

Continuing Education

Blue Ridge Community College is able to respond quickly and flexibly to the needs of the community through continuing education programs. These programs promote the concept of lifelong learning as an essential component of contemporary adult life by offering courses and services covering a wide variety of occupational, academic and vocational subjects. A major goal is to provide services and training to area businesses and public agencies. Three Departments carry out goals of Continuing Education: Basic Skills, Community and Continuing Education, and Economic and Workforce Development.

These departments develop courses and services based on the interest shown by local businesses, agencies, and the community; availability of competent instructors; and limitations of available equipment, space, and funds. The departments offer some services and non curriculum classes in constant demand on a continuing basis and other classes at the request of particular businesses, individuals or organizations.

The College welcomes requests and suggestions for additional continuing education courses or services.

Literacy Programs

Adult Basic Education (ABE): The ABE Program at BRCC is the cornerstone upon which the overall Basic Skills Program is built. ABE is a dynamic outreach program specifically targeting non-readers and other under-educated adults. A variety of traditional and non-traditional, innovative curricula have been implemented to upgrade the academic skills of this population. Special programs offered through formal partnerships with other agencies have promoted program accessibility. All classes are offered free-of-charge.

Compensatory Education (CED): The CED program is designed to provide remedial academic programs to adults who have been diagnosed as being delayed learners and who can provide documentation of intellectual disabilities. The program includes task-analyzed lessons in language arts, math, social sciences, consumer education, health and community living skills. CED classes are offered at Vocational Solutions in Henderson County and Transylvania Vocational Services in Transylvania County. All classes are offered free-of-charge.

English as a Second Language (ESL): ESL classes are designed for adults who are not native English speakers. Because individual needs vary considerably, instruction in reading, writing, speaking, and listening is tailored to meet individual needs. Three distinct levels are offered to help students acquire functional English competence: Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced. All classes are offered free-of-charge.

General Education Development (GED): GED courses are designed for adults who have not received a high school diploma. Courses prepare students for the five official GED tests: Language Arts-Writing, Social Studies, Science, Language Arts - Reading, and Mathematics. The GED diploma certifies that the graduate has achieved a level of general educational development equivalent to that of high school diploma recipients. All classes are offered free-of-charge. There is a one-time-only nominal administrative fee for GED testing as well as a graduation fee for students completing their GED. Graduation ceremonies are held each year.

Community and Continuing Education Programs

Allied Health and Emergency Services: These programs provide training in a variety of health and emergency services occupations. These include nurse aid training at levels I, II, and refresher, as well as long-term health facility activity coordinator training, training for firefighters, emergency services personnel, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics. These courses are designed to provide training from entry level to more advanced levels and to prepare students to sit for the required certification examinations as mandated by Division of Facilities Services/Board of Nursing, Office of Emergency Medical Services and Office of State Fire Marshal.

Computers and Distance Learning: A variety of computer-oriented training is available from basic computer software and hardware application skills to more advanced digital media skills. Also included in this program area are a variety of online classes designed to prepare medical office workers who want to become involved with medical terminology, billing, coding, or transcription.

Community Enrichment: Classes and programs are offered by Blue Ridge Community College to assist individuals as they endeavor to broaden their horizons or enhance their abilities and interests. These include opportunities to grow intellectually, to develop creative skills or talents, to learn hobby or leisure time activities, and to gain civic and cultural awareness. In addition to enrichment courses, other educational programs sponsored by Community Enrichment include:

Arts and Humanities Series: This annual series presents monthly programs featuring a wide variety of performance art forms as well as presentations about humanities issues. Events include theatrical performances, poets sharing their works, musical concerts featuring many different genres, and humanities lectures.

Blue Ridge Center for Lifelong Learning: The Blue Ridge Center for Lifelong Learning was established at Blue Ridge Community College in January 1991. In this member-directed organization, persons of diverse backgrounds come together to share a common interest in learning in an environment of sharing and fellowship. Anyone fifty years of age or older may become a lifetime member for a fee of \$40. Members can attend a variety of course offerings for a nominal fee and may also participate in travel opportunities. The College supports the Center by providing classroom and office space as well as administrative services.

Blue Ridge Concert Series: Each year this series of six concerts is presented featuring highly-acclaimed classical artists of national renown as well as a concert by musicians from around the world who are studying at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

Music by the Lake: Each summer (May through August) Community Enrichment offers monthly concerts beside the College lake as a gift to the community. These free Sunday evening concerts feature a wide range of musical and vocal groups. The public is invited to bring lawn chairs and picnics to enjoy the music by the lake.

Celebration of Women in the Arts: This annual event was created to honor women artists by celebrating their creativity and imagination and their diverse contributions to the cultural life of our community. Scheduled in March, Women's History Month, the Celebration includes an exhibit of visual art including works from a wide range of media as well as an evening performance showcasing performing artists from our region.

Arida Arts Symposium: This annual event honors artists and their contributions to the arts. All events are funded by the Gamil T. Arida

Endowment Fund through Blue Ridge Community College Educational Foundation and are free to the public.

Kehr Lecture Series: This series brings expert presenters to discuss issues relative to horticulture and environmental science. All events are funded by the August E. Kehr and Mary Louse Kehr Lecture Series Fund through Blue Ridge Community College Educational Foundation, and are free to the public.

Environmental Health and Safety Institute (EHSI): To meet the needs of industry, the Environmental Health and Safety Institute at Blue Ridge Community College can provide needs assessment and curriculum development as well as delivery of training in areas such as OSHA requirements, environmental regulations, ISO 14000, hazardous materials handling, chemical spill response, confined space entry, water and wastewater treatment operations, safety awareness, safety requirements and many others. These courses can be customized for a particular industry and can be conducted on campus or at the job site. Participants can receive certificates, and CEUs can be earned. The EHSI is also responsible for helping the fifty-eight NC community colleges comply with environmental and safety regulations.

Law Enforcement: Training is offered at the Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) program level as well as advanced, mandated, and a variety of online certificate programs. The BLET program prepares students for the required state examination and is designed to give students the essential skills required for entry-level employment as law enforcement officers with state, county, or municipal governments, or private enterprise, governed by the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission and or North Carolina Sheriff's Education and Training Standards Commission. The advanced and mandated programs are designed to provide ongoing training for current NC sworn law officers, detention officers, or telecommunicators. Online certificate programs cover a variety of topics designed to assist current law enforcement officers in areas such as network forensics and death investigations.

Small Business Center (SBC): The SBC supports the development of new businesses and the growth of existing businesses by being a provider of education and training, counseling, information and referral. The mission of the Small Business Center is to increase the success rate and the number of viable small businesses in Henderson and Transylvania County by providing high quality, readily-accessible assistance to prospective and existing small business owners and their employees. Confidential business advice services and access to the resource center are free of charge. SBC offers a wide variety of seminars and programs to help small business be successful. A minimal registration fee may be required for some seminars and programs.

The **Blue Ridge Innovation Network (BRIN)** is a small business incubator located at the College's Transylvania Center. It offers assistance to new entrepreneurial start-ups by providing a supportive environment including mentors, information resources, technical assistance, and office space. BRIN allows companies to grow in the incubator setting and then relocate into the surrounding community.

Economic and Workforce Development

The mission of the Economic and Workforce Development Department is to strengthen economic and workforce development in the College service area through a system of career planning, training and business services. These include:

Henderson County JobLink Career Center: The Henderson County JobLink Career Center, located on the Flat Rock Campus, provides a comprehensive system of services to area job seekers and businesses. Workforce development professionals

from Blue Ridge Community College, Mountain Area Workforce Development, North Carolina Department of Social Services Work First, North Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation and North Carolina Employment Security Commission collaborate to offer career planning, training, placement, and business services. The Center has an “open door” policy and serves anyone regardless of age or income level.

Henderson County JobLink is committed to building an integrated economic and workforce development system in Henderson County which effectively pools the resources of diverse partner agencies and delivers optimal quality, customer focused services.

The JobLink Center assists job seekers in choosing career direction, identifying training programs and funding, refining job seeking skills, finding employment and career progression. Services to job seekers include:

- Career assessments/exploration and career counseling
- Employment coaching
- Job-seeking skills workshops
- ACT® WorkKeys Assessment in Communication, Problem Solving, Interpersonal and Personal Skills
- Preparation for and issuance of the North Carolina Career Readiness Certificate
- Workplace skills enhancement using WIN curriculum
- Job readiness skills training
- Job search strategies
- Job referral
- Internet access to employment and training resources
- Information on community resources
- Resume consultation and preparation
- Computer software tutorials and assessments
- Workforce Investment Act (WIA) job training assistance funding
- On-site Employment Security Commission services

Henderson County JobLink Career Center assists local businesses in finding well-trained, highly qualified employees by pre-screening applicants based on company specifications. Center staff members are available to test applicants using a variety of assessments, assist with specific training needs and advise companies on eligibility for financial incentives for hiring from specific populations. Business services include:

- ACT® WorkKeys Profiling on Nine Comprehensive Workplace Skills
- ACT® WorkKeys Assessment of all Twelve Cognitive and Interpersonal Skills
- Workplace skill enhancement using WIN curriculum
- On Line Job Listing Service through College Central Network
- On-the-Job Training
- Human Resource Consultation
- On-site job fairs
- On-site interviewing
- Computer software tutorials and assessments
- Compilation or review of Employee Handbooks
- Conducting Wage and Benefits Surveys

Human Resources Development (HRD): The HRD program provides short-term, pre-vocational training and counseling to help unemployed and under-employed adults successfully enter the work force or pursue further training for career change. The goal of HRD is to teach individuals the skills necessary for obtaining and maintaining employment and how to manage the lifestyle changes that can be associated with it. This goal is achieved through classes which develop communication skills; improve self esteem; develop positive life attitudes, and explore the impact of habits and behavioral strengths and weaknesses as they relate to decision making, conflict resolution, and working as a member of a team. HRD

designs a wide variety of classes to meet the needs of employers and enhance the student's ability to become a qualified worker.

Corporate Training: This program provides an array of open enrollment non-curriculum occupational training courses to quickly prepare area workers to meet the demands businesses in the community. These short term skills are in high demand in the region. Short term skills training include courses in machining, welding, small engine repair and event planning. The Corporate Training Institute is designed to offer career development training for professionals from local business and industry. Through the Institute, the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) has approved Blue Ridge Community College has an official SHRM College. The Corporate Training Institute is able to offer SHRM approved courses which prepare Human Resources professionals for SHRM Certifications. The Institute is based on 4 areas of professional skills: Human Resources, Leadership, Continuous Improvement and Safety.

Customized Training: The Customized Training Program supports economic development efforts by providing education and training opportunities for eligible businesses and industries. The purpose of the Customized Training Program is to provide customized training assistance in support of full-time production and direct customer service positions created in the service area, thereby enhancing the growth potential of companies while simultaneously preparing our local workforce with the skills essential to successful employment in emerging industries.