



Applied Baccalaureate Degree Program

Statement of Need

Whatcom Community College

September 5, 2018

**COVER SHEET
STATEMENT OF NEED**

Program Information

Institution Name: Whatcom Community College

Degree Name: Applied Business Management CIP Code: 52.0201

Name(s) of existing technical associate degree(s) that will serve as the foundation for this program:

Degree: (AS) Business Administration CIP Code: 52.0201 Year Began: Fall 2005

Degree: _____ CIP Code: _____ Year Began: _____

Proposed Start Implementation Date (i.e. Fall 2014): Fall 2019

Projected Enrollment (FTE) in Year One: 18 at Full Enrollment by Year: 30 by year 3

Funding Source: State FTE: Self-Support: Other:

Mode of Delivery

Single Campus Delivery: Whatcom Community College, 237 West Kellogg Rd., Bellingham, WA

Off-site: None

Distance Learning: Classes will be offered in person initially and hybrid/online classes will be added in year 2

Statement of Need: *Please see criteria and standard sheet. Page Limit: 20 pages*

Contact Information (Academic Department Representative)

Name: Kate Baker

Title: Business Administration Program Coordinator & Business Full-time Faculty

Address: 237 West Kellogg Rd., Bellingham, WA 98226

Telephone: 360-383-3537

Fax: _____

Email: kbaker@whatcom.edu



Chief Academic Officer

7-18-15

Date

APPLIED BACHELOR DEGREE STATEMENT OF NEED CRITERIA

WHATCOM COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Introduction

Whatcom Community College (WCC) is a regionally and nationally accredited college with an accomplished faculty and staff who serve nearly 11,000 students annually. On its 72-acre campus in Bellingham and through online courses, WCC offers transfer degrees, professional-technical training programs, as well as basic education, job skills, and community and continuing education classes. According to the Aspen Institute (2017), WCC is rated among the top community and technical colleges in the state and recognized as one of the leading community colleges in the nation. WCC is well prepared to serve the needs of its local employer community and their demand for a wide range of professional-technical and applied programs designed to prepare students to enter the workforce. In fall 2017, WCC began offering its first bachelor of applied science (BAS) degree, in IT networking – cybersecurity, and will add a fully online version of this degree in 2018-19. WCC is now looking to strengthen its workforce education offerings with the addition of a BAS degree in applied business management.

Program overview

WCC will build upon its current business administration associate of science degree – a professional / technical degree that is coded as such – by developing and offering a BAS degree in applied business management. This BAS degree will provide a unique focus not found at nearby Western Washington University (WWU) or other regional two-year colleges, in that it is specifically geared for the workforce needs of the variety of growing small to medium-sized businesses which make up the majority of Whatcom County's employer community. It will also serve budding entrepreneurs who wish to stay and grow their businesses in Whatcom County – a requested focus of current students enrolled in WCC's two-year business programs. There are currently no other face-to-face four-year business management degree options in Whatcom County that are geared for working students and taking new students. WWU offers a face-to-face business management degree, but it is currently full, thus limiting opportunities for students who reside in Whatcom County to enroll in four-year business management programs.

WCC's BAS will serve place-bound and other students in northwest Washington state – who have limited options to further their education in this field – with uniquely customizable opportunities. The proposed BAS will be geared toward student's who have earned their associate's degree in business or a related field, and who need the comprehensive skills and knowledge to oversee and manage overall business systems and operations. With an emphasis on applied skills and knowledge, cooperative education (in the two-year degree), and capstone courses (at the end of the four-year degree), the BAS degree will incorporate opportunities for students to work with industry partners on real-world business projects.

Program outcomes

The following outcomes will be included in the BAS degree in applied business management:

- Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of issues related to human resources
- Show analytical and critical thinking skills applicable to management of a business or industry
- Use technology and computer software applications needed to function in today's high technological business environment
- Employ an understanding of financial, accounting, and statistical applications needed to make and evaluate decisions
- Analyze and evaluate qualitative and quantitative data to assess organizational performance and make informed decisions in business
- Describe business systems and structure for planning and decision making
- Recognize the legal business environment
- Differentiate use of different types of leadership and communication for appropriate business need

Criteria 1: Relationship to institutional role, mission, and program priorities

Proposed program bolsters the role and mission of Whatcom Community College

WCC's strategic plan, updated in fall 2017, is composed of a mission statement, vision statement, promise statement and core themes and objectives.

The mission statement identifies the college's most fundamental purposes: "Whatcom Community College contributes to the vitality of its communities by providing quality education in academic transfer, professional-technical, and life-long learning, preparing students for active citizenship in a global society."

Whatcom's promise statement commits the college to transforming lives through education... including by means of "promoting excellence" and "creating opportunities."

Whatcom's strategic plan goals and objectives include:

- Engaging students in their learning, leadership development, educational achievement, and workplace preparation;
- Cultivating connections for the enrichment of the college, local communities, and beyond;
- Engaging with business and industry to strengthen regional economic development; and
- Offering programs, services, and facilities that support college needs and market demands.

In each of the last few years, multiple goals and indicators in the College's annual work plan also have planned for growth in business areas, specifically in entrepreneurship and human resources.

Proposed program reflects program priorities

Our project, to create a new four-year BAS degree in applied business management at WCC, will directly support the College's mission and guiding objectives in four important ways:

1. The proposed BAS degree is at the heart of fulfilling WCC's mission by meeting the needs of both the business community and students seeking living wage employment. With the skills and knowledge to take on additional business management responsibilities, graduates of the program will qualify for higher wages, further contributing to the tax base and vitality of the community.
2. The new degree will expand opportunities for various student populations – including those with limited financial resources, preference for a small campus, preference for part-time, and/or currently working and place-bound students – to earn a baccalaureate degree at WCC. The BAS in applied business management will truly provide students from all walks of life the opportunity to build their skills for leadership positions in the workforce.
3. It will contribute actively to the vitality of Whatcom County by building on and strengthening the College's successful partnerships with local and regional businesses. As a skilled and knowledgeable workforce is made readily available through the new program, existing businesses will flourish and new businesses will be attracted to Whatcom County.
4. The program has strong support from the local business community, reinforced by members of WCC's business / office administration program advisory committee, the executive director and members of the Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce and by the board of the Technology Alliance Group (TAG) for NW Washington. Administrators from a number of small and medium-sized companies are represented on WCC's business administration advisory committee, as well as the executive director of Bellingham's small business development center. Committee members will be tapped to provide guidance and input to the degree as it is further developed, as well as for capstone and cooperative education support.

WCC's Board of Trustees is supportive of expanding business and BAS options for students and the community.

Criteria 2: Support of the statewide strategic plans

Program supports SBCTC mission study goals

In 2008, the SBCTC commissioned a task force to undertake a Mission Study to gain a better understanding of where Washington's CTC system is today and where it needs to be in the future. The overarching goal of this Mission Study, published in 2010, was to find more and better ways to reduce barriers and expand opportunities so more residents can reach higher levels of education and support industry needs.

The Washington Student Achievement Council's (formerly the Higher Education Coordinating Board) 2008 *Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education*, the Washington Student Achievement Council's 2017-19 *Strategic Action Plan and Roadmap*, and the SBCTC's own 2006 *System Direction* report focus on current and future needs in Washington state. Within the SBCTC's *System Direction*, an outline for creating opportunities for Washington's future is articulated through ten-year goals including those that address the following objectives by priority areas:

- Economic Demand - Strengthen state and local economies by meeting the demands for a well-educated and skilled workforce.
 - Be responsive to the changing needs of the business community by offering high quality, relevant, flexible programs.
- Student Success - Achieve increased educational attainment for all residents across the state.
 - Enroll more underserved populations.
 - Expand the pipeline to associate's and bachelor's degrees.
- Innovation - Use technology, collaboration and innovation to meet the demands of the economy and improve student success.
 - Produce better education that meets the needs of local communities by taking full advantage of cost effective partnerships and leveraging outside resources.

Program supports WSAC policies and goals for higher education

The steps to more successful higher education outcomes in Washington state identified by the Washington Student Achievement Council include:

- Increase capacity of higher education to serve more students: Expand institutional enrollment capacity in existing institutions, branches, centers, and through online options.
- Maintain commitment to access for low-income students
- Define and develop K-12 to postsecondary program pathways.
- Focus on high employer demand majors and careers.
- Provide incentives in STEM and other areas of critical state need.

Degree Goals: The state's 2008 plan estimated that by 2018, the state's higher education institutions would need to increase the production of mid-level degrees from 26,800 to 36,200; bachelor's degrees from 28,600 to 39,000; and graduate, professional degrees from 11,200 to 19,800 annually. In 2014, the state legislature adopted a goal that by 2023, at least 70% of Washington adults, ages 25-44, will have a postsecondary credential. According to the 2017 *Roadmap Progress Report* published in January 2018, 52.5% have attained a postsecondary credential – only a 2.5% gain over 2011 levels – leaving a significant 17.5% gap to close in the next five years.

With gaps in bachelor's degree attainment the largest to fill, community and technical colleges can play an important part through the development of BAS programs. Compared to those with associate's degrees, bachelor's degree earners in Washington state make one-third more in annual wages (\$60,575 vs \$45,070) and experience a lower unemployment rate. Each year from 2013 to 2017, approximately two-thirds (65-69%) of Washington state BAS students had earned an associate degree from a Washington state community or technical college, demonstrating these colleges do play a critical role in expanding access to a four-year education (SBCTC, August 2017).

WCC's project addresses all of the above-mentioned goals by:

- **Increasing capacity to serve more students in existing institutions in a high employer-demand area of study: applied business management.** The BAS degree in applied business management will include new curriculum in areas of growing local industry focus and need such as human resources for managers, marketing for managers, management information systems, and business strategy and sustainability. The applied business management degree also provides foundational training for those with two-year degrees that are not business related who wish to pursue business management knowledge and skills in parallel with another passion.
- **Increasing access for low-income students to earn a four-year degree in an efficient and economical way and in a familiar location and environment.** Community colleges serve the bulk of underrepresented students entering post-secondary education. The proposed BAS degree promotes the statewide goal for more Washington adults earning a postsecondary credential, which will require 1,400 BAS graduates from the CTC system by 2030 (WA SBCTC, August 2015). Approximately 15% of Whatcom County's population is below the poverty line (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018a) and the area's rural designation and distance from major metropolitan areas implies many place-bound students. Of WCC's degree- and certificate-seeking students, 25% are low-income (WCC Assessment and Institutional Research Office, 2018).
- **Helping to define, develop and expand community and industry partnerships to build the local talent pipeline and address workforce needs.** The program, which will feature uniquely customizable opportunities both in terms of content focus and modality of access, will work to address the workforce needs of small to medium-sized businesses which make up the majority of Whatcom County's employer community by supplying them with a capable, educated workforce. The program will be constructed to support working adults by offering face-to-face, hybrid, and online options. The new BAS degree program will also serve budding entrepreneurs who wish to stay and grow their own businesses locally by providing them with accessible, flexible, and practical program options that teach critical applied business management skills and knowledge.

Criteria 3: Employer / community demand for graduates with baccalaureate level of education proposed in the program

Employer demand exceeds regional supply of applied business management graduates, and the gap between graduates and job openings locally and regionally will only increase without a new BAS degree

According to indeed.com, demand for management positions in the Bellingham area totals 584 positions as of June 4, 2018 ("what" search term used: *management*; "where" search term used: *Bellingham, WA*). That figure rises to **748 positions** in Whatcom County overall. Examples include health information supervisor, social worker supervisor in integrated behavioral health, workforce manager, commercial relationship manager, project manager, store manager, operations manager, human resources manager, and many more. Eighty-five percent of Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce members surveyed in summer 2018 were interested in an increased supply of locally available talent with a bachelor's-level degree in business management (see Appendix B). An equal share are considering hiring or promoting one or more people into supervisory or management roles in the next several years. Top employers seek management positions in Whatcom County now. WWU's Center for Economic and Business Research ranks PeaceHealth as Whatcom County's largest employer, with numerous healthcare providers, educational institutions, and local businesses such as Starbucks ranking in the top 40. All of these referenced organizations employ management positions in Whatcom County.

Students who are place-bound because they are working, or for other factors, need an affordable four-year option close to home if they wish to pursue high-wage business management jobs. **The proposed BAS degree is very much needed given the workforce gap** demonstrated by the facts that only 123 students

per year are graduating with two-year degrees in the area, as shown in Table 1, and there are 748 openings in Whatcom County. Even with 123 students graduating with two-year degrees in the area, most positions require a bachelor’s degree, and the area only produces 217 students graduating with four-year degrees (see Table 1). Eighty-eight percent of local four-year graduates are from WWU, but not all are expected to remain in the northwest workforce development region, let alone Whatcom County. The local business profile for Whatcom County generated by the Census business builder regional analyst tool reveals 6,401 employer establishments (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018b). With an average of 12 employees per employer, Whatcom County is home to thousands of small to medium-sized businesses. The proposed BAS degree will help to address the workforce gap for these employers.

Table 1. Annual supply of graduates from business-related two-year and four-year degree programs in Northwest Washington state (Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties).

Institution	Two-year programs	Two-year graduates	Four-year programs	Four-year graduates
Western Washington University	N/A	0	Business management	190
Whatcom Community College	Business administration	20	Applied business management BAS (not yet approved)	0
	Accounting, finance, hospitality and tourism	15		
Bellingham Technical College	Accounting, admin. / legal assistant	30	Operations management BAS (the first cohort graduated 2018)	2
Skagit Valley College	Multiple business degree options	50	Applied management BAS (program is starting, so no graduates to date)	0
Northwest Indian College	Business and entrepreneurship, and public and tribal governance	8	Tribal governance and business management BA	25
	Total	123	Total	217

Demonstrated labor market need for business management professionals

According to Washington state Employment Security Department (WA ESD) occupation statistics updated August 1, 2017 (the most recent available), average annual openings for the period 2015-2025 for business management-related positions shown in Table 2 total 1,775 total positions in the four-county region of Northwest Washington state (Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties), with estimated 2015 employment totaling 4,951 positions for these occupations (WA ESD, 2018). Occupations are listed by entry-level education expectation in Table 2, as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

These occupation statistics demonstrate the need for business management-related positions in Whatcom County is strong and projected to stay strong, with demand forecast for nearly all occupation groups. Similar demand statistics for these positions are echoed statewide. While marketing and food services managers are balanced and sales and administrative services managers are considered not in demand locally, WCC’s hospitality and tourism advisory committee has stated that there are simply not enough qualified local applicants to fill middle-management positions locally and that managers and supervisors are needed in sales, restaurants, and more. A representative from the Washington Hospitality Association

who works directly with hoteliers and restaurant operators confirmed “there is demand for more management skilled workers in Whatcom and Skagit Counties.” Local businesses try to promote from within when possible to counter the trend of hiring from outside the area, and the new proposed BAS degree will help to provide the necessary training to help develop the local talent pool (both for incumbent and new workers). As another committee member stated, “a two-year degree is the appropriate amount of education up to a certain point. Advancement in management or sales would then slow down without a four-year degree.”

Table 2. Demand for business management occupations in Northwest Washington state (Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties) for the period 2015-2025 by entry-level education expectation, including average annual growth rate, openings, estimated employment, hourly wage (WA ESD, 2018).

Entry-level education expectation: Bachelor’s degree				
Occupation	Average annual growth rate (2015-2025)	Average annual total openings (2015-2025)	Estimated employment (2015)	Average hourly wage (2015)
Social and community services managers	1.5%	91	258	\$28.27
Human resources managers	1.7%	36	119	\$43.82
Medical and health services manager	2.0%	92	305	\$52.53
Marketing managers	1.8%	29	88	\$43.75
Construction managers	2.1%	352	809	\$48.12
Sales managers	1.4%	94	275	\$54.86
Administrative services managers	1.5%	62	223	\$41.90
total / average	1.8%	756	2,077	\$46.09
Entry-level education expectation: Bachelor’s degree not required but may be preferred				
General and operations managers	1.5%	705	2,148	\$47.37
Food services managers	1.3%	166	364	\$28.36
Property, real estate and community association managers	1.3%	84	210	\$27.10
Lodging managers	1.4%	64	152	\$25.52
total / average	1.4%	1,019	2,874	\$42.33
ALL positions / average	1.6%	1,775	4,951	\$43.90

For each occupation listed in the top half of Table 2, WA ESD states, “According to the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the typical level of education that most workers need to enter this occupation is: Bachelor’s degree.” For the rest, a bachelor’s degree is not required but may be preferred. Employees in these business-management related positions earn an average hourly wage of \$43.90, 68% higher than the Whatcom County average hourly wage of \$26.06 (WA ESD, 2018).

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistic’s *Occupation Outlook Handbook*, updated April 13, 2018, also predicts growth nationally for these occupations, as shown in Table 3, indicating BAS program graduates will not only be set up for success locally and throughout Washington state, but across the nation as well

(Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). These projections, for the period 2016-2026, represent the most current available. **Across all job categories, demand is expected to increase** given evolving business needs (e.g., increasing complexity of human resource issues and modernized technology, data issues and marketing and sales campaigns), shifting population dynamics (e.g., increases in the elderly population requiring expansion of health and community services), and increases in construction activity and complexity and size of projects.

Table 3. Outlook for business management occupations nationally, for the period 2016-2026, by entry-level education expectation (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018)

Entry-level education expectation: Bachelor's degree			
Job outlook	Projected growth relative to all occupations	Work experience in a related occupation	Job outlook
Social and community services managers	18% (much faster than average)	Less than 5 years	Growth will be driven by increases in the elderly population and in demand for behavioral health services.
Human resources managers	9% (as fast as average)	5 years or more	As new companies form and organizations expand operations, they will need HR managers to oversee and administer programs.
Medical and health services manager	20% (much faster than average)	Less than 5 years	As the large baby-boom population ages and people remain active later in life, there should be increased demand for healthcare services.
Marketing managers	10% (faster than average)	Less than 5 years	Marketing campaigns will continue to be essential for organizations as they seek to maintain and expand their share of the market.
Construction managers	11% (faster than average)	None	More managers are needed to oversee the increase in construction activity. Those with a bachelor's degree will have best job prospects.
Sales managers	7% (as fast as average)	Less than 5 years	Employment growth will depend primarily on growth in the industries that employ them.
Administrative services managers	10% (faster than average)	Less than 5 years	Managing facilities and being prepared for emergencies will remain important.
Entry-level education expectation: Bachelor's degree not required but may be preferred			
Food services managers	9% (as fast as average)	Less than 5 years	Those with a degree in hospitality, restaurant, or food service will have best job opportunities.
Property, real estate and community association managers	10% (faster than average)	Less than 5 years	Job opportunities should be best for those with a college degree in business administration or real estate.
Lodging managers	4% (slower than average)	Less than 5 years	Bachelor's degree holders in hotel or hospitality will have best job opportunities.

For instance, for medical and health services manager occupations, the *Occupation Outlook Handbook* states that employment “is projected to grow 20 percent from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations. As the large baby-boom population ages and people remain active later in life, there should be increased demand for healthcare services. This means... greater needs for managers who organize and manage medical information and healthcare staff.” An increased demand for nursing care facility administrators is also forecast. Job prospects are expected to be highest for those with at least a bachelor's degrees (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). BAS program graduates will possess skills

and experience that makes them desirable across multiple industries, including healthcare and others. In particular, healthcare, construction, and manufacturing are key sectors of focus for the Northwest Washington service area as identified by the office of Washington state governor Jay Inslee (2018).

A recent analysis of local construction and manufacturing industry trends in desired hiring qualifications showed that supervisory, leadership, and project management skills are highly desirable across the Northwest Washington region (September 2017). The analysis, conducted by WWU's Center for Economic and Business Research in collaboration with the Northwest Workforce Council, revealed that 100% of construction firms surveyed in the study rated employees' supervisor and leadership training and project management skills as valuable in terms of promotional opportunity. Results were similar among manufacturing firm respondents, suggesting both of these significant local industries would benefit from the skills graduates will earn in WCC's new proposed BAS degree in applied business management.

While the WWU Center for Economic and Business Research's *Whatcom County / Bellingham Economic Profile* published December 2017 indicates the majority of Whatcom County workers live and work in the county, over one-quarter (25.7%) do not. According to a Census tool called On The Map, Whatcom County residents employed outside of the county have higher earnings, with 46% earning more than \$3,333 per month compared to 42% of those employed within the county (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018c). This suggests residents seek higher wage local jobs that the proposed BAS program can help to generate locally. The new degree program will help residents earn an affordable four-year degree in Whatcom County, where two-thirds (67%) of the population 25 years and over has not earned a bachelor's degree (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018a). As previously stated, bachelor's degree earners in Washington state make one-third more in annual wages compared to those with associate's degrees (\$60,575 vs \$45,070).

A recent higher education capacity study in Washington state concluded that BAS degree programs can help residents earn bachelor's degrees and meet workforce demand in top occupations including business and management. Among the over 740,000 job openings forecast over the next five years in Washington state, approximately 15,000 per year in business and financial operations occupations earn \$36,000 annually. This is the fourth largest occupational category in demand statewide, and all but a handful of these positions are forecast to require a bachelor's degree. Management occupations are the third largest category at nearly 16,000, with almost identical educational requirements. In order to ensure that students in the region – especially underserved ones – are prepared for, access, and complete a postsecondary education in high demand fields that pay a living wage, both economic initiatives and higher education capacity efforts must consider place-bound populations. It is well known that most students tend to remain and work or seek employment in their local communities. Nationally, 90% of high school graduates who attend two-year institutions stay local, with even higher rates for low-income and students of color (University of Washington, 2017). An applied business management program serving place-bound students is well justified. With countless job openings for qualified business managers and desire for increased management skills of existing employees, there is clearly a need to help prepare and expand this workforce – locally, regionally, and nationally. For the foreseeable future, industries, employers, and companies of all sizes and kinds will continue to need well-trained business managers and benefit from those with applied skills.

In Washington state, the success of new BAS programs since 2007 has demonstrated the important role they now play in meeting workforce needs. BAS degree programs in the CTC system have been producing graduates since 2010, with a roughly 85% employment match for the system's 739 business management-related BAS program graduates to date (SBCTC, August 2017). Their median earnings from pre-enrollment to eight years after BAS degree completion total \$62,874 (SBCTC, August 2017).

Local industry and employer demand and support

Results from a summer 2018 survey of Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce members revealed a strong desire for local bachelor's-prepared managers and supervisors (see Appendix B). The Chamber enthusiastically conducted the survey on behalf of the College, distributing it to 1,895 recipients, who represent large, medium, and small businesses, and non-profits across Whatcom County. Fifty-seven members responded (those who provided name and company information are detailed on pages 13-14 of

Appendix B; the vast majority are located in the Bellingham area). A significant 85% were interested in an increased supply of locally available talent with a bachelor's-level degree in business management, with an equal share considering hiring or promoting one or more people into supervisory or management roles in the next several years. One-third of respondents require – and 60% prefer – at least a bachelor's degree for these roles. Members considered affordability / cost, increased job skills / marketability, and convenient class schedule as the top considerations in making a decision to enroll or send personnel to a BAS degree in applied business management at WCC. According to one respondent, "I think a four-year degree program of this type is a much needed offering in Whatcom County, where many are turned away from [other colleges] due a variety of reasons but mostly due to maxed enrollment."

Further evidence of need for increased workforce skills in Bellingham and Whatcom County has been demonstrated by increased corporate training and Job Skills Program contracts realized through WCC's Community and Continuing Education department. Within the past year, WCC has been awarded numerous new contracts with regional manufacturing companies to increase leadership and lean manufacturing skills amongst existing employees. WWU's Small Business Development Center further supports this need, noting that many local small business owners would benefit from access to the breadth of content that will be offered through WCC's BAS degree.

According to the Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce, "The industries of Whatcom County are so well-diversified that there is room for just about any new business or new extension of an existing business to open" (2018). In fact, Forbes ranks Bellingham 17 in *Best Small Places for Business and Careers* in 2018. The proposed BAS degree will leverage the business needs and opportunities of Whatcom County's diversified, entrepreneurial business community which includes manufacturing, food and beverage, technology, recreation, health and wellness, agriculture, food processing and maritime.

From rope and shoe manufacturing to solar panels and breakfast cookies, Whatcom County produces approximately \$3 billion worth of diverse goods and services that are shipped and sold around the world, as highlighted by *Choose Whatcom: Moving business forward* (Port of Bellingham, 2018). Ideally located midway between Seattle, WA and Vancouver, BC, and with a deep water marine port, rail access and an international airport, Whatcom County provides incredible access to the state's booming export economy, helping locally-grown companies to rapidly reach a global market. \$14.8 billion worth of exports pass through Whatcom County's five ports of entry every year and over 2 million customers for these goods are just 30 minutes away (Port of Bellingham, 2018). A population of 6 million consumers live within just one hour, with considerable lower cost of doing business compared to major nearby metropolitan areas. International trade opportunities are abundant, with the Canadian border located only 20 miles away. The future economic growth of Whatcom County is projected to be strong, and the business community will continue to grow and need business management talent across all industry sectors of strategic importance as identified by the office of Washington state governor Jay Inslee (2018).

Launching a business-focused BAS degree program is a major 2017-18 work plan goal of the business / office administration program advisory committee at WCC, with expectations to continue this goal in 2018-19 if supported for moving forward by the SBCTC. The committee is highly supportive and has provided input on areas of focus and reviewed proposed program outcomes and approval documents. Committee members, who represent the local business community and can attest to demand, noted the proposed degree is well rounded and will help to address local business needs with in-demand focus areas including human resources, law, and technical writing.

Many support resources are available to those looking to start or expand business in Whatcom County, suggesting business management opportunities are plentiful and increasing. Bellingham SCORE is a local non-profit organization – a chapter of the national SCORE mentoring network – that has been educating entrepreneurs and helping small businesses succeed through free counseling, mentorship, and resources in Whatcom and Skagit counties for more than 20 years. Through its partnership with WCC, Bellingham SCORE provides local workshops on entrepreneurship and small business management. With funding from the federal Small Business Administration, WWU's Small Business Development Center provides business advising and market analysis. According to the organization's 2017 annual report, it provided nearly 300 clients with free-of-charge business advising last year and contributed hundreds of hours of

local market research. In the last five years it helped to create nearly 60 businesses and helped to create or save over 600 jobs, with new investments totaling \$28 million. Other local support includes Bellingham Entrepreneurs, Innovate Bellingham, the Bellingham Startup Challenge, Invent (Bellingham's largest co-working community), the Bellingham Angel Group, Choose Whatcom, the Northwest Innovation Resource Center, the Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Technology Alliance Group for NW Washington, and the Port of Bellingham's numerous economic development resources.

The need for a well-trained and educated business management workforce is well documented, and the need for graduates with demonstrated, applied skills and knowledge is greater than ever. A four-year BAS degree offered through WCC will be an effective, economical means to develop just such a workforce to serve economic growth and development in the northwest region of Washington state.

Criteria 4: Applied baccalaureate program builds from existing professional and technical degree program offered by the institution

A BAS in applied business management would build on existing successful programs

WCC's current two-year business administration program began in 2005 with a focus in accounting, and now provides a core of fundamental business courses combined with flexibility in elective choices to allow students to concentrate study in their business area of choice. It prepares students in entrepreneurship to start their own business, and to gain the technical and professional skills needed for office management, marketing, retail and other business professions, including various supervisory / entry-level management positions. WCC offers optional embedded certificates of proficiency in sustainable business leadership (9 credits) and clerical assistant (28 credits) as well as certificates in office administration (45-57 credits), office administration – logistics (47-57 credits), and retail management (46 credits) – all potentially providing completers with credentials to seek and qualify for employment while continuing their studies. The associate in science degree totals 90-94 credits and includes 59-63 credits of core requirements and 31 credits of electives and cooperative work experience. Other related two-year degrees at WCC include accounting, finance, hospitality and tourism, and visual communications, all potential feeders into the BAS in applied business management program.

The new BAS in applied business management degree program at WCC will also admit students with business or related two-year degrees from other Washington state community colleges.

The long-standing business program at WCC is primed for expansion

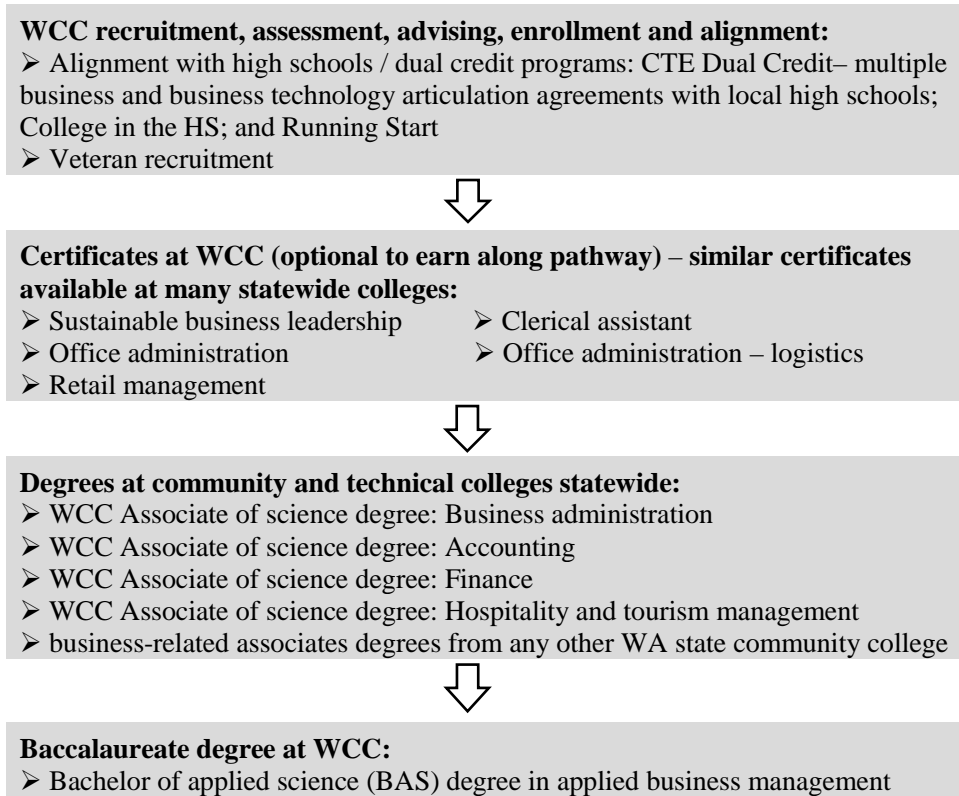
In 2015, due to the large number of WCC students intending to and successfully transferring to baccalaureate business programs and growing student demand for a more coherent transfer pathway to baccalaureate degree options, WCC launched an associate in business – direct transfer agreement / major related program (business DTA/MRP) degree. This option provides a transfer preparation pathway specifically for the large number of WCC students pursuing a bachelor's degree in a business-related field. This statewide degree, approved by SBCTC and most baccalaureate institutions in Washington state, was developed to ensure that students pursuing a business baccalaureate degree are prepared for transfer to another college or university and for admission into the relevant major field of study by completing coursework representing both the depth and breadth needed for major preparation in business. While demand for the business DTA / MRP is strong, there are still large numbers of students looking for applied degree options in business-related fields.

WCC's robust and growing business program also includes extracurricular options that enhance the student experience and job readiness, including the WCC business club, which provides members with practical exposure and experiences in business (including international business), accounting, finance, not-for-profits, hospitality, retail, food production, manufacturing, and other fields. Business club members have the opportunity to network with professionals and explore current business topics from across the local business community. Volunteers from the business community speak, present new ideas, provide feedback on resumes, participate in mock interviews, and share their experiences, all in support of

helping students learn about career opportunities and realities and to prepare for future internships and employment.

This project aims are to create a new applied four-year degree in applied business management, attractive to local students and in particular the area's many place-bound and working students, but also to students statewide interested in transferring to WCC's growing business program and thriving community. According to Washington Career Bridge and an environmental scan of program availability, *all* Washington state CTCs offer two-year business-related degrees or certificates – including dozens of options in related fields such as accounting, finance, and hospitality – supporting the conclusion that the pool of eligible students for WCC's proposed BAS program is significant (WA Career Bridge, 2018).

Figure 1. Education pathways in applied business management



The pathway, shown in Figure 1 on the previous page, identifies outreach populations and opportunities for WCC students to earn optional certificates along the way to the new BAS, which will build specifically on WCC's current two-year business administration degree. WCC's two-year business degree, accounting and finance, and hospitality and tourism management programs combined graduate approximately 35 students per year, and all would be eligible to pursue WCC's new BAS program. Figure 1 also shows how qualifying graduates from *any* business or related two-year degree program in Washington state can pursue a BAS degree at WCC. While particular emphasis will be placed on reaching out to graduates from area colleges including Bellingham Technical College (BTC), Skagit Valley College (SVC), and Northwest Indian College (NWIC) as appropriate, WCC will work to develop articulation agreements with colleges statewide.

The degree will also be available to other two-year degree completers, regardless of discipline, who wish to pursue business management knowledge and skills in parallel with another passion (e.g. a massage therapist who wants to run her own massage clinic). With the broad elective options already in place in WCC's two-year business administration degree, students with other discipline backgrounds will be able to qualify relatively quickly for entry into the BAS degree, without significant additional coursework

(approximately 43-54 credits, depending on program of study). The degree will also leverage general education requirements in project management, business ethics, and compliance and auditing already being offered at WCC as part of the BAS in IT networking – cybersecurity degree.

Five-year enrollment history of WCC's business programs shows an average 10% growth per year

The business program is ready for expansion to the next level. **In the last three years, the program has grown by 54%**, likely fueled by the overall growth in the US economy, but also mirroring regional economic growth across western Washington and the Northwest. As shown in Table 4, enrollment has increased consistently over the last five years, with an average *10% growth per year* in unduplicated headcount. The program has seen a 41% increase in FTE since 2014-15.

Table 4. WCC business program FTE, headcount, courses, and sections for the period 2013-14 – 2017-18

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
FTEs	FTEs (full-time equivalent students)	122	118	135	146	166
	% change in FTEs from previous year	3%	-3%	17%	8%	14%
Head count	Unduplicated headcount (number of students enrolled in at least one discipline course in that year)	640	625	723	800	962
	% change in unduplicated headcount from previous year	-2%	-2%	16%	11%	20%
Courses	Number of courses offered	21	22	24	24	25
	% change in number of courses from previous year	-5%	5%	9%	0%	4%
Sections	Number of sections offered	103	111	116	93	90
	% change in number of sections from previous year	-14%	8%	5%	-20%	-3%

Criteria 5: Student demand for program within the region

Students graduate with relevant two-year degrees in the region

The number of Whatcom County students following a business path is growing. As noted in Table 4 under Criteria 4, WCC's business program realized 20% growth in student enrollment last year alone. But without adding additional four-year degree capacity, local educational institutions will not be able to fill the need of two-year graduates who want an affordable, applied, local baccalaureate option.

Each year, WCC graduates 20 students with a two-year degree in business administration, plus an additional 15 in the accounting, finance, hospitality and tourism programs, for a total of 35 students. All would be well suited to apply to WCC's new BAS program. BTC, located in the same city as WCC, graduates approximately 30 students per year from its two-year accounting, administrative assistant, and legal assistant programs. BTC is also planning to offer a two-year HR degree. SVC, located in the county south of Whatcom, offers two-year business degree options and graduates approximately 50 students per year. SVC also offers operations management and office and business technology degrees. NWIC offers a two-year associate of arts and sciences degree in business and entrepreneurship as well as public and tribal governance. These programs graduate approximately 8 students per year. **With these colleges**

graduating approximately 123 students per year from business-related two-year degree programs only, the workforce gap is clearly evident, even with SVC offering its own BAS degree in business. This is especially evident given the two-year degree graduation figures are expected to increase over time and when considering the regional demand for four-year degree prepared managers.

As noted, WCC will build upon its current two-year business associate of science degree (as well as the related degrees mentioned above), by developing and offering a BAS degree in applied business management. This BAS degree will provide a unique focus not found at nearby WWU or other regional two-year colleges, in that it is specifically geared for the workforce needs of small to medium-sized businesses which make up the majority of Whatcom County's employer community. It will also serve working adults and budding entrepreneurs who wish to stay and progress in or grow their businesses in Whatcom County – a requested focus of current students enrolled in WCC's two-year business programs. There are currently no other face-to-face four-year business management degree options in Whatcom County accepting new students; and BTC's online business-related BAS in operations management is focused on manufacturing processes and information technology as opposed to the variety of other businesses in the county described previously (retail, healthcare, construction, food processing, etc.). SVC now offers a four-year management degree that is substantively different in both content and pedagogical approach; and WWU's business management program is currently full, with no plans for expansion, according to program representatives. The current demand for four-year graduates with applied business management skills and knowledge will not be met locally without the addition of the BAS degree at WCC.

Student surveys demonstrate demand, which exceeds opportunity to enroll in related traditional bachelor's programs

A fall 2017 survey of current WCC students pursuing a two-year business degree demonstrates very strong local student support for a four-year degree in applied business management program at WCC. One-hundred-and-sixty-five students responded to the survey overall, with results showing that a significant number of students 1) want to pursue a bachelor's program in the field; 2) believe that increased job skills and marketability, career advancement, and affordability are very important factors in the decision to attend such a program; 3) are mostly working adults; and 4) would only be willing to attend such a BAS program in less than 30 miles of their home. Specific results are described in detail in Table 5.

Quotes from student survey respondents were enthusiastic and included the following:

“It would allow me to obtain my BAS without having to switch colleges.”

“I would LOVE to do receive a BA in Business Management from Whatcom. We're so much less expensive than [other colleges].”

“I think it is a great idea, and I would definitely consider this. Money would be an issue. I would much rather go to Whatcom than [other colleges].”

“I like the option of online and mediated classes as I can make the most efficient use of my personal time. As someone who also has to make a sole support living, having classes offered at a variety of times and delivery options is a major attraction to WCC, and to logistically be able to pursue my education.”

“For most of us looking into these kinds of degrees, having the option of evening or night classes is really helpful!”

Table 5. WCC two-year business student survey results, fall 2017

Survey question	Response in support of BAS	% who responded as indicated
If WCC offered a BAS in applied business management, would you enroll?	Yes	43% (60 of 141)
What is the highest level of education you seek to attain in this field?	Bachelor's degree	86% (114 of 133)
What would your preference be in attending?	Full time (two or more courses per quarter)	60% (66 of 110)
	Part-time or the option to attend part-time or full-time, depending on their personal schedule	40% (44 of 110)
What is the preferred method and timing of attendance? (check all that apply)	On-campus day-time courses	55% (60 of 109)
	On-campus evening courses	26% (29 of 112)
	Hybrid course offerings, with a combination of online course work with face-to-face class meetings for labs and some instruction	56% (62 of 111)
	Fully online courses	56% (62 of 111)
Factors ranked 'very important' by students	Increased job skills and marketability	70% (77 of 110)
	Career advancement	66% (73 of 110)
	Affordability / cost of the program	49% (54 of 110)
How far would you be willing to travel to attend the BAS in applied business management program?	0-29 miles	75% (82 of 110)
Employment status	Currently employed	64% (90 of 141)
Age	Over 30	43% (60 of 141)

Among WCC professional-technical program alumni recently surveyed, one-third of respondents indicated a potential interest in pursuing a BAS degree related to business management (entrepreneurship or HR). Thirteen percent expressed a definite interest, and 20% indicated a possible interest.

Change in industry standards

A bachelor's degree is the typical level of education that most workers now need to enter the vast majority of business management occupations locally, regionally, and nationally. For the others, a bachelor's degree is not required but may be preferred in the hiring process. As stated, employees in business-management related positions in the Northwest region of Washington state earn an average hourly wage of \$43.90, 68% higher than the Whatcom County average hourly wage of \$26.06 (WA ESD, 2018).

Enrollment projections for the next five years

Based on these efforts, recent trends in enrollment growth, and growing student interest in a baccalaureate pathway in business, the following enrollments in Table 6 are projected for WCC's new applied business management BAS degree program. These projections are based on the 10% average annual enrollment growth seen in the last five years in WCC's business program and strong student enthusiasm for the proposed BAS program as demonstrated by the recent student survey. WCC anticipates that within one to two years of launching the program, students who enter the program will spread word of its rigor, local industry appeal, and value to the extent that enrollment will increase approximately six students per year. While WCC will put forth a strong marketing plan for the proposed BAS program, the College knows by experience that word of mouth is often the best approach to advertising a high caliber program.

Table 6. Projected enrollments for WCC's new applied business management BAS degree by year

Project Year	Projected enrollment (individual students)
2019	18 (students can begin working on GURs and business core program; new courses for BAS under development)
2020	24
2021	30
2022	40
2023	50

Criteria 6: Efforts to maximize state resources to serve place-bound students

The program will serve place-bound students including working adults

WCC is located in Bellingham, Whatcom County, in the northwest corner of Washington state. With an average of 95 people per square mile, Whatcom County is primarily rural with approximately 15% of the county population below the official poverty line, according to U.S. Census Bureau data (2018a).

Statistics support the place-bound demographics of WCC students. In 2016-17, WCC served 4,181 FTE (full-time equivalent) students. When most recently measured, the vast majority (81%) of WCC's degree-seeking students are transfer students, with half attending full time. As noted in Table 7 below, nearly half of students who attend WCC consistently come from Whatcom County high schools. Among students 20 years of age and under, that figure jumps to three-quarters. Local residents want to attend WCC.

Table 7. High school attendance of degree and certificate seeking students of any age

Academic Year	High school area		
	Whatcom County	Washington State	Out-of-state
2012-13	46%	21%	10%
2013-14	45%	20%	20%
2014-15	46%	19%	20%
2015-16	47%	18%	21%
2016-17	47%	16%	24%

In WCC's two-year business program, 46% of students are ages 20-29 and 30% are over the age of 30. Nearly half (49%) of program students are first generation, meaning neither parent has earned a bachelor's degree. One-third (33%) are students of color, 43% are low income, and 62% are female. WCC's two-year business program serves many working adults, and over half (52%) of program students take advantage of hybrid or online learning as part of the program (WCC office of assessment and institutional research, 2018). Student survey results demonstrate the need for a flexible BAS degree at WCC with a hybrid component that serves the needs of working adults.

WCC's BAS will serve place-bound and other students in northwest Washington – who have limited options to further their education in this field – with uniquely customizable opportunities. With the ability to enroll face-to-face, fully online, or mix-and-match modalities of courses, this program will provide opportunities to students who currently work full- or part-time, or who have other obligations that limit them from traveling, to further their education with practical, applied business management skills.

CTCs are recognized for providing education to student populations that are more likely to include women, veterans, people of color, lower-income, first generation, part-time parents with dependent children, and returning adult students. The open door policy provides access to all students thus increasing diversity in a college setting. Providing a seamless pathway to a four-year degree at a community college increases affordable access for underserved student populations. Specifically, the pathway includes students entering or transferring to WCC from local and statewide colleges, thus providing a four-year pathway previously non-existent in Whatcom County.

Similar programs in the region do not meet place-bound student needs

Other related applied management BAS degrees are available in the state and serve specific student populations and needs. SVC, 30 miles south of Bellingham, now offers an applied management BAS degree, which is a cohorted program that meets face-to-face one day per week and is open to any student with a two-year degree. BTC offers an online-only operations management BAS program that is strongly focused on preparing students to manage manufacturing operations and IT. WCC's proposed BAS program is unique in that it is a *business* management degree, with a strong emphasis on meeting the needs of Whatcom County small to medium-sized businesses and working or part-time students. With a new four-year degree option in place at WCC, options for graduates (estimated at approximately 123 in 2018) from combined WCC, BTC, SVC, and NWIC business programs who wish to remain in the Northwest Washington state region to earn a four-year applied degree in applied business management include:

- WCC's applied business management BAS program (new);
- Western Governor's University (online) or other online options; and
- WWU's business management program, which is currently full.

While some students who graduate from WCC's two-year business program could complete a four-year degree at Western Governors University or through other online options, this solution is highly problematic for students who would like or need in-person instruction, and the nature of online college programs presents challenges for teaching the applied focus of the proposed degree program. Because WWU's business management program is currently full, there is no physical four-year business program option in Whatcom County that is accepting students at this time and WWU's program representatives indicate that they do not anticipate the ability to expand their program within the foreseeable future.

Affordability is another important consideration for regional students. According to the College Board's 2017 report on trends student aid, the average loan debt of borrowers attending a public four-year institution was \$27,000. According to the College Board, the average loan debt of borrowers attending a private non-profit institution was \$32,000, and attending a university away from Bellingham would also add the cost of student housing. Still, graduating with a bachelor's degree from WWU would cost approximately \$33,252 (in tuition and fees only), **one-third more than the cost** of four years earning a bachelor's degree at WCC (estimated at approximately \$22,492 in tuition and fees only). The lack of local private four-year schools and limited public school options, combined with the high expense of the degrees and debt limits, severely limits the number of students who can afford to attend either option and underscores the need for local efficient educational pathways, especially since, as already mentioned, 43% of WCC students are economically disadvantaged.

Potential collaborations explored in development of the proposal

On June 28, 2018, representatives from WWU and WCC met to discuss WCC's proposed BAS degree and WWU representatives were supportive. WCC's program will serve the needs of professional-technical students who want to pursue an applied course of study. Out of the 16,000 students served on

WWU's campus, 10% are enrolled in the College of Business and Economics. It's face-to-face business management program is full and is not enrolling new students. WWU and WCC discussed working on course equivalencies and approaches for supporting students in determining their best fit for their baccalaureate pathway – either a four-year program at WWU or the new BAS option at WCC. The institutions also discussed the possibility of sharing non-tenure track faculty to teach courses in either program. In addition, WCC will explore articulating the new BAS program to WWU's master's in business administration program, which is under capacity and in need of an enrollment boost.

On March 28, 2018, representatives from BTC and WCC met to discuss WCC's plans for the proposed BAS degree in applied business management and the need to develop strategies to advise students on pathways at either institution. BTC plans to offer new two-year degree options in social media marketing and human resources specialist, both of which would serve as pathways to WCC's BAS program. BTC offers a two-year operations management degree, which serves as a logical pathway into BTC's BAS program in operations management.

On May 10, 2018, representatives from SVC and WCC met to discuss the need to mutually assist each other in advising the colleges' two-year business program graduates on the BAS program options that each institution will offer: SVC with a cohorted applied management degree that meets only once per week and caters to the business management needs of Skagit County, and WCC with a strong applied business management focus that will specifically address the needs of small to medium-sized business in Whatcom County as well as place-bound and other students who would strongly prefer to pursue their studies here, with flexible delivery options, which is well documented. Each college acknowledged it has its own pipeline to supply their respective BAS programs, while noting the benefits of having two options for students between the two colleges.

On July 11, 2018, representatives from NWIC and WCC met to discuss NWIC's two-year and four-year business options and how the colleges can work together. NWIC offers a bachelor of arts degree in tribal governance and business management, the primary purpose of which is to develop local leaders in tribal governance. The college's two-year business options feed into the program, which began in 2012 and anticipates 25 graduates this year. The program is offered via video conferencing and hybrid to students at remote tribal campus sites and other distance learners. The program features culturally based curriculum and a strong focus on leadership of communities, and many participants are returning students who are working and want to progress in their positions in tribal governance. NWIC expressed interest in working with WCC on establishing equivalencies of appropriate courses such as project management, human resources, and finance.

Collaborations with similar CTC BAS programs and related CTC Centers of Excellence

As noted previously, WCC has had conversations with BTC and SVC about clarifying pathways for students in the Northwest Washington region in order to best meet student needs. BTC offers an online BAS degree program in operations management that primarily prepares students to manage manufacturing operations and IT. Advisors at the two institutions will help to guide students from the colleges' relevant two-year degree programs toward BAS options that best match their goals and needs. SVC's BAS degree is a hybrid program with one face-to-face day on Fridays. The program, which targets 25 students per year, features mandatory orientation and is cohorted. WCC will work with SVC, BTC, and NWIC to ensure students understand each programs' unique features, and which might best suit their plans and dreams. There are now Centers of Excellence in Business serving Washington state CTCs.

Demand for an applied business management pathway is demonstrated at the high school level in Whatcom County

Through the governor's Career Connect Washington initiative, the state has set a goal to connect 100,000 Washington youth during the next five years with career-focused learning opportunities that prepare them for high demand, high wage jobs. A supply-demand gap analysis conducted by the initiative revealed that the state must achieve 5% annual growth in postsecondary credentials earned to meet the forecast 2030 annual demand for positions that pay above regional family wage – significantly higher than the current 0.9% annual growth rate. In the Northwest Washington region, business positions are among the top eight

occupations with an average regional wage of over \$36,000 with no experience needed – and the only top occupation on the list that requires a bachelor’s degree for all positions forecast (approximately 250 business replacement openings annually for the period 2015-2020 with no experience required). This suggests there is strong need for an applied business management pathway at the high school level in Whatcom County. While high school graduation rates are higher in Northwest Washington than the state overall, the rate of postsecondary enrollment within 12 months of graduation is much lower at just 52% in Northwest Washington, compared to 60% in the state overall. Half (48%) of these so-called direct enrollees in the Northwest region attend two-year institutions, meaning the pool of high schoolers who would benefit from direct enrollment in an applied business program is high (Washington STEM, 2018). WCC now offers Open Doors and Passport programs to help students complete high school and attend college, further increasing the pool of students who could potentially enroll in the BAS program.

What sets the proposed program apart and why expansion is desirable and necessary

The proposed BAS will be geared toward students who have earned their associate degree in business or a related field, and who need the comprehensive skills and knowledge to oversee and manage overall business systems and operations. With an emphasis on applied skills and knowledge, cooperative education (in the two-year degree) and capstone courses (at the end of the four-year degree) will incorporate opportunities for students to work with industry partners on real-world business projects. WCC’s business / office administration program advisory committee and other local business leaders who have worked with WCC on cooperative education opportunities, have committed their support for such a degree and their willingness to support WCC faculty in the development of capstone projects. The program will be specifically geared for the workforce needs of small to medium-sized businesses which make up the majority of Whatcom County’s employer community. It will also serve budding entrepreneurs who wish to stay and grow their businesses in Whatcom County – a requested focus of current students enrolled in WCC’s two-year business programs.

WCC’s BAS will serve place-bound and other students in northwest Washington state – who have limited options to further their education in this field – with uniquely customizable opportunities. This flexible BAS degree program will allow students to continue their education full or part-time, in different modes of delivery, while working or fulfilling other life obligations. It will be career changing for those students who would like to further their education, but who are not currently able to do so for reasons of geography, cost, and / or schedule. Through its comprehensive approach, the degree will prepare graduates for a variety of careers requiring administrative and management, leadership and possibly self-employment skills. With an emphasis on capstone projects and options for real-world experiential learning, WCC’s BAS will provide practical skills needed in the community at affordable tuition rates.

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Appendix A: Applied Baccalaureate Degree Supply/Demand Gap Rubric for Colleges

The application needs to show the information below for program approval:

- employers demand* the level of technical training proposed within the program, making it cost-effective for students to seek the degree;
- lead to high wage-earning jobs; and
- the proposed program fills a gap in options available for students because it is not offered by a public four-year institution of higher education in the college's geographic area.

College Name: Whatcom Community College	
Program Name: BAS degree in Applied Business Management	
Select one: Existing Occupation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or Emerging Occupation <input type="checkbox"/>	
If local demand/supply information is available for the specified degree program and target occupation(s),**	
For demand: Provide local/regional demand data for the targeted occupation job title(s) from traditional labor market data, industry data, trade association data, or other transactional data. <i>(Provide absolute numbers, not just percentages)</i>	<p>According to indeed.com, demand for management positions in the Bellingham area totals 584 positions as of June 4, 2018 (“what” search term used: <i>management</i>; “where” search term used: <i>Bellingham, WA</i>). That figure rises to 748 positions in Whatcom County overall. Examples include health information supervisor, social worker supervisor in integrated behavioral health, workforce manager, commercial relationship manager, project manager, store manager, operations manager, human resources manager, and many more. Top employers seek management positions in Whatcom County now. WWU’s Center for Economic and Business Research ranks PeaceHealth as Whatcom County’s largest employer, with numerous healthcare providers, educational institutions, and local businesses such as Starbucks ranking in the top 40. All of these referenced organizations employ management positions in Whatcom County.</p> <p>According to Washington state Employment Security Department (WA ESD) occupation statistics updated August 1, 2017 (the most recent available), average annual openings for the period 2015-2025 for business management-related positions shown in Table 2 total 1,775 total positions in the four-county region of Northwest Washington state (Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties), with estimated 2015 employment totaling 4,951 positions for these occupations (WA ESD, 2018). Occupations are listed by entry-level education expectation in Table 2, as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.</p>

Table 2. Demand for business management occupations in Northwest Washington state (Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties) for the period 2015-2025 by entry-level education expectation, including average annual growth rate, openings, estimated employment, hourly wage (WA ESD, 2018).

Entry-level education expectation: Bachelor's degree				
Occupation	Average annual growth rate (2015-2025)	Average annual total openings (2015-2025)	Estimated employment (2015)	Average hourly wage (2015)
Social and community services managers	1.5%	91	258	\$28.27
Human resources managers	1.7%	36	119	\$43.82
Medical and health services manager	2.0%	92	305	\$52.53
Marketing managers	1.8%	29	88	\$43.75
Construction managers	2.1%	352	809	\$48.12
Sales managers	1.4%	94	275	\$54.86
Administrative services managers	1.5%	62	223	\$41.90
total / average	1.8%	756	2,077	\$46.09
Entry-level education expectation: Bachelor's degree not required but may be preferred				
General and operations managers	1.5%	705	2,148	\$47.37
Food services managers	1.3%	166	364	\$28.36
Property, real estate and community association managers	1.3%	84	210	\$27.10
Lodging managers	1.4%	64	152	\$25.52
total / average	1.4%	1,019	2,874	\$42.33
ALL positions / average	1.6%	1,775	4,951	\$43.90

These occupation statistics demonstrate the need for business management-related positions in Whatcom County is strong and projected to stay strong, with demand forecast for nearly all occupation groups. Similar demand statistics for these positions are echoed statewide. While marketing and food services managers are balanced and sales and administrative services managers are considered not in demand locally, WCC’s hospitality and tourism advisory committee has stated that there are simply not enough qualified local applicants to fill middle-management positions locally and that managers and supervisors are needed in sales, restaurants, and more. A representative from the Washington Hospitality Association who works directly with hoteliers and restaurant operators confirmed “there is demand for more management skilled workers in Whatcom and Skagit Counties.” Local businesses try to promote from within when possible to counter the trend of hiring from outside the area, and the new proposed BAS degree will help to provide the necessary training to help develop the local talent pool (both for incumbent and new workers). As another committee member stated, “a two-year degree is the appropriate amount of education up to a certain point. Advancement in management or sales would then slow down without a four-year degree.”

For each occupation listed in the top half of Table 2, WA ESD states, “According to the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the typical level of education that most workers need to enter this occupation is: Bachelor’s degree.” For the rest, a bachelor’s degree is not required but may be preferred. Employees in these business-management related positions earn an average hourly wage of \$43.90, 68% higher than the Whatcom County average hourly wage of \$26.06 (WA ESD, 2018).

In Washington state, the success of new BAS programs since 2007 has demonstrated the important role they now play in meeting workforce needs. BAS degree programs in the CTC system have been producing graduates since 2010, with a roughly 85% employment match for the system’s 739 business management-related BAS program graduates to date (SBCTC, August 2017). Median earnings from pre-enrollment to eight years after BAS degree completion total \$62,874 (SBCTC, August 2017).

Results from a summer 2018 survey of Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce members revealed a strong desire for local bachelor’s-prepared managers and supervisors (see Appendix B). The Chamber enthusiastically conducted the survey on behalf of the College, distributing it to 1,895 recipients, who represent large, medium, and small businesses, and non-profits. Fifty-seven members responded (those who provided name and company information are detailed on pages 13-14 of Appendix B; the vast majority are located in the Bellingham area). A significant 85% were interested in an increased supply of locally available talent with a bachelor’s-level degree in business management, with an equal share considering hiring or promoting one or more people into supervisory or management roles in the next several years. One-third of respondents require – and 60% prefer – at least a bachelor’s degree for these roles. Members considered affordability / cost, increased job skills / marketability, and convenient class schedule as the top considerations in making a decision to enroll or send personnel to a BAS degree in applied business management at WCC. According to one respondent, “I think a four-year degree program of this type is a much needed offering in Whatcom County, where many are turned away from [other colleges] due a variety of reasons but mostly due to maxed enrollment.”

For supply gap: Provide data on the number of programs and the number of annual program graduates for all four-year colleges that supply your region. Is the number of current annual graduates insufficient to meet current and projected demand? (The result of demand minus supply).

Each year, WCC graduates 20 students with a two-year degree in business administration, plus an additional 15 in the accounting, finance, hospitality and tourism programs, for a total of 35 students. All would be well suited to apply to WCC's new BAS program. BTC, located in the same city as WCC, graduates approximately 30 students per year from its two-year accounting, administrative assistant, and legal assistant programs., located in the county south of Whatcom, offers two-year business degree options and graduates approximately 50 students per year. SVC also offers operations management and office and business technology degrees. NWIC offers a two-year associate of arts and sciences degree in business and entrepreneurship as well as public and tribal governance. These programs graduate approximately 8 students per year.

The proposed BAS degree is very much needed given the workforce gap demonstrated by the facts that only 123 students per year are graduating with two-year degrees in the area, as shown in Table 1, and there are 748 openings in Whatcom County. Even with 123 students graduating with two-year degrees in the area, most positions require a bachelor's degree, and the area only produces 217 students graduating with four-year degrees (see Table 1). Thus, the workforce gap is clearly evident ($748 - 217 =$ gap of 531). The proposed BAS degree will help to address the workforce gap for area employers.

Table 1. Annual supply of graduates from business-related two-year and four-year degree programs in Northwest Washington state (Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties).

Institution	Two-year programs	Two-year graduates	Four-year programs	Four-year graduates
Western Washington University	N/A	0	Business management	190
Whatcom Community College	Business administration	20	Applied business management BAS not yet approved	0
	Accounting, finance, hospitality and tourism	15		
Bellingham Technical College	Accounting, admin. / legal assistant	30	Operations management BAS (the first cohort graduated in 2018)	2
Skagit Valley College	Multiple business degree options	50	Applied management BAS (program is starting, so no graduates to date)	0
Northwest Indian College	Business and entrepreneurship, and public and tribal governance	8	Tribal governance and business management BA	25
	Total	123	Total	217

	<p>The proposed BAS degree at WCC will provide a unique focus not found at nearby WWU or other regional two-year colleges, in that it is specifically geared for the workforce needs of small to medium-sized businesses which make up the majority of Whatcom County’s employer community. It will also serve working adults and budding entrepreneurs who wish to stay and progress in or grow their businesses in Whatcom County – a requested focus of current students enrolled in WCC’s two-year business programs. There are currently no other face-to-face four-year business management degree options in Whatcom County accepting new students; and BTC’s online business-related BAS in operations management is focused on manufacturing processes and information technology as opposed to the variety of other businesses in the county described previously (retail, healthcare, construction, food processing, etc.). SVC now offers a four-year management degree that is substantively different in both content and pedagogical approach; and WWU’s business management program is currently full, with no plans for expansion, according to program representatives. The current demand for four-year graduates with applied business management skills and knowledge will not be met locally without the addition of the BAS degree at WCC.</p> <p>Affordability is another important consideration for regional students. Graduating with a bachelor’s degree from a regional university would cost approximately \$33,252 (in tuition and fees only), one-third more than the cost of four years earning a bachelor’s degree at WCC (estimated at approximately \$22,492 in tuition and fees only). The lack of local private four-year schools and limited public school options severely limits the number of students who can afford to attend either option and underscores the need for local efficient educational pathways.</p>
<p>OR, if demand information is not available or it is a new/emerging/changing occupation, **</p>	
<p>For demand: Provide employer survey results for local demand for the targeted occupation job title(s) to support the demand and education level for the program. <u>Survey requirements are listed below.</u></p>	<p>N/A</p>

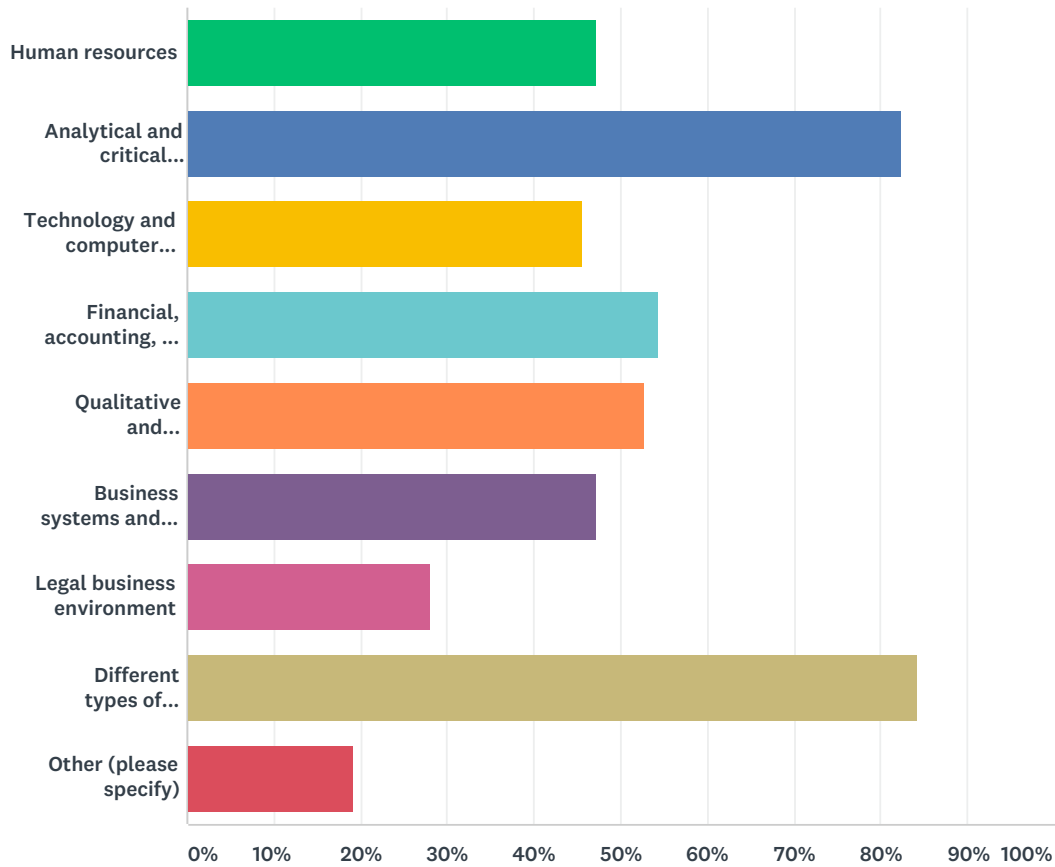
<p>For supply gap: Provide employer survey results for local supply for the targeted occupation job title(s) to support that there is a gap in the number of qualified applicants available to fill jobs. <u>Survey requirements are listed below.</u></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>OR, if based on a statutory or accreditation requirement, **</p>	
<p>Select one: Statutory Requirement <input type="checkbox"/> or Accreditation Requirement <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>For demand: Provide labor market information on the current education requirements for the job, including evidence of recent openings for requiring or preferring bachelor's degrees or above. Cite the statute or certifying body, your proposed program is based upon that has specified a bachelor's or above in the field is needed.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p>For supply gap: Provide employer survey results for local supply for the targeted occupation job title(s) to support that there is a gap or that employers anticipate a gap in the number of qualified applicants that will be available to fill jobs with the new requirements. <u>Survey requirements are listed below.</u></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>* Demand is defined by state law as <i>“an occupation with a <u>substantial number of current or projected employment opportunities.</u>”</i> **Applications may include information related to more than one option (i.e., labor market data to support the local demand for the occupation and a local employer survey to support that there is a gap in the number of qualified applicants available to fill jobs).</p>	

Appendix B: Results of the summer 2018 survey of Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce members regarding the proposed BAS degree in Business Management

Q1 For someone in or aspiring to be in a supervisory or management role at your company, which of the following skills are most essential? (check all that apply)

Answered: 57 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Human resources	47.37% 27
Analytical and critical thinking (applicable to management of a business or industry)	82.46% 47
Technology and computer software	45.61% 26
Financial, accounting, and statistical analysis	54.39% 31
Qualitative and quantitative data analysis (to assess organizational performance to make informed decisions)	52.63% 30
Business systems and structure for planning and decision-making	47.37% 27
Legal business environment	28.07% 16
Different types of leadership and communication for appropriate business need	84.21% 48
Other (please specify)	19.30% 11
Total Respondents: 57	

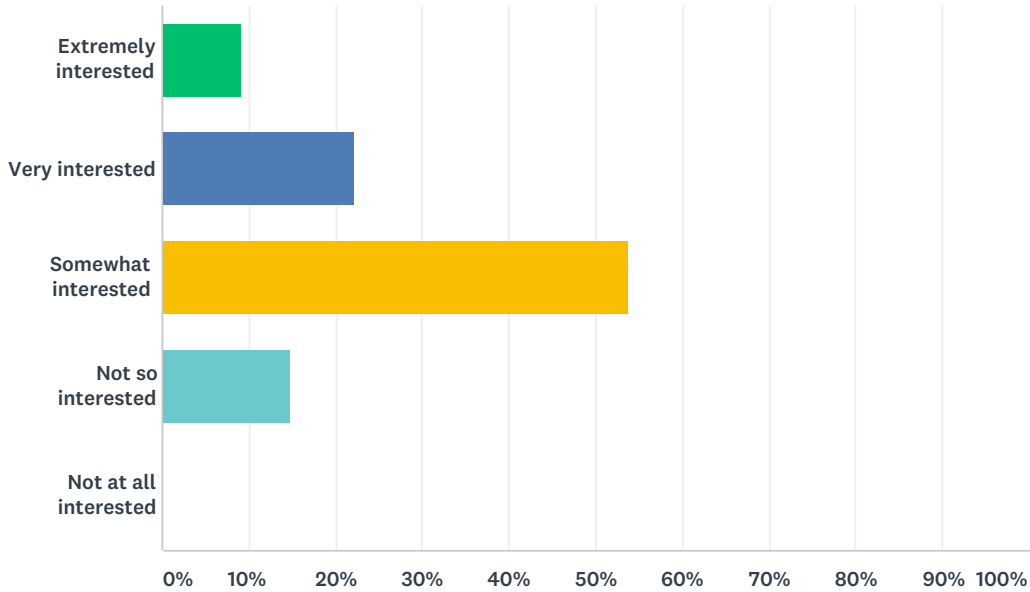
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
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BAS in Business Management - employer survey

1	Must be a "peoples person" and like to communicate with all types of people.	6/18/2018 12:31 PM
2	Networking	6/18/2018 12:31 PM
3	Add a non-profit component too -differences from for-profit and how they function.	6/18/2018 11:33 AM
4	People skills - able to work with vast variety of personalities (including but not limited to people with reduced self-aware skills and temperamental (think artists)	6/18/2018 11:31 AM
5	People skills, ability to work well in teams. Everyone here works their way up from the "bottom" if they want to manaage.	6/18/2018 11:09 AM
6	Risk Management	6/16/2018 10:11 AM
7	Risk Management	6/16/2018 10:00 AM
8	Social media skills	6/15/2018 5:40 PM
9	People skills	6/15/2018 3:23 PM
10	Demonstrative Good attitude	6/15/2018 3:19 PM
11	ability to supervise, train, develop, lead	6/15/2018 3:12 PM

Q2 Are you, or is someone in your company, interested in an increased supply of locally available talent with a bachelor-level degree in business management?

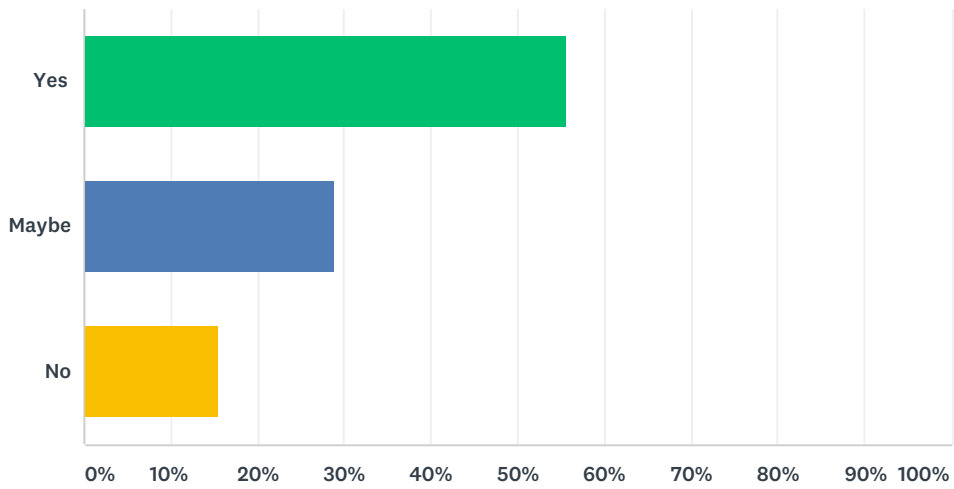
Answered: 54 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely interested	9.26%	5
Very interested	22.22%	12
Somewhat interested	53.70%	29
Not so interested	14.81%	8
Not at all interested	0.00%	0
TOTAL		54

Q3 Do you anticipate hiring or promoting one or more people into supervisory or management roles within the next 5-8 years?

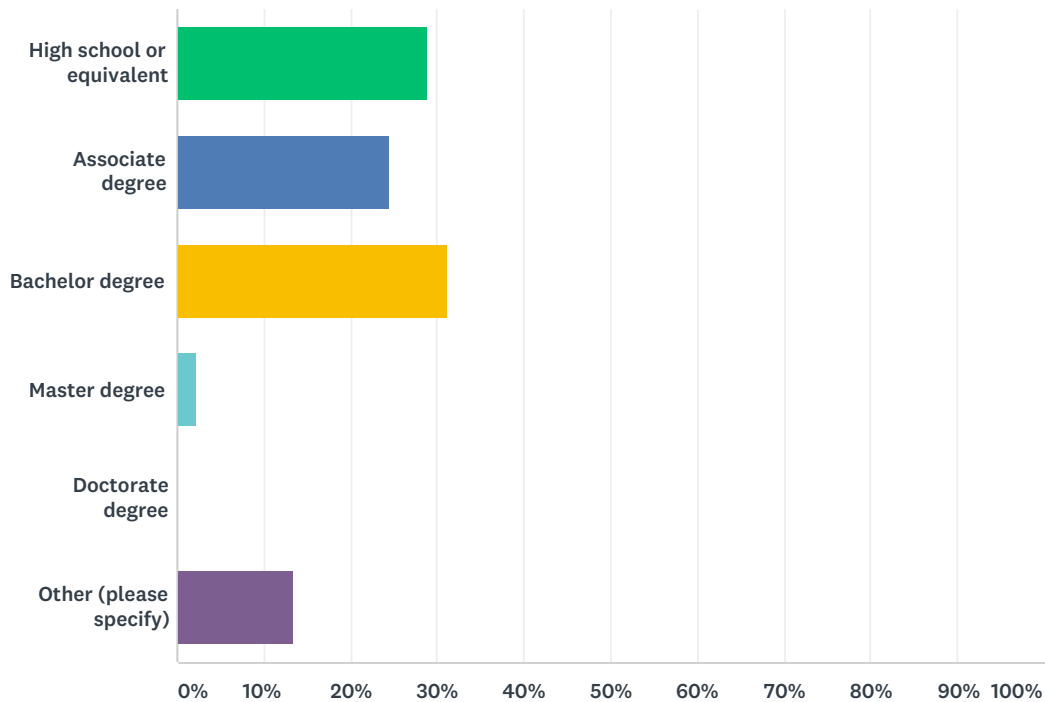
Answered: 45 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	55.56%	25
Maybe	28.89%	13
No	15.56%	7
TOTAL		45

Q4 What is the minimum level of education required at your company for people in supervisory or management roles?

Answered: 45 Skipped: 12

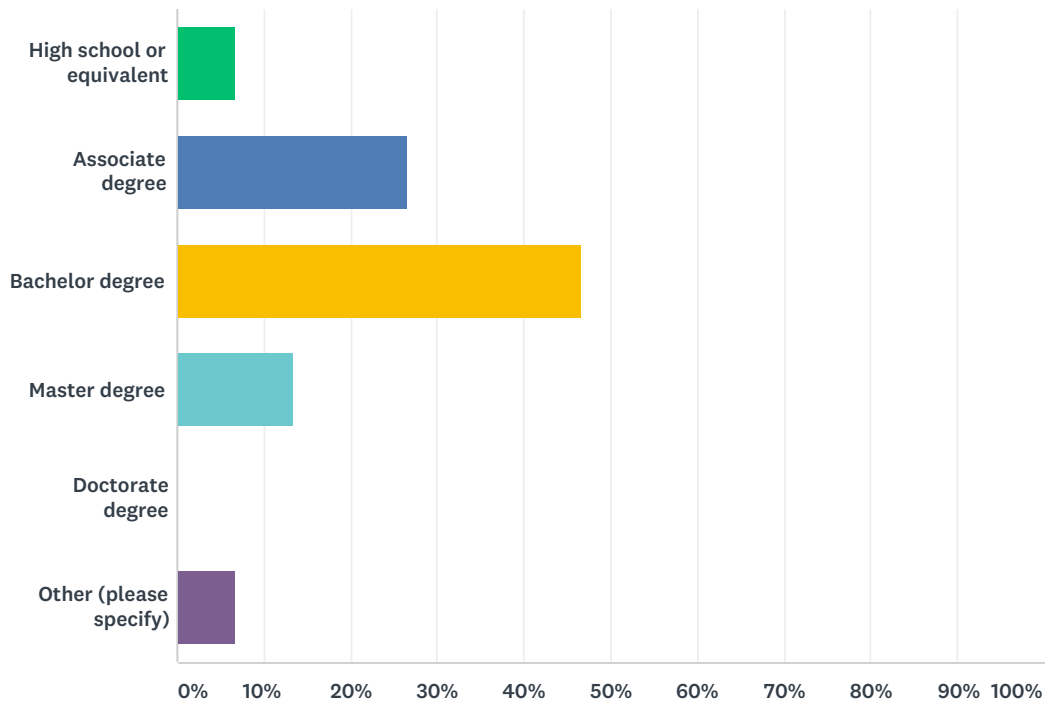


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
High school or equivalent	28.89%	13
Associate degree	24.44%	11
Bachelor degree	31.11%	14
Master degree	2.22%	1
Doctorate degree	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	13.33%	6
TOTAL		45

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	industry experience	6/16/2018 7:12 PM
2	Experience	6/16/2018 1:58 PM
3	Associate degree with experience.	6/15/2018 5:42 PM
4	Bachelor preferred, or, experience (2-5 yrs)	6/15/2018 4:23 PM
5	We provide on the job training, but for some positions a background in an office setting is preferred	6/15/2018 3:23 PM
6	Business experience is more important in our field	6/15/2018 1:26 PM

Q5 What is the minimum level of education preferred at your company for people in supervisory or management roles?

Answered: 45 Skipped: 12

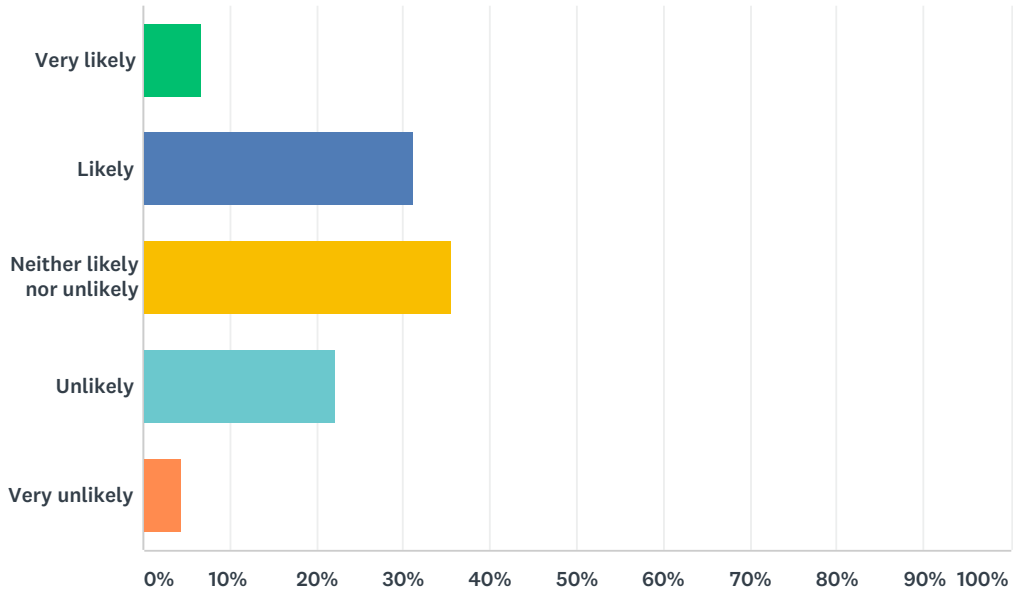


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
High school or equivalent	6.67%	3
Associate degree	26.67%	12
Bachelor degree	46.67%	21
Master degree	13.33%	6
Doctorate degree	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	6.67%	3
TOTAL		45

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	The skill set is more important than degree - example military often have skill set without degrees	6/18/2018 11:35 AM
2	Experience- companies should have apprenticeships	6/16/2018 1:58 PM
3	Bachelor preferred, or, experience (2-5 yrs)	6/15/2018 4:23 PM

Q6 How likely would you or your company recommend one or more current employees enroll in a BAS degree in business management if offered locally at WCC?

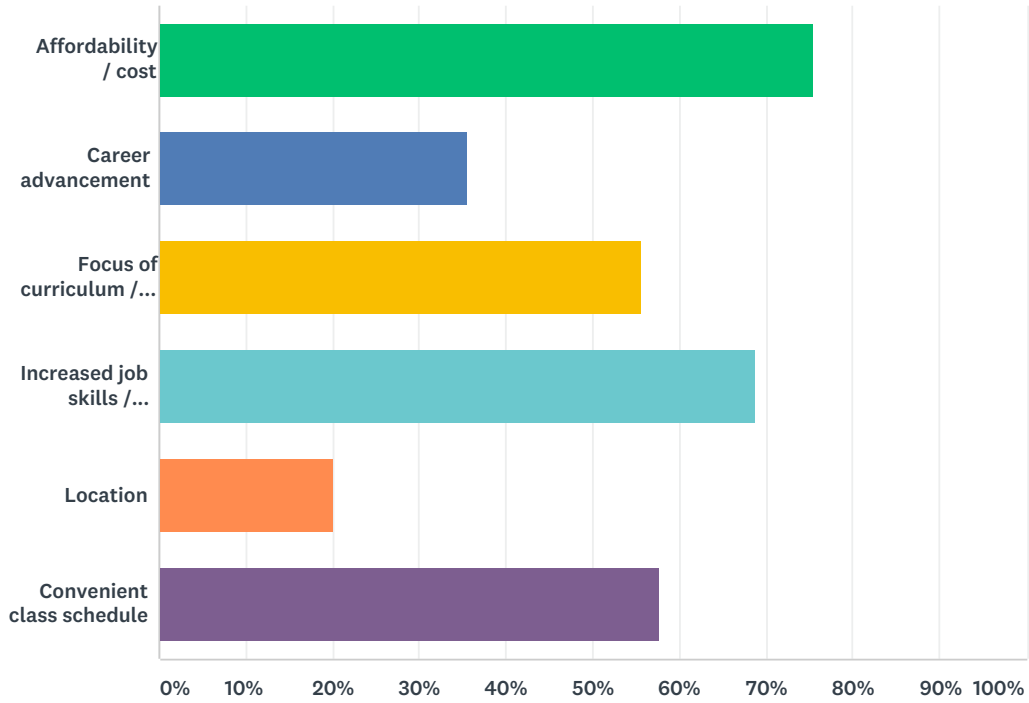
Answered: 45 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very likely	6.67%	3
Likely	31.11%	14
Neither likely nor unlikely	35.56%	16
Unlikely	22.22%	10
Very unlikely	4.44%	2
TOTAL		45

Q7 Which of these factors would be important to you in making a decision to enroll or send personnel to a BAS degree in business management at WCC? (check all that apply)

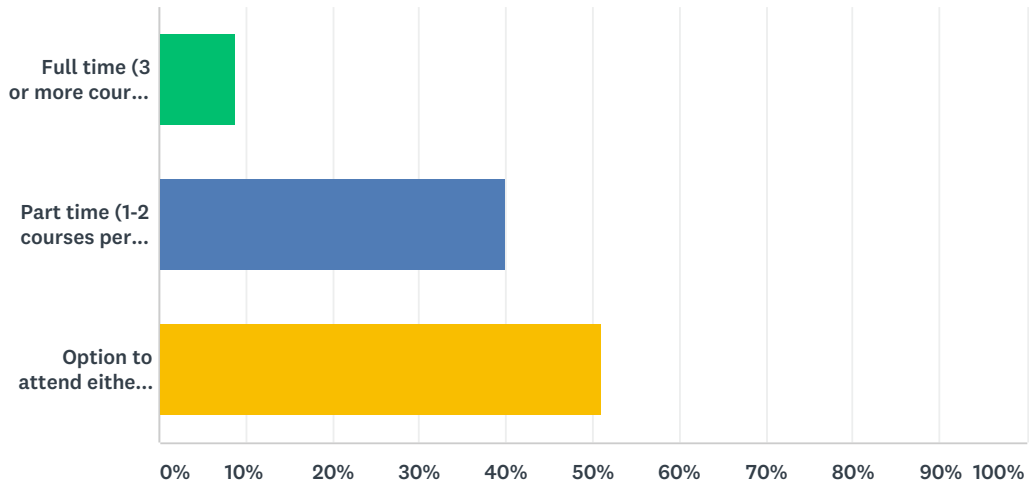
Answered: 45 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Affordability / cost	75.56%	34
Career advancement	35.56%	16
Focus of curriculum / courses offered	55.56%	25
Increased job skills / marketability	68.89%	31
Location	20.00%	9
Convenient class schedule	57.78%	26
Total Respondents: 45		

Q8 Would the preference be to attend a BAS program at WCC full time or part time?

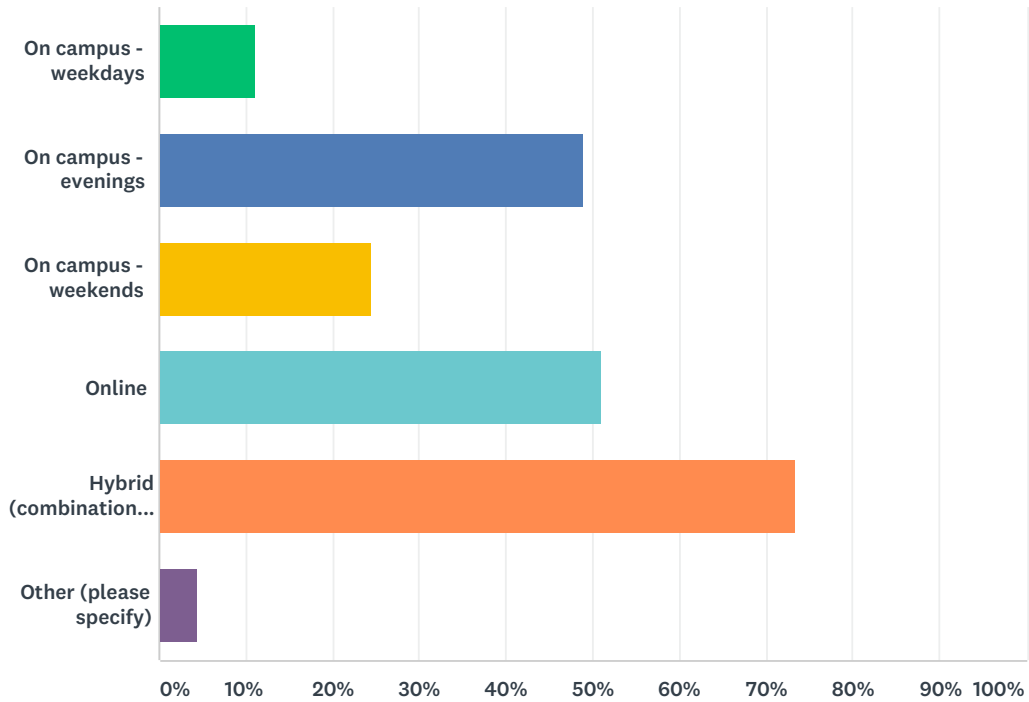
Answered: 45 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Full time (3 or more courses per quarter; quickest time to degree completion)	8.89%	4
Part time (1-2 courses per quarter)	40.00%	18
Option to attend either full time or part time, depending on schedule	51.11%	23
TOTAL		45

Q9 What is the preferred method and timing of attendance? (check all that apply)

Answered: 45 Skipped: 12

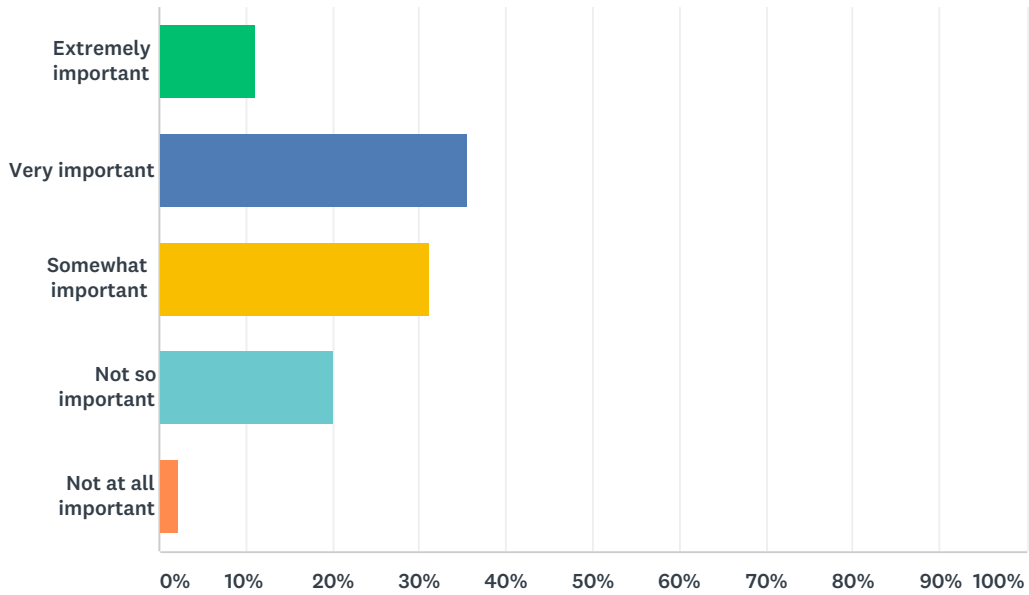


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
On campus - weekdays	11.11%	5
On campus - evenings	48.89%	22
On campus - weekends	24.44%	11
Online	51.11%	23
Hybrid (combination of online course work with face-to-face class meetings for labs and some instruction)	73.33%	33
Other (please specify)	4.44%	2
Total Respondents: 45		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	practicing with people is important - can't do that online	6/18/2018 11:35 AM
2	required response	6/15/2018 3:25 PM

Q10 Indicate the level of importance of including an internship (on-the-job training) as part of the BAS degree program.

Answered: 45 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	11.11%	5
Very important	35.56%	16
Somewhat important	31.11%	14
Not so important	20.00%	9
Not at all important	2.22%	1
TOTAL		45

Q11 What final thoughts regarding this proposal would you like to share with WCC?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 45

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I would like to see a course leading towards a degree in Real Estate	6/18/2018 12:35 PM
2	Diversity in businesses and approaches is important. With so many small/mid size companies that do things their way understanding adaptability and how to blend the 'the ideal' with the current design without alienating the original management.	6/18/2018 11:41 AM
3	I think 4 year degree program of this type is a much needed offering here in Whatcom County, where many are turned away from WWU due to a variety of reasons but mostly due to maxed enrollment.	6/18/2018 11:36 AM
4	Companies should offer paid apprenticeships. I have attended WCC for one semester and I didn't see much useful learning going on. But I feel this way about most schools.	6/16/2018 2:00 PM
5	If the employer helps to underwrite the cost for the employee, they would be wise to obtain an employment commitment from the employee.	6/16/2018 10:16 AM
6	If the employer is helping to underwrite the employee's expense, would recommend they get a reasonable employment commitment from the employee. Otherwise, the employee is likely to seek a supervisory position elsewhere.	6/16/2018 10:10 AM
7	I represent the Washington Hospitality Association. We work directly with hoteliers and restaurant operators. There is a demand for more management skilled workers in Whatcom and Skagit Counties b	6/16/2018 9:54 AM
8	Internships and volunteer positions are a great way to show us that students work well.	6/15/2018 5:43 PM
9	I LOVE this idea of obtaining a Bachelor's Business degree at WCC!!! I might think about going back to school!!	6/15/2018 4:25 PM
10	I think it is a great.	6/15/2018 4:11 PM
11	Will you provide any opportunities/incentives/perks for returning Business Administration Alumni?	6/15/2018 3:25 PM
12	I think this could be a cool program. We have been impressed with the Leadership Skagit model as an alternative to an actual degree program.	6/15/2018 3:14 PM

Q12 Provide your contact information if you would like to receive updates regarding the development of WCC's BAS degree in business management. (optional)

Answered: 13 Skipped: 44

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name	100.00%	13
Company	92.31%	12
Address	0.00%	0
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	0.00%	0
State/Province	0.00%	0
ZIP/Postal Code	0.00%	0
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	92.31%	12
Phone Number	84.62%	11

#	NAME	DATE
1	Nichole Lewis	6/18/2018 2:01 PM
2	Ann Damani	6/18/2018 11:41 AM
3	Julie N. Guay	6/18/2018 11:36 AM
4	Terri Sirmans	6/18/2018 9:11 AM
5	Cynda Quinn Bennett	6/16/2018 7:14 PM
6	LeAna Osterman	6/16/2018 10:16 AM
7	LeAna Osterman	6/16/2018 10:10 AM
8	Kim Hildahl	6/16/2018 9:54 AM
9	Bernadette J Zuzarte	6/15/2018 5:43 PM
10	Sherrie Turner	6/15/2018 4:25 PM
11	Jeri Andrews	6/15/2018 4:11 PM
12	Sydney Sutterfield	6/15/2018 3:25 PM
13	CJ Seitz	6/15/2018 9:54 AM

#	COMPANY	DATE
1	Profection Painting Inc	6/18/2018 2:01 PM
2	Simmering Tava	6/18/2018 11:41 AM
3	Blue Skies for Children	6/18/2018 11:36 AM
4	Holiday Inn Express	6/18/2018 9:11 AM
5	QM Transport/ Evergreen Town Car	6/16/2018 7:14 PM
6	Multiple nonprofit organizations	6/16/2018 10:16 AM

BAS in Business Management - employer survey

7	Multiple nonprofit organizations	6/16/2018 10:10 AM
8	WA Hospitality Association	6/16/2018 9:54 AM
9	Not for Profit civil legal assistance for low-income residents.	6/15/2018 5:43 PM
10	Whatcom County Pregnancy Clinic	6/15/2018 4:25 PM
11	Andrews Tax Accounting	6/15/2018 4:11 PM
12	Signs Plus Inc.	6/15/2018 3:25 PM

#	ADDRESS	DATE
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There are no responses.

#	ADDRESS 2	DATE
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There are no responses.

#	CITY/TOWN	DATE
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There are no responses.

#	STATE/PROVINCE	DATE
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There are no responses.

#	ZIP/POSTAL CODE	DATE
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There are no responses.

#	COUNTRY	DATE
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There are no responses.

#	EMAIL ADDRESS	DATE
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#	PHONE NUMBER	DATE
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