

Division for Economic and Workforce Development/ Continuing Education

Blue Ridge Community College is able to respond quickly and flexibly to the educational needs of Henderson and Transylvania counties through continuing education programs. The Division offers a wide variety of courses and services vital to the health and economic well-being of the community. A major emphasis is entry level and incumbent training for workers in area businesses and public agencies. Seven Departments carry out the Division's mission: Allied Health and Emergency Services, Personal Enrichment, Work-Based Learning and Human Resources Development, Corporate and Customized Training, NCWorks, Law Enforcement Training, and the Small Business Center. These departments develop courses and services based on requests from local businesses, agencies, and community members. Course descriptions are available in current course schedules for viewing online or in printed format upon request.

The College welcomes requests and suggestions for additional continuing education courses or services. Please contact the Division for Economic and Workforce Development/Continuing Education at (828) 694-1735 or send an email to ewdce@blueridge.edu.

Emergency Services

These programs provide training in a variety of health and emergency services occupations. Programs include training for firefighters, emergency services personnel, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and emergency management personnel. Courses are designed to provide training from entry level to more advanced levels and to prepare students to sit for the required certification examinations as mandated by Office of Emergency Medical Services and Office of State Fire Marshal.

Work Based Learning (formerly Cooperative Education)

Work Based Learning (WBL) is an educational program that combines classroom instruction with practical work experience directly related to the student's curriculum. This combined classroom study and work experience is a meaningful way for students to practice skills they have learned in their programs of study while earning college credit.

Corporate Training

This program provides an array of open enrollment non-curriculum occupational training courses to quickly prepare area workers to meet the demands of businesses in the community. Short term skills training includes courses in supervisory development, advanced manufacturing, machining, welding, small engine repair and event planning. Emphasis is placed where possible on earning stackable state or national credentials.

Computers: Various levels and types of computer training are available each semester from basic computer software and hardware application skills to more advanced digital media skills.

Distance Learning: Online classes on a variety of topics are available each semester. Courses available online include Computer Training, various Education topics, Medical Billing, Coding and transcription courses and course topics on many Business Applications.

The Corporate Training Institute: Designed to offer career development training for professionals from local business and industry, the Institute is based on 4 areas of professional skills: Human Resources, Leadership, Continuous Improvement and Safety.

Occupational Spanish: Spanish courses are designed for professional or occupational development and are available in three distinct formats. The first is a 12-course series designed for students with an interest in developing reading, writing, verbal, and listening skills needed for eventual fluency in Spanish. The second is a series of workplace Spanish courses designed for those who need to learn specific vocabulary and phrases for use at their job. The third option is a customized Spanish course that can be developed for a specific organization's needs.

Customized Training

The Customized Training Program supports economic development efforts by providing education and training opportunities for eligible businesses and industries at no cost to the company. The program provides customized training assistance in support of full-time production and direct customer service positions in the service area, thereby enhancing the growth potential of companies while simultaneously preparing local the workforce with the skills essential to successful employment in emerging industries.

Development and Personal Enrichment

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

Arida Arts Symposium: This annual event honors North Carolina artists and their contributions to the arts. All events are funded by the Gamil T. Arida Endowment Fund through Blue Ridge Community College Educational Foundation and are free to the public.

Blue Ridge Center for Lifelong Learning: The Blue Ridge Center for Lifelong Learning was established at Blue Ridge Community College in January 1991. In this member-directed organization, persons of diverse backgrounds come together to share a common interest in learning in an environment of sharing and fellowship. Any adult may become a member for a fee of \$70 per year. Members can attend a variety of course offerings for a nominal fee and may also participate in travel opportunities. The College supports the Center by providing classroom and office space as well as administrative services.

Blue Ridge Concert Series: This series features highly-acclaimed classical artists of national renown as well as a concert by musicians from around the world who are studying at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

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

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

Music by the Lake: Each summer monthly concerts take place beside the College Lake. These Sunday evening concerts feature a wide range of musical and vocal groups. The public is invited to bring lawn chairs and picnics to enjoy the music by the lake.

Environmental Health and Safety Institute (EHSI)

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

Human Resources Development (HRD)

The HRD program provides short-term, pre-vocational training and counseling to help unemployed and under-employed adults successfully enter the workforce or pursue further training for career change. The goal of HRD is to teach individuals the skills necessary for obtaining and maintaining employment and management of lifestyle changes that can be associated with it. This goal is achieved through classes which develop communication skills; improve self-esteem; develop positive life attitudes, and explore the impact of habits and behavioral strengths and weaknesses as they relate to decision making, conflict resolution, and working as a member of a team. HRD designs a wide variety of classes to meet the needs of employers and enhance the student's ability to become a qualified worker.

Law Enforcement

The advanced and mandated programs provide in-service training for current NC sworn law officers, detention officers, or telecommunicators. Online certificate programs assist current law enforcement officers in areas such as law enforcement leadership and death investigations.

Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) program, advanced and mandated training and a variety of online certificate programs are available through this department. The BLET program prepares students for the required state examination and is designed to give students the essential skills required for entry-level employment as law enforcement officers with state, county, or municipal governments, or private enterprise, governed by the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission and or North Carolina Sheriff's Education and Training Standards Commission.

NCWorks Career Centers

Located on the Henderson County Campus in the Continuing Education Building, Room 125, and on the Transylvania campus in the Straus Building provide a comprehensive system of services to area job seekers and businesses. Workforce Development Professionals from Blue Ridge Community College, Mountain Area Workforce Development, and the Department of Commerce Division of Workforce Solutions collaborate to offer career planning, training, placement, and business services. The Centers have an "open door" policy and serves anyone regardless of age or income level. NCWorks Career Centers are committed to building an integrated economic and workforce development system in Henderson County and Transylvania Counties which effectively pools the resources of diverse partner agencies and delivers optimal quality, customer focused services. The Centers assist job seekers in choosing career direction, identifying training programs and funding, refining job seeking skills, finding employment and career progression. Services to job seekers include:

Career assessments/exploration and career counseling

Employment coaching

Job-seeking skills workshops

ACT@ WorkKeys Assessment in Communication, Problem Solving, Interpersonal and Personal Skills

Preparation for and issuance of the North Carolina Career Readiness Certificate

Workplace skills enhancement using Career Ready 101 curriculum

Job readiness skills training

Job search strategies

Job referral

Internet access to employment and training resources

Information on community resources

Resume consultation and preparation

Computer software tutorials and assessments

Workforce Investment Act (WOIA) job training assistance funding as well as other scholarships and grants

On-site Division of Workforce Solutions services

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

ACT® WorkKeys Profiling on Nine Comprehensive Workplace Skills

ACT® WorkKeys Assessment of all Twelve Cognitive and Interpersonal Skills

Workplace skill enhancement using Career Ready 101 curriculum

Online Job Listing Service through College Central Network and NCWorks Online

On-the-Job Training

Human Resource Consultation

On-site job fairs

On-site interviewing

Computer software tutorials and assessments

Compilation or review of Employee Handbooks

Conducting Wage and Benefits Surveys

Small Business Center (SBC)

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

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