

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 22-16
	DATE December 5, 2016

TO: COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS
COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES
STATE GOVERNORS
ALL DEPARTMENT OF LABOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING
ADMINISTRATION GRANTEEES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS
STATE DIRECTORS FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING
STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY VETERANS COORDINATORS
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD STATE CHAIRS
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD LOCAL CHAIRS
COMPREHENSIVE AMERICAN JOB CENTER MANAGERS
AFFILIATE AMERICAN JOB CENTER MANAGERS

FROM: PORTIA WU /s/
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Availability of Open Source Curricula for Workforce Development on
www.SkillsCommons.org

- Purpose.** To announce the availability on www.SkillsCommons.org of open source educational resources to train adults for occupations in 16 high-demand fields including manufacturing, healthcare, energy, and Information Technology. The resources are available to all training providers.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program has created the online repository called SkillsCommons to provide openly licensed learning materials and program support materials for job-driven workforce development in key sectors such as manufacturing, healthcare, energy, and information technology. All 256 TAACCCT grantees, involving nearly 700 of the nation's community colleges, are contributing materials and the collection will continue to grow. Thousands of resources are already available for download, featuring curricula for both short and long-term courses leading to industry-certified credentials. While there are multiple repositories of Open Educational Resources (OER), SkillsCommons is the world's largest OER project featuring job-driven workforce development materials, with more resources being added continually. All teaching, learning, and supporting materials on SkillsCommons are available under a Creative Commons license that allows anyone – not just grantees -- to use and adapt these materials, with attribution, at no cost.

- 2. Background.** The U.S. Department of Labor invested almost \$2 billion over four years in TAACCCT and many grants are still underway. The TAACCCT grants provided institutions of higher education with funds to expand and improve their ability to deliver education and career training programs that can be completed in two years or less, and are suited for workers who are eligible for the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Workers Program, as well as other adults. Grantees have developed or revised more than 2,500 programs of study to date. All course materials developed using these public funds will be available at no cost to the users through the SkillsCommons OER project so that others can access and build on successful training models. With these OER materials, adult workers are better able to access affordable, high quality training that will lead to careers in high demand industries.

Those interested in re-using the materials on SkillsCommons will find the following support resources useful:

- A SkillsCommons resource called “Revise and Reuse Open Educational Resources” explains how users can customize materials in a variety of ways to create derivative works that could better serve the needs of different learners in different contexts with different technologies. It includes examples of “makeovers,” innovative technologies that have been applied to the original materials to transform them into more usable, accessible, and effective resources. Makeovers may include edits to the branding, scope, and sequence of content as well. Find this support at <http://support.skillscommons.org/reuse-revise/>.
- A two-part webinar on utilizing the resources on SkillsCommons is also available. Titled “*Utilizing Free Online Educational Resources on the SkillsCommons.org Repository: Part I–Introduction*” and “*Part II – Makeover,*” the webinar recordings, transcripts, and handouts can be found by searching for that title on ETA’s technical assistance website, www.WorkforceGPS.org.

SkillsCommons.org is designed and managed by California State University (CSU) and its Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT) program under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor. Extensive user support resources are available on the website, and the SkillsCommons CSU-MERLOT team of librarians, educators, and developers are available to assist not only TAACCCT grantees in posting their materials, but anyone who is using and adapting the OER on SkillsCommons.

- 3. Action Requested.** Share the availability of the resources on SkillsCommons with workforce training providers, especially community colleges and entities designated as Eligible Training Providers under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- 4. Inquiries.** The SkillsCommons team of librarians, educators, and developers are available to assist and can be contacted at support@skillscommons.org.