Code Alignment Pilot Project

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, working with the Chancellor's Office and CTE Data Unlocked, will be launching a pilot project to support the review of codes that have been assigned to courses and awards. This pilot period will run from October 2016 to February 2017.

What is the purpose of the pilot?
The pilot will test a proposed faculty-led process for examining the reporting codes (TOP, CIP, SOC) that have been assigned to CTE courses and program awards, to ensure that they appropriately match the content of the curriculum. When codes are accurately assigned, colleges are better able to implement degree audit systems, can avoid inconsistencies in federal reporting, and see data that are consistent with similar programs in tools like Salary Surfer, Data Mart, and the LaunchBoard.

What does being part of the pilot require?
1. Approval by the local faculty senate, documented through an email to Julie Adams at ASCCC (julie@asccc.org)
2. Financial support to cover the costs of an ASCCC-appointed Curriculum Approval Expert, who will lead the process ($65/hour plus travel). Colleges can use their $50,000 from CTE Data Unlocked funding to underwrite these costs.
3. A planning meeting with ASCCC leadership, your assigned Curriculum Approval Expert, and your assigned CTE Data Unlocked Expert to determine the scope of the code review and who will be involved in the process
4. Pre-work with your CTE Data Unlocked Expert to document the SOC, CIP, and TOP codes that have already been assigned to the programs under review (through processes like program approval, gainful employment reporting, financial aid, and veterans programs)
5. Participation of discipline faculty in a face-to-face meeting, where they will compare code descriptors to curriculum and target occupations.
6. Institutional support, including substitutes and reassign time, to allow faculty to participate in and complete any work associated with this project.

How will the code review process work?
With support from experts in the curriculum approval process and labor market information, colleges will review whether the codes assigned to courses and awards match the content of the curriculum. The code descriptors that will be reviewed include:
- Standard Occupational Codes (SOC) – federal codes addressing the types of jobs that programs target
- Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) – federal award and course codes
- Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) – California award and course codes
- SAM Priority – California codes indicating course sequences

The process will include the following steps, for each CTE program that the college wants to review:
1. Using an online form, with support from your assigned CTE Data Unlocked Expert:
   - Document the SOC, TOP, and CIP codes and the program control numbers that have been assigned to each certificate or degree within the program
   - Document the TOP, SAM, and course control numbers for required courses associated with each award within the program, including stand-alone courses associated with the program area
2. WestEd will compile a binder for each program that includes possible SOC, CIP, TOP, and SAM code descriptors based on current assignments.
3. At a meeting with discipline faculty and other stakeholders:
   - Review the descriptors for the occupations that each award is intended to prepare students for, and determine whether this list is accurate
   - Based on SOC codes that are selected, use the federal SOC-CIP crosswalk to identify expected CIP codes and determine whether the current designation(s) are accurate for each award
   - Based on the CIP code that was selected for each award, use the TOP-CIP crosswalk to identify expected TOP codes and determine whether the current designation is accurate for each award
   - Examine the TOP codes assigned to each of the required and stand-alone courses and determine whether the appropriate TOP6 code has been used
   - Examine the SAM codes assigned to each of the required and stand-alone courses and determine if the appropriate SAM code has been used