



Career Education (CE) Committee

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Library Conference Room and Zoom

1:00 – 2:15pm

In attendance: Rebecca Agonafir, Ruth Casillas, Victoria Charles, Gillian Grebler, Jazmin Guzman, Jo Hao, Gary Huff, Laurel Joe, Maria Leon-Vazquez, Dana Nasser, Debbie Perret, Steven Sedky, Redelia Shaw, Howard Stahl.

Zoom: A.J. Adelman, Leigh Allen, Drew Davis, Mario Franco, Deja Gateward, David Hall, Jenny Landa, AnnMarie Leahy, Luke Meyer, Lisa Lewenberg, Sharyn Obsatz, Sri Susilowati, Josh Withers.

Call to Order: 1:11pm

Public Comments and Announcements:

A mini conference – Careers for Good - will be held on Friday, October 23rd from 9am – 2:30pm at the CMD, which connects college students with meaningful careers, inspiring professionals, and value-driven companies. Please [RSVP](#).

Approval of Minutes: May 19, 2026

Reports:

Chair: Debbie Perret

Debbie Perret welcomes everyone and thanks everyone for coming and those that are on zoom.

Vice Chair: Steven Sedky

N/A

Information and Discussion Items:

Ice Breaker and Introductions, Debbie Perret

Debbie asks committee members to introduce themselves and briefly talk about something they did over the summer or recently. Committee members introduced themselves:

- Several members shared summer travel, including trips to Europe, Aruba, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, Washington State, Scotland, and local destinations.



- Others shared activities such as attending concerts, baseball games, festivals, theater productions, visiting museums, biking, spending time with family, and enjoying time at home.
- New committee members and participants were welcomed and introduced.
- Ruth was congratulated on becoming a voting member of the committee.

AI Professional Development Opportunities, Gary Huff

SMC's AI professional development initiatives, provides opportunities that include Chancellor's Office webinars on AI and authentic assessment, 400+ AI resources through the Vision Resource Center, and guidance from the Instructional Technology & AI Committee.

Through Strong Workforce Regional funding we will recruit six (6) CE faculty to serve as AI peer coaches (stipends provided for up to 20 hours per semester) to support faculty in integrating AI into instruction. An AI Community of Practice will begin meeting on the second Friday of each month to discuss AI literacy, assessment, and workforce skills. Additional AI professional development opportunities and CMD-specific sessions are planned for the coming year.

Perkins-SWP Local FY 2026-27 Announcements, Ruth Casillas

Those that applied for funding for Fiscal Year 26–27 received an email with approved items and a deadline to submit quotes, stipends, conference requests, etc by September 30th. The Chancellor's Office requires we spend according to quarterly targets: at least 20% by the 1st quarter, about 45% by the second quarter, 75% by the third quarter, and 100% by the end of the year. The Chancellor's Office Vision Aligned Reporting System now applies to all categorical funding, requiring student names and ID numbers for funded activities such as workshops, business engagement, and guest speakers. This information must be collected and submitted at the end of each semester according to MIS deadlines.

Updated [Career Education](#) Website & Flyer, Steven Sedky

Steven partnered with the Marketing team to improve how Santa Monica College's Career Education programs are showcased. A new Career Education webpage and updated flyer were created to highlight the variety of programs, key statistics, degrees, and certificates. The webpage also allows users to search and sort programs by area of interest, credential type, and department.

Asian American Employer Insights on Workforce Readiness, Luke Meyer

Luke Meyer from the [Center of Excellence](#) presented findings from a recent employer study involving 39 business leaders across eleven (11) industries in Los Angeles. Employers identified artificial intelligence as the top labor market trend and emphasized AI should augment work



rather than replace it. They also identified soft skills, including communication, leadership, and professionalism, as a major skills gap and emphasized the importance of real-world application of classroom learning. The study also showed hiring is currently in a holding pattern, while employers expressed interest in hiring community college students but noted the need for stronger connections between employers and colleges. Recommendations included integrating AI across disciplines, providing internships and apprenticeships, offering real-world projects, developing soft skills, and strengthening education-industry connections. The slide deck and full report will be posted on the Academic Senate CE Committee webpage.

Discussion Items

What topics would you like us to cover in future meetings?

Postponed for future meeting.

What obstacles make it difficult to offer career focused events for your students?

Postponed for future meeting.

Adjournment 2:19pm

Next scheduled meeting: October 6, 2026, 1:00 - 2:15pm. Library Conference Room #275 and Zoom. www.smc.edu/senate

AI Professional Development Updates

Chancellor's Office Academic Affairs Team — Reimagining Assessments Spotlight Sessions

A systemwide webinar series that reframes assessment design in the age of AI, with discipline-specific spotlights from faculty across the California Community Colleges.

Kick Off Session

Tuesday, September 29 | 1:00–2:00 p.m.

Spanish & (TBD) Spotlight

Tuesday, October 6 | 1:00–2:00 p.m.

English Spotlight

Thursday, October 8 | 10:00–11:00 a.m.

Sociology & Ethnic Studies Spotlight

Friday, October 16 | 1:00–2:00 p.m.

Chemistry and Biology Spotlight

Tuesday, October 20 | 3:00–4:00 p.m.

Allied Health & Computer Studies Assessment Spotlight

Wednesday, October 28 | 2:00–3:00 p.m.

The Full Rebuild

Tuesday, November 10 | 2:00–3:00 p.m.

https://cccco.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_n5O4hoXuTnyhvACJXMID-A#/registration

Vision Resource Center

<https://visionresourcecenter.cccco.edu>

The VRC Warehouses training resources available for free, system wide. Several hundred AI-related videos, self-paced courses, playlists, certificates, and recorded webinars. Highlights include:

AI Literacy and Readiness

AI for Student Support, Equity & Workforce Development

AI for Data, Research & Decision-Making

AI for Administrative Efficiency & Workflow Automation

AI for Communication

AI Foundations for Higher Education Professionals

SMC Instructional Technology & AI Committee

<https://admin.smc.edu/administration/governance/academic-senate/committees/instructional-technology-ai.php>

The newest college committee. Website will centralize internal and external tools and training and professional development resources.

Check out the guidelines for SMC faculty on [Course Level AI Policies](#) and [Data Security and Privacy When Using AI Tools in Instruction](#)

LARC AI Literacy & Innovation Project

<https://losangelesrc.org/projects/round-10-ai-literacy-innovation-project/>

SMC is one of the 18 colleges participating in this Regional Strong Workforce Project.

This project advances the region's capacity to prepare students, educators, and employers for the evolving future of work by integrating Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) literacy and innovation across education and workforce systems.

The project will empower faculty to integrate A.I. into instruction, promote ethical A.I. use, and strengthen student employability in high-demand fields.

What about SMC?

AI Coaching for CE Faculty

Now recruiting 6 faculty members (adjuncts are encouraged) to serve as AI Coaches. Do not have to be an AI expert. Stipends available at the contract rate.

Skills needed:

- Foundational knowledge of using AI in course design and instruction, already using a few basic AI tools in your work
- Ability to support faculty colleagues with different levels of technical expertise.

Up to 20 hours per semester supporting faculty

[Apply to be a CE AI Coach](#)

For more information, contact Gary Huff at huff.gary@smc.edu

SMC's AI Community of Practice

- Open to all SMC faculty
- Not a workshop, but monthly, facilitated conversations around various AI topics
- Via Zoom
- 11:30am - 12:30pm on the 2nd Friday of each month
- Upcoming dates 10/9, 11/13, 12/11

For more information, contact Gary Huff at huff.gary@smc.edu

October 9 – What is AI literacy and what should all faculty and students know?

AI literacy gets used constantly and defined rarely. Does it mean knowing how to prompt well, understanding how these systems work, knowing when not to use one, or something else?

This is the first session of the year. Share your thoughts and listen to other's opinions about what AI literacy should mean at SMC, for faculty and students. No prior AI experience required. Your questions and skepticism are valued here!

November 13 – How do we know what students actually know in the age of AI?

If a student can generate a competent draft in thirty seconds, what is an assignment actually measuring? We are all running into this question right now, whether the assessment is an essay, a lab report, or a portfolio. This month's chat gets us talking about how we check for understanding, what's working in different classrooms and departments already, what you've tried that totally didn't work and where the harder unresolved problems still are for your discipline.

December 11 – Preparing students for work in the age of AI

Employers are rewriting job descriptions around AI fluency now and our students might be entering the market soon.

We'll chat together about what we think preparing students for AI-integrated work might actually require beyond tool proficiency, where SMC's responsibility starts and ends, and what the CoP should take on when we pick back up in the spring.

CMD Faculty AI Community of Practice

- Similar structure to the full-college CoP, but tailored for the unique CE disciplines at the CMD
- Dates and topics TBD

For more information, contact Lynn Dickinson at dickinson_lynn@smc.edu

Winter Session AI Workshops

Info TBA, but we will offer several learning opportunities in the winter intersession.

Topics will come from faculty feedback, coaching sessions, and CoP meetings.



Los Angeles Employer Insights on Workforce Readiness

A Delphi Study of Asian American Leaders' Perspectives on
Workforce Readiness, AI Adoption, and the Future of Community
College Talent in Southern California

APEX × LA CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH

JULY 2026



Study at-a-Glance

APEX and the LA Center of Excellence conducted a two -round Delphi study among Asian American business leaders in Greater Los Angeles to surface forward-looking employer judgment on community college talent.

39

Round 1 Leaders

Across 11 industries

32

Round 2 Panelists

Balanced by gender

11

Industries

From healthcare to tech

70 %

Consensus Threshold

Agree or Strongly Agree



AI Is Accelerating — But Should Augment, Not Replace

85% Named AI

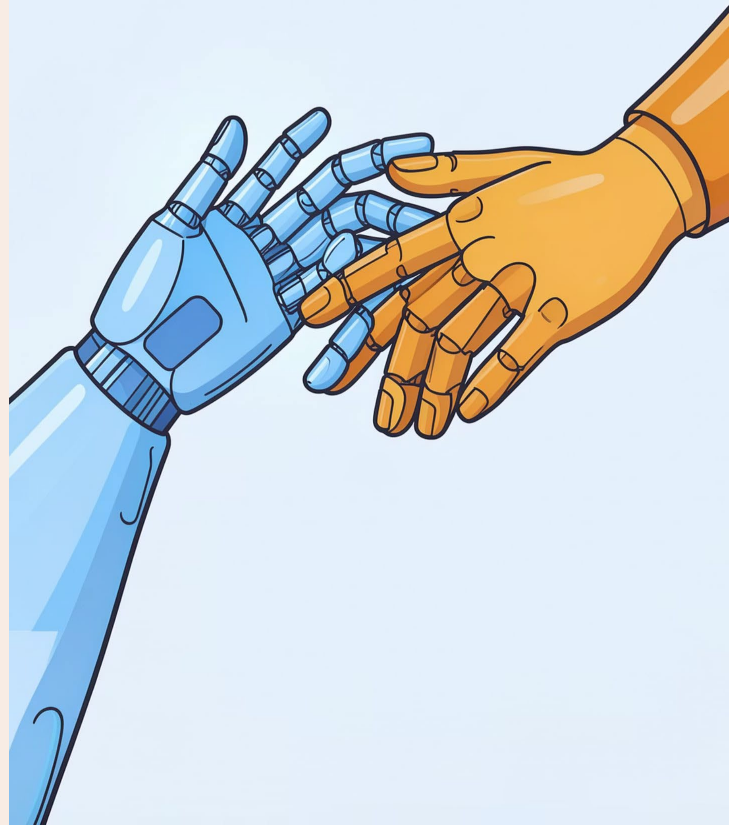
The top labor market trend affecting graduates over the next 3–5 years (Round 1).

97% Consensus

AI is a tool to augment human work —students who rely on it without critical thinking will be at a disadvantage. Zero dissents.

44% Use AI

Frequently or most of the time in their industry; 62% use it at least some of the time.

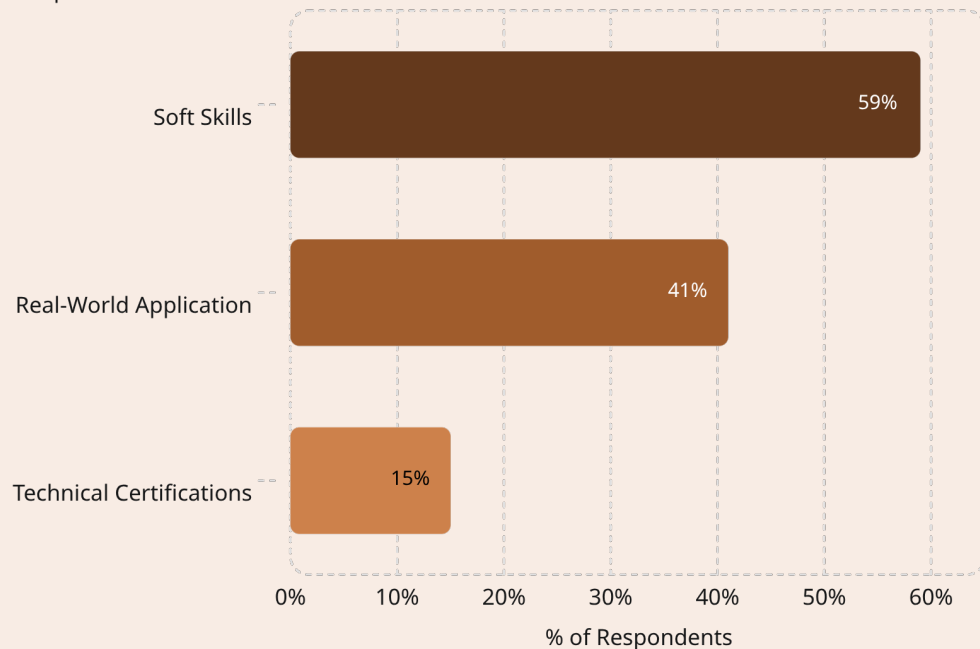




Soft Skills Are the Biggest Gap — But Context Matters

■ ■ ■ % of Respondents

Skill Gap



Round 1: Soft Skills Lead Decisively

59% named communication, leadership, and professionalism as the biggest gap — far ahead of technical certifications at 15%

Round 2: A More Nuanced Picture

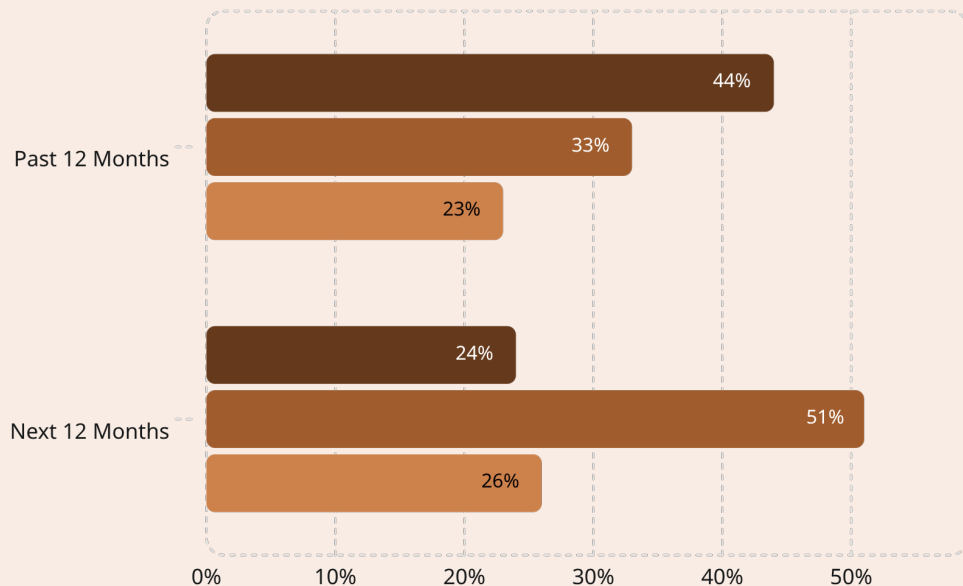
Only 62% agreed soft skills are the *single most critical* gap — below the 70% consensus threshold. Leaders in technical fields weigh real-world application equally. **Soft skills + applied experience together** is the employer ask.



Hiring Is Cautiously Stable — Not Booming, Not Collapsing

■ Decreased Hiring ■ Maintained Headcount ■ Increased Hiring

Period



What the Data Shows

44% reported decreased hiring over the past year.

Looking ahead, 51% expect to maintain headcount — the dominant posture is **cautious stability**.

Several organizations that cut significantly now expect to hold steady, suggesting a bottoming-out rather than continued decline.

📌 Only 26% expect any growth in the coming year — community colleges should not count on an expanding job market to absorb graduates.



Real Employer Interest — But Few Structured Pipelines

Only 5% Hire Frequently

Just 2 of 39 organizations regularly hire community college graduates. 38% require four-year degrees for most roles.

49% Are Open to This Talent

23% want to build a pipeline; 21% already hire occasionally. Interest is real —but without a recruiting channel, it rarely becomes hires.

The Gap Is Connection, Not Quality

Employers who recognize the value of community college talent lack the means to act. Structured pathways are the missing link.





Round 2 Consensus: What Leaders Agreed On

■ ■ ■ % Agree + Strongly Agree

Statement

Consensus Threshold (70%): 70%

AI is a tool, not a replace...

97%

AI/automation is the mos...

73%

Colleges should train on...

78%

Soft skills are the single...

62%

Hiring environment is "c...

53%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

% Agree + Strongly Agree

Three Findings Reached Consensus

The near-universal 97% agreement on AI as an augmentation tool —with zero dissents.

78% agreement on teaching **multiple AI platforms** validates the near-parity of ChatGPT (64%), Gemini (59%), and Claude (56%) usage observed in Round 1.

Soft skills and hiring stability fell below threshold —reflecting genuine divergence across industries.



Forward-Looking Priorities: What Colleges Should Do



Applied AI Proficiency —
81%

Select the right tool,
evaluate output critically,
integrate into workflows. Not
basic awareness —applied
judgment across disciplines.



Internship/Apprenticeship
Pipeline — 62%

The single most valuable new
initiative —more than all
other options combined.
Connect students directly to
employers who've signaled
interest.



Real-World Project Work —
44%

Employer-partnered projects
beat standalone courses for
building early-career skills.
Mentorship pairings followed
at 34%



Five Recommendations for CTE Program Design

01

Integrate AI Across Every Discipline

Frame around judgment and evaluation, not tool mechanics. *(97% consensus on critical thinking; 81% on applied proficiency)*

02

Teach Multiple AI Platforms

Include foundation models and industry - specific tools. No single platform dominates employer usage. *(78% consensus)*

03

Build Structured Internship Pipelines

Begin with employers already signaling interest. 23% want a pipeline but lack a recruiting channel. *(62% named this the top initiative)*

04

Develop Skills Through Employer Projects

Pair with mentorship from working professionals. Classroom only solutions trailed far behind. *(44% project work; 34% mentorship)*

-Partnered

05

Pair Soft Skills With Applied Domain Experience

Not isolated instruction. Soft skills alone fell below consensus —applied context is essential. *(59% soft - skills gap; 41% real - world applications)*



The Core Message for Community Colleges

The leaders in this study are not asking community colleges to chase every new technical tool. They are asking for graduates who can think critically, communicate well, use AI fluently and judiciously, and step into real work through employer-connected experiences.

Critical Thinking + AI

97% agree: AI without judgment is a disadvantage

Communication + Application

Soft skills are most effective when developed through real work

Build the Pipeline

Employers are ready —community colleges must connect