on your spouse’s income and lost that primary source of income due to death, divorce or legal separation and has been unemployed or underemployed and need training to return to the workforce to make a living wage for you and your family.

Self-Employed example: If you had to close a Mortgage loan business during the last recession, that might have been approved as most of the mortgage industry had been affected. On the other hand, if you had a coffee shop during that same time and closed due to personal reasons, it might not have been considered an industry decline. We would look at situations individually on a case by case basis. If not sure, you can always check Yes and ask your advisor later during your intake.

Please turn page over for the next questions.

Under Program of Study, if you are unsure, you can write “Unsure”.

Under Authorization for Release of Information, please read, then PRINT your name at the top and SIGN and DATE at the BOTTOM.

Slide 8\_Individual Employment Plan (IEP)

The second form you’ll need to complete is the Individual Employment Plan, or IEP. Please fill in your name, and your student ID number if you have one.

In the first section, Employment Information, please check the box if you’ve received Unemployment Benefits at any point in the past four years. Then provide information about your current or most recent employer. If you don’t remember wage information or exact start and end dates, it’s still helpful to include the information that you do remember, such as employer name and job title. If you don’t have any previous work experience, it’s okay to write “no work experience” in the first field.

The next section, Employment Goals, is important to complete. Every Workforce Education student is required to have an employment goal related to their classes at the college. A program of study is not necessarily the same as an employment goal, so please don’t just write down the name of your certificate or degree program. It’s okay if your employment goal is broad right now; if you only know the general field or area you want to work in, for example healthcare, business, or IT, you can write that down. However, if you know of one or more specific jobs you would like to have, please write down the job titles. And the more specific, the better.

Slide 9\_Individual Employment Plan (IEP) continued

On the second page of the IEP, please check any boxes next to transferrable skills you already have. Check the box next to your current level of computer skills, and add any additional information about specific skills you’ll need in order to obtain your employment goals. If there are any potential barriers listed on this page that might impact you, please check the box next to them. Then sign and date the form.

We recommend saving your own copy of the completed Individual Employment Plan, as this form will need to be updated each academic year for continuing Workforce Education students. It also needs to be updated if you make changes to your program of study or employment goal, so having a completed copy on hand will help you fill out the IEP more quickly in the future if you’re asked to submit a new one.

Slide 10\_Tips for Completing the Forms Remotely

Next we’ll go over some tips for completing the forms remotely. The current versions of our application forms are designed to be filled out and signed electronically. We recommend using Adobe Acrobat Reader, because that program will allow you to sign by clicking the digital signature field and following prompts. You could also fill out the forms using a web browser instead, however the signature fields may not work correctly, so you might need to print the forms to sign them, and then send us scans. If necessary, we can even accept clear photos. If you have any technical issues with the forms, please reach out to our office for assistance at 425-564-4054.

Slide 11\_ Eligible for Workfirst?

WorkFirst is a funding program specifically for students receiving TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) from DSHS. You need to get a referral from your DSHS Case Manger to be eligible for the WorkFirst program at BC.

You also need to be enrolled in an approved Professional or Technical program. The approved programs list is in your downloaded information packet. Please, note that the WorkFirst program doesn’t pay for transfer degrees.

You also need to qualify for in-state tuition at the college. In-state residency is assessed when you apply to the college. This includes having lived in Washington in the past 12 months. There are exceptions to those with Refugee/Asylee status. You can check with the Bellevue College residency office if you have questions.

Slide 12\_ Eligible for BFET?

Our next program is the Basic Food Employment and Training program, also called BFET. If you're receiving federal Basic Food assistance from DSHS, and not receiving TANF, then you may be eligible for BFET. If you don’t know if you’re eligible for food assistance or haven’t applied, we recommend going to the Washington Connection website to learn more and apply. The income guidelines are provided on this slide, and are based on monthly gross income and the number of people in the household. For qualifying students, BFET can pay for in-state or resident tuition. Non-resident students, meaning students who have lived in Washington for less than one year, may still qualify for partial tuition funding up to the resident rate, but might have remaining costs that would need to be covered by other funding sources. BFET can only pay for tuition, fees, or support services when a student does not have other financial aid available.

Slide 13\_Eligible for Opportunity Grant?

The next funding program we’ll talk about is Opportunity Grant. To be eligible, you must:

* Be a Washington State resident (meaning you’ve lived in Washington for at least one year)
* Not have a previous bachelor’s degree
* And meet the income guidelines, which are the same as the income guidelines for food assistance from the previous slide.

The guidelines include income from all members of the household. If you are under the age of 24, you must include your parents’ income even if you’re not living with them, unless:

* you’re married
* have children
* have served in the armed forces
* or are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Slide 14\_ Eligible for Worker Retraining?

Our last category, the Worker Retraining program, is not an income-based program. Eligibility is based on meeting criteria for being a “dislocated worker.” There are several ways to qualify, including if you are collecting unemployment benefits, or have a layoff notice and plan to apply for unemployment, or you’re active duty military with a separation date.

You may also be eligible for WR if within the last four years:

* you’ve exhausted unemployment benefits and not returned to full-time work **or**
* you’ve been discharged from the Armed Forces (it doesn’t matter what type of discharge) **or**
* you’ve become a displaced homemaker, meaning someone who provided unpaid services in the home and was dependent on their spouse’s income, then lost that primary source of income due to death or divorce **or**
* you’re formerly self-employed, but lost your business due to economic factors in the community.

Please note, if you are receiving Unemployment, you must apply for Commissioner Approved Training to attend school, regardless of who is paying for school. Details are on our next slide.

Slide 15\_Receiving Unemployment?

If you are receiving Unemployment you need to apply for Commissioner Approved Training (CAT) and also, if you would like, apply for Training Benefits (TB). CAT is permission from Employment Security to attend school and continue to receive unemployment benefits and to possibly waive your work search requirement. You do need to be a full-time student if you want to request that work search waiver. Also, TB is a possible extension of unemployment benefits while in training. Deadlines may apply.

For the process of completing, getting a review and sending the application, connect with our Worker Retraining advisor.

If you are not yet attending classes, to prevent a hold being placed on your Unemployment claim, it is highly recommended to talk to our Worker Retraining advisor before notifying Employment Security of your school plans.

Slide 16\_CAT/TB Workshop

In your downloaded information you will find a flyer on the CAT/TB process. This is to help you in completing your application to make sure that you don’t miss any important points and to explain what supporting documents that you will need to include with your application. It is very important that you have your application reviewed and signed by our office before you turn it in. The school signature is required.

Slide 17\_Student Responsibilities

Workforce Education students are required to apply for Financial Aid by the end of their first quarter, but we recommend doing it as soon as possible. This includes submitting the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), or the WASFA (Washington Application for State Financial Aid) for undocumented students.  Even if you’re ineligible for financial aid grants, for example if you have a prior bachelor’s degree or a loan in default, we need to have that information documented in your financial aid file with the college. If the Financial Aid office determines that you don’t qualify for grants, then Workforce Education programs could continue to help with funding.

If you need assistance with the application process, our financial aid program specialist Greg Short can help you with:

* filling out the FAFSA or WASFA,
* checking on your financial aid application status,
* submitting any additional requested documents,
* and answering questions.

Slide 18\_Student Responsibilities continued

While enrolled in a Workforce Education program, you need to make satisfactory academic progress.  We give you more information during intake, but basically you need to earn at least a C average or a 2.0 GPA.  However, if you're pursuing prerequisites for a selective-admission medical program, then your grades must be at least a B average or 3.0 GPA in order to maintain eligibility.  Next, we ask that you keep in touch with your advisor.  Sometimes if we don’t hear from you, then we can’t help you with any resources you might need, and loss of contact may require additional work to reestablish eligibility for your program.  We’re here to help you, so please feel free to contact your advisor with any questions.  If we don't have the answer, we will help you research and find out who you need to talk to or where to go.  Also make sure to check your Bellevue College email frequently as Workforce Education and other college offices may send important notices through that email.  Lastly, as a Bellevue College student, you also need to follow Bellevue College policies.

Slide 19\_What to know before Your 1st Online/Phone Meeting With Your Advisor

To schedule an appointment, submit your WE Intake Eligibility Application and your WE Individual Employment Plan (IEP) forms via e-mail. Instructions are on our website at [www.bellevuecollege.edu/we/apply/](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/we/apply/) Also, submit your BC admission application. Expect your appointment to last one hour. Please contact us to confirm, cancel, or reschedule your appointment. If you’re eligible for more than one funding program, you’ll be assigned one advisor to guide you through enrolling in our programs.

Slide 20\_BC Online Admissions Application

Before meeting with a Workforce Education advisor, please apply for admission to Bellevue College. If you’re already a current Bellevue College student or have attended BC in the past, you don’t need to reapply. If applying, please make sure that you do not pay the admission fee online. This is a fee that can be waived if you’re eligible for Workforce Education programs, but unfortunately we can’t reimburse students who self-pay. We encourage all students who are interested in our programs to apply to the college, as processing takes about 3 to 5 days, so if you apply now, then your admissions should be processed by the time you meet with an advisor.

Slide 21\_BC Online Admissions Application continued

When you apply for admission to Bellevue College, please make sure to also include your Social Security Number. This is important as our funding is tied to that requirement. If you do not have a Social Security Number, please contact our office for details on options.

Slide 22\_Contact Information

If you have questions related to a specific funding program, please reach out to the program manager. If you have a general question or need technical assistance with the application process, please contact our main office at 425-564-4054.

Slide 23\_Thank You!

Thank you for your interest in the Workforce Education programs and we look forward to hearing from you.