2024 WASHINGTON STATE

Skill Standards for Professional-Technical College Instructors

A Tool to Drive Student Success and Faculty Professional Development

What Are the Skill Standards for Professional-Technical Faculty?

Washington's community and technical colleges use a shared set of skill standards that outline the knowledge, skills, and abilities instructors need to succeed in professional-technical programs.

The **Skill Standards for Professional-Technical Faculty**:

- Reflect what high-quality teaching looks like today
- Provide clear, measurable expectations
- Support professional growth at all levels

The updated skill standards were shaped by instructors, for instructors, and integrate a strong focus on equity and inclusion in current teaching practices.
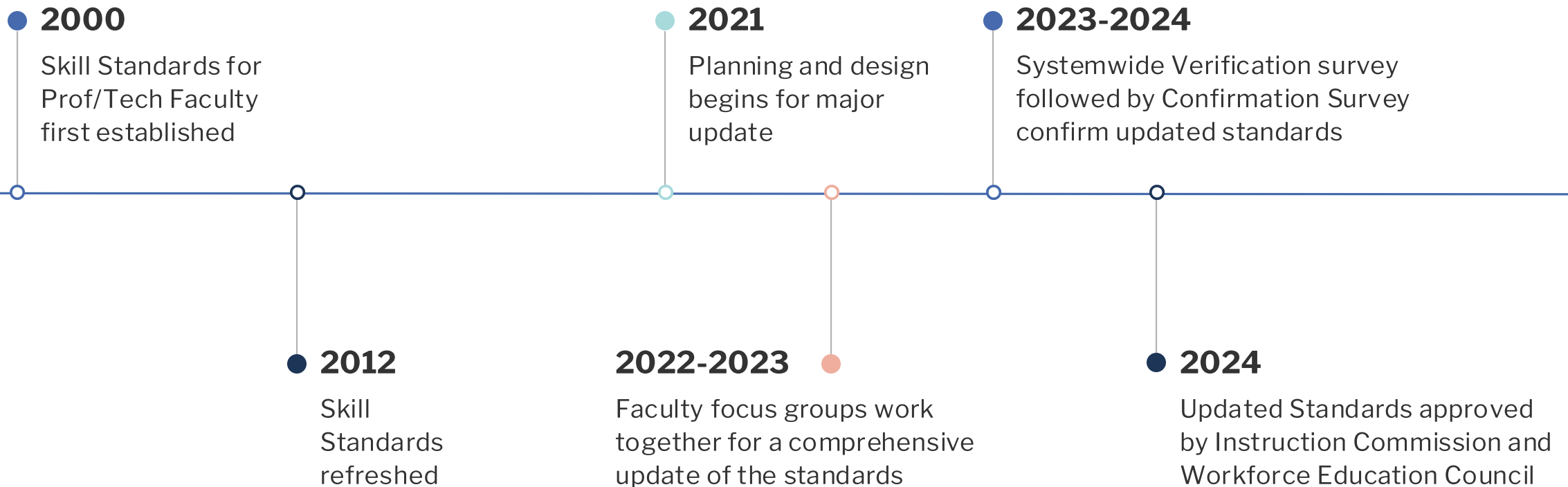
Understanding the Skill Standards and Why They Matter

Let's break it down. This presentation will cover:

- Brief history and context

- Legal requirements related to skill standards and faculty professional development plans (PDP)

- What the skill standards include and how they're organized

- How instructors helped shape the 2024 updates

- How to use the skill standards to guide your teaching

- What's expected in your professional development plan (PDP)

- Where to find resources and what to do next

How Have Skill Standards Evolved?

Since their creation, Washington's Skill Standards have continued to evolve -- shaped by instructors, grounded in workforce demands, and focused on student success.

2000
Skill Standards for Prof/Tech Faculty first established

2021
Planning and design begins for major update

2023-2024
Systemwide Verification survey followed by Confirmation Survey confirm updated standards

2012
Skill Standards refreshed

2022-2023
Faculty focus groups work together for a comprehensive update of the standards

2024
Updated Standards approved by Instruction Commission and Workforce Education Council

Required by Law: What You Need to Know

Washington State law requires all professional-technical instructors to complete a professional development plan (PDP) based on the state's skill standards.

This requirement is outlined in **Washington Administrative Code (WAC 131-16-092 to 094)**.

Your professional development plan (PDP) must:

- Align with the updated 2024 skill standards

- Be developed collaboratively with your administrator

- Support your growth in instruction, curriculum, and classroom management

Want to check out the details? Here are the direct links:

- [WAC 131-16-092](#): Maintaining and improving certification competencies

- [WAC 131-16-093](#): Types of professional-technical education certificates

- [WAC 131-16-094](#): Certification process and PDP requirements for instructors

We'll walk through detailed PDP requirements later in this presentation.

New to Skill Standards? You're Not Alone.

When the update of the skill standards began in 2022, most faculty focus group members hadn't used the skill standards previously. However, that changed dramatically by the end of the process.

Before:

- 60% of the participants were 'not aware at all,' or only 'somewhat aware' of the skill standards.

- 65% of the respondents' affiliated institutions only 'sometimes' or 'not at all' supported the use and implementation of skill standards.

- 50% of respondents had never used the skill standards, 35% referenced them annually, and 15% quarterly.

After:

- By the end of the process, over 75% of faculty focus group members said the standards were relevant and useful to their work.*

Today:

- Three of the eight teaching focus areas (critical work functions) must be included in your PDP. We'll explain which ones and help you to understand how to use them.

*Survey conducted with 42 faculty focus group members, February 2023

What's New in the 2024 Skill Standards?

- Integrated competencies focused on inclusion, access, and belonging

- Achievement levels for technical knowledge and performance indicators

- First comprehensive review and update of the Professional-Technical Skill Standards since 2012

What's New in the 2024 Skill Standards?

Over a two-year period, 42 instructors from prof/tech programs across the CTC system came together to review and update the standards. Their goal? Make the standards more relevant, practical, and inclusive for today's classrooms.

Here's what's new:

- Integrated competencies focused on inclusion, access, and belonging, helping faculty create equitable and supportive learning environments

- Clearer structure and more accessible language throughout

- Three levels of proficiency to support instructors' growth over time:
  - Baseline, Intermediate, and Mastery-level
  - Faculty developed a self-assessment rubric denoting each level in the skill standards

Baseline	Intermediate	Mastery-level

- Expanded content in performance indicators and technical knowledge

Skill Standards Components

Learn what makes up the skill standards.

Skill Standards Taxonomy

SKILL STANDARDS

Skills and abilities required for job success

CRITICAL WORK FUNCTIONS (CWF)

Describe major work responsibilities

KEY ACTIVITIES

Activities required to meet critical work function

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance measures to meet key activity

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge, skills, and abilities to do the work

What Are Critical Work Functions (CWFs)?

- Critical work functions define,

  "*What are my major responsibilities at work?*"

- Critical work functions encompass broad, main roles.

- Example:

  - Critical Work Function A: Manage Learning Environments

Critical Work Functions

- **There are 8 critical work functions in the 2024 Skill Standards:**
  - CWF A: Manage Learning Environments
  - CWF B: Develop Outcomes, Assessments, and Curricula
  - CWF C: Develop and Review Programs
  - CWF D: Provide Student Instruction
  - CWF E: Provide Support and Guidance to Students
  - CWF F: Perform Administrative and Program Management Functions
  - CWF G: Create and Maintain a Professional Environment
  - CWF H: Promote the Program and Collaborate with College Administration on Student Recruitment

What Are Key Activities (KAs)?

- Key activities answer the question,
  "What do I need to do to carry out critical work functions?"

- Key activities describe specific sets of tasks.

- Example:
  - **Critical Work Function A:** Manage Learning Environments
  - **Key Activity A1:** Research, evaluate, and obtain required equipment, systems, tools, supplies, and/or other materials

What Are Performance Indicators (PI)?

- Performance indicators answer,
  "How do we know when key activities are performed well?"

- Performance indicators focus on measures.

- Example:
  - **Critical Work Function A:** Manage Learning Environments
  - **Key Activity A1:** Research, evaluate, and obtain required equipment, systems, tools, supplies, and/or other materials
    - **Performance Indicator 1:** Adequate supplies and materials are maintained with a focus on overcoming barriers to entry, ensuring that all students have access to the necessary resources. (B)

What Is Technical Knowledge (TK)?

- Technical knowledge specifies,
  "What technical skills, knowledge, and abilities are needed to perform a task with excellence?"

- Technical knowledge articulates the know-how.

- Example:
  - **Critical Work Function A:** Manage Learning Environments
  - **Key Activity A1:** Research, evaluate, and obtain required equipment, systems, tools, supplies, and/or other materials
    - **Performance Indicator 1:** Adequate supplies and materials are maintained with a focus on overcoming barriers to entry, ensuring that all students have access to the necessary resources. (B)
    - **Technical Knowledge 1:** Knowledge of ergonomics, with an understanding of how ergonomic considerations can support diverse learning styles and provide equitable access. (B)

Skill Standards Preview

Here's an example from the skill standards document, showing how the key activities, performance indicators, and technical knowledge relate to the critical work function.

Note that the performance indicators and technical knowledge are further broken down into levels of instructor proficiency: baseline, intermediate, and mastery.

Critical Work Function G: Create and maintain a professional environment

Key Activity G1: Collaborate with college staff, faculty, students, and internship/externship site personnel

Legend: (B) baseline proficiency, (I) intermediate proficiency, (M) mastery-level proficiency

Performance Indicators

1. Curriculum and course materials and resources are provided as required. (B)
2. Incorporate motivational techniques to create culturally responsive performance assessments and feedback. (B)
3. Recognizing diverse cultural perspectives, assistance is provided in a courteous and respectful manner. (B)
4. Timeliness of responses to colleagues and staff is weighed against the need for input from divergent sources and stakeholders. (B)
5. Collaborate professionally with other departments and services to accurately provide information that supports an equitable and inclusive learning environment. (B)
6. Institution-wide and interdisciplinary student learning activities and initiatives focus on overcoming barriers to entry and are fully supported by staff and faculty. (I)
7. Professional growth is promoted among staff and faculty. (I)
8. College and departmental committees are staffed with diverse members and attended with full participation in accordance with college policy. (I)
9. Per college policy, institute industry-standard and culturally responsive affective-training techniques and assessment with input from key stakeholders, including program graduates. (M)

Technical Knowledge

1. Knowledge of locations and use of technology tools to file or post curriculum and course materials and resources. (B)
2. With a focus on adopting diverse and inclusive instructional resources, demonstrate knowledge of the learning resources adoption procedures and processes. (B)
3. Acquire and maintain up-to-date knowledge of college departments and services. (B)
4. Knowledge of and ability to use technology tools that promote equitable access, are culturally relevant, and facilitate college communication and collaboration. (B)
5. Ability to use technology tools that promote college communication and collaboration. (B)
6. Acquire and maintain knowledge of professional development opportunities. (B)
7. Acquire and maintain knowledge of program requirements and outcomes. (B)
8. Knowledge of culturally responsive performance assessment, feedback, and recommendation procedures. (B)
9. Knowledge of employment contract. (B)
10. When possible, participate in a culturally responsive, shared-governance model in the college structure that is reflected in college policies and procedures. (I)

Professional Development Plans

How the skill standards factor into your PDP

What's the Benefit of a Professional Development Plan (PDP)?

- Individualized to meet the needs of each faculty member

- Includes instructor's and administrator's assessment of strengths and opportunities for growth

- Focuses on reaching professional goals as a facilitator of learning

- Activities include measurable outcomes linked to the skill standards

- Timeline for completion of activities

What's Required For My PDP?

- Minimum of five (5) performance outcomes and related activities

- Must include the following Critical Work Functions:
  - CWF A: Manage Learning Environments
  - CWF B: Develop Outcomes, Assessments, and Curricula
  - CWF D: Provide Student Instruction

- **Professional technical faculty have flexibility in selecting performance outcomes and related activities outside of those legislatively required by** [Washington Administrative Code 131-16-092 to 094.](#)

Step One: Incorporate Required CWFs Into PDP Template

Note that PDP templates vary by institution

- Start with CWF A: Manage Learning Environments (page 13 of Skill Standards 2024 Edition)
    - Select Key Activity
    - Based on your level of proficiency, select Performance Indicator (PI)
    - Based on your level of proficiency, select Technical Knowledge (TK)
    - If proficient in all PI/TK at one level, select a stretch goal in the next level
- Repeat for Critical Work Function B: Develop Outcomes, Assessments, and Curricula
- Repeat for Critical Work Function D: Provide Student Instruction

Step Two: Incorporate Your Choice of Additional Performance Outcomes Into PDP Template

- Follow the same process to incorporate additional performance outcomes of your own choosing into your plan. This flexibility is designed to help you select what's most beneficial to you and your students.
  - Select Key Activity.
  - Based on your level of proficiency, select Performance Indicator (PI).
  - Based on your level of proficiency, select Technical Knowledge (TK).
  - If proficient in all PI/TK at one level, select a stretch goal in the next level.

PDP Elements: What, How, When?

- Each performance outcome in your PDP should identify the critical work function, key activity, performance indicator(s) and technical knowledge.

- Additionally, complete the following in detail for each performance outcome:

  - Description – describe **what** you'll do to complete the activity.

  - Method – **how** will you accomplish it?

  - Due date – by **when**?

Sample 1: Initial 3-Year Professional and Technical Certification Plan

Performance Outcome 1:

- Update outcomes for the Criminal Justice program.

- Update course learning outcomes in my courses.

- Establish quality assessments that match learning course learning outcomes.

Activities:

- Research skill standards in criminal justice by December 2024.

- Attend workshops on skill standards as offered throughout the next two years.

- Attend outcomes and assessment workshops as offered throughout the next two years.

- Work with faculty mentor to ensure that outcomes and assessment link to the college's core abilities throughout the next three years.

- Review, rewrite, or create outcomes or assessments based on skill standards (if appropriate) and that link to college's core abilities by March 2026.

Sample 1: Initial 3-Year Professional and Technical Certification Plan (Continued)

Skill Standards Addressed:

- B1 Identify, evaluate, and modify current outcomes

- B2 Create, evaluate, and modify curriculum

- B3 Create, evaluate, and modify assessments

- B4 Implement curriculum, outcomes, and assessments

Critical Work Function B:
Develop outcomes, assessments, and curricula

Key Activity B1: Identify, evaluate, and modify outcomes

Legend: (B) baseline proficiency, (I) intermediate proficiency, (M) mastery-level proficiency

Performance Indicators

1. Outcomes are written with clear learner expectations, incorporating equitable assessment and feedback methods. (B)
2. Outcomes assess observable and measurable skills. (B)
3. Outcomes are properly documented in accordance with college, regulatory and accrediting body policies and procedures. (I)
4. Industry standards are thoroughly researched to identify current outcomes and competencies. (I)
5. When appropriate, outcomes are discussed and reviewed with the advisory committee. (I)
6. Outcomes and competencies are modified as necessary based on advisory committee recommendations and/or changing industry standards, regulatory and accrediting bodies. (I)
7. Course outcomes are clearly aligned with program outcomes while considering diverse instructional resources and responsive techniques to drive student success. (M)

Technical Knowledge

1. Knowledge of the purpose and components of outcomes. (B)
2. Adhere to advisory committee protocols (B)
3. Acknowledge diverse learning styles and use various instructional resources and methods to accommodate the requirements of all learners. (B)
4. Knowledge of outcomes, definitions, competencies and requirements. (B)
5. Knowledge of the implications of outcomes on assessment of learning. (B)
6. Ability to develop clear and measurable outcomes, that accommodate diverse learning styles. (I)
7. Knowledge of documentation procedures to record outcomes. (I)
8. Ability to access regulatory and accrediting bodies, professional industry organizations, and college sources of information regarding outcomes, competencies, and standards. (I)
9. Ability to translate, for diverse populations, the technical and non-technical skills into outcomes. (I)

Sample 2: Initial 3-Year Professional and Technical Certification Plan

Performance Outcome 2:

- Evaluate off-campus learning environments.

Activities:

- Observe instruction of part-time faculty and provide feedback regarding strengths and opportunities for growth, throughout next three years.

- Create and implement regular meeting schedule of all site supervisors and part-time faculty by December 2024.

- Create and implement a continuous assessment process of all courses held at off-campus sites by May 2025.

Skill Standards Addressed:

- A6 Research, select, and evaluate off-campus learning environments

Questions & Observations

- How can you map the goals in your previous personal development plan to the new requirements?

- What can your administration do to best support you?

- Do you have a better understanding of skill standards and their use?

- How might your industry contacts help?

- How can you use student feedback when designing your professional development plan?

Skill Standards Update

How the 2024 skill standards were updated with faculty input

Faculty-Led Process Behind the 2024 Skill Standards

Now that you've seen what's new with the updated skill standards, here's a look at how they were shaped by prof/tech faculty across the system.

42 prof/tech instructors from across the CTC system came together over the course of two years to serve as focus group members. **Together, they**:

- Spent 960+ hours of collective work (equivalent to 0.5 FTE)

- Reviewed 8 Critical Work Functions

- Refreshed 45 Key Activities

- Updated 322 Performance Indicators

- Updated 297 elements of Technical Knowledge

- Mapped 232 Employability Skills

- Considered changes in the classroom over the past 10 years (e.g. technology, instructional delivery, student demographics, the pandemic)

Faculty Considered the Following When Updating the 2012 Skill Standards

- Classroom changes over the previous 10 years
  - Technology/ instructional platforms
  - Student demographics/ corresponding issues
  - Mental health

- Anticipated classroom changes over the next 10 years
  - Instruction
  - Technology
  - Demographics

Ten New Instructional Themes Integrated into the Updated Skill Standards

Faculty identified these themes as essential to effective, equitable, and student-centered teaching:

1. Overcoming barriers to entry
2. Diverse learning styles
3. Cultural relevancy
4. Culturally responsive assessment and feedback
5. Motivational techniques
6. Equitable access
7. Diverse advisory committees
8. Diverse instructional resources
9. Cultural acknowledgement
10. Equitable, anti-racism, anti-bias, cross-cultural instructional practices

Faculty Feedback Verified the Updated Skill Standards

All professional technical faculty were invited to participate in verification and confirmation surveys focused on the updated critical work functions, their component key activities, and the ten instructional themes, new to the 2024 Edition. The survey process ensured the updated standards are relevant, reflect today's classroom realities, support faculty growth, and promote better outcomes for students.

2023 Verification Survey

- **Goal**: Verify the relevance and importance of focus group's work on the revised critical work functions and key activities.

- Sent to 3,382 professional-technical instructors statewide, representing all 34 community and technical college

- 22% response rate (over 740 responses)

- **Result**: All critical work functions and key activities were verified. The revised standards reflect actual current teaching responsibilities.

2024 Confirmation Survey

- Focused on the integration of the new 10 instructional themes

- Qualitative feedback received from faculty focus group

- **Result:** Faculty confirmed the themes are:
  - Relevant to modern classrooms
  - Already being used in practice
  - Supportive of inclusive, equitable opportunities, and learning environments

Let's Recap: What's New in 2024?

- Incorporated new competencies including diverse perspectives, equitable opportunities, and inclusive classroom environments

- Added achievement levels for technical knowledge and performance indicators

- Completed the first comprehensive review and update of the Professional-Technical Skill Standards since 2012

Thanks & Next Steps

- Special thanks to the faculty focus groups who did an outstanding job using a thoughtful and insightful approach to updating the skill standards.

- Visit the skill standards website for tutorial videos and a one-page synopsis of implementing the skill standards at: **www.skillstandardswa.org**

Resources

- https://www.skillstandardswa.org – 2024 Washington State Skill Standards

- https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/programs-services/professional-technical/faculty-certification – SBTC Professional-Technical Faculty Certification

- https://www.sbctc.edu/resources/documents/colleges-staff/programs-services/professional-technical/procertmanualv3_instructor.pdf – ProCert Manual - Instructor

- https://s3.amazonaws.com/PCRN/docs/Employability_Skills_Framework_OnePager_20180212.pdf – DOE Perkins Collaborative Employability Skills Framework

- https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=131-16-094 – WAC 131-16-094 Certification Process for Professional-Technical Instructors

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