

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Professional Capacity Building (PCB) Community College Workshop Series

June 30 – August 12, 2020

Background

As Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) become more prevalent along our nation's roadways and within the transportation networks, it is increasingly important that educational institutions produce students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to competently perform entry-level tasks in the ITS workforce. With current shortages in the ITS workforce and the emergence of increasingly complex systems and technologies (such as connected vehicles), alignment between ITS workforce needs and educational curricula is essential.

To promote this alignment, the USDOT's ITS Professional Capacity Building (PCB) Program has hosted a series of academic workshops, convening ITS educators, practitioners, and professional societies, to strategize on how to align ITS education to the ever-changing needs of employers. Previous workshops identified the need for stronger ITS technicians, or entry-level employees with the ability to deploy and maintain ITS field equipment. Community college graduates were identified as a viable solution, however, many agencies and community colleges are unaware of this potential for successful collaboration. Additionally, many DOTs are unaware of the opportunities available in community college graduates, and/or may have institutional barriers that prevent hiring these graduates (such as a human resources barrier that requires all hires to have a bachelors in engineering).

About the 2020 Community College Workshop Series

This ITS PCB Community College Workshop is a multi-week collaborative event where educators and practitioners will define current and emerging entry-level ITS technician needs (and current solutions for acquiring those skills within the DOT workforce), discuss the technical skills taught at community college programs, opportunities, and evaluate the potential for bridging the current KSA gaps through community college partnerships. This workshop builds on previous workshops and will feature presentations and panel sessions to highlight the collaborative potential between transportation agencies and community colleges. Restrictive practices and hurdles to collaboration will also be explored. The ITS PCB Program will use workshop findings to inform a framework for community college and DOT partnerships and workshops to develop those partnerships– the Employment Pathways Workshops (EPAWS).

The workshop will be attended by up to one hundred ITS professionals, including educators (community college, technical school, trade school, and high school), Federal employees, practitioners (from state DOTs, MPOs, and private consultancies), and professional associations (ITSA, ITE, APTA, AMPO, APA, NADO, AASHTO) that specialize in ITS and planning research, application, or education.

Workshop attendees will participate in presentations, tours, break-out sessions, and interactive exercises designed to foster the exchange of information, ideas, and best practices in ITS education.

Workshop Objectives

- 1.) Provide an overview of ongoing support programs offered through the ITS PCB Program.
- 2.) Define the current and future knowledge and skills required of an ITS technician, and compare them to the knowledge and skills taught through community college programs.
- 3.) Collaboratively explore how community colleges can (and have) added value to agencies through collaborations and partnerships.
- 4.) Discuss the potential for a workforce pipeline between community colleges and DOTs to address the growing staffing needs in the field of ITS.
- 5.) Identify and discuss ways the ITS PCB Program can support coordination between community colleges and potential employers for their ITS-related programs.
- 6.) Define actionable steps for community colleges, transportation agencies, and the USDOT, that will help build a competent and complete ITS workforce through community colleges.
- 7.) Provide educators and practitioners with a peer-to-peer network to exchange best practices in ITS education.

Session Dates and Times

Session 1: Tuesday, June 30, 1:00-3:00pm EDT

Session 2: Thursday, July 2, 1:00-2:30pm EDT

Sessions 3-8: Wednesdays, 1:00-2:30pm EDT, from July 8 to August 12

Registration Information: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/usdot-its-joint-program-office-virtual-community-college-workshop-series-tickets-108867128512>