

**Diesel Power Technology
Advisory Committee**

Meeting Date: March 5, 2025

Time: 12:15pm

External Participants:

Kelly Quaintance – Director Human Resources – Fire Service, Inc.
Greg Gonda – Service Manager – Fire Service, Inc.
Tamara Roubisoff – Business Manager – Rochelle RTC
TJ Stahl – Service Manager – CIT Trucks
Eric Christian – Regional Service Manager – AHW, LLC.
Sandy Seyller – Coordinator Human Resources – AHW, LLC.
Mike McElmeel – President – Bobcat of Rockford
Scott Kingren – Service Manager – Vermeer Midwest
Bill Pruitt – Shop Manager – Vermeer Midwest
Jeff Burfield – Service Manager – Lakeside International Trucks
George Orth – Maintenance Manager – RMTD
Steve Deller – VP Product Support – West Side Tractor
Nathan Durham – General Manager – Equipment Depot

Internal participants:

Barbara Leach – Vice President of Instruction
Chase Budziak – Dean of Instruction
Jescelynn Gibbons – Associate Dean of Instruction
LaCretia Konan – Associate Vice President of College Relations
Mark Engel – Diesel Power Technology Faculty
Tricia Troyer – Coordinator Truck Driver Training
Terry Lyn Funston – Director of Curriculum & Program Development
Laura Gregory – Coordinator of Employment & Job Placement Services
Catherine Macias – Administrative Specialist

- I. Program Update
 - A. Review Previous Meeting
 - B. Spring 2025 Enrollment
 - i. College enrollment is up 11.3% credit hours over Spring 2024. Pre-Covid Levels.
 - ii. DPT at 571 credit hours in Spring 2025.
 - 1. 14.2% increase over Spring 2024 (71 credit hours = 4.7 Full-time equivalent).

2. The numbers do not include dual credit enrollment.

C. Upcoming Events

- i. Informational Meetings for Fall 2025 (held at the Kish Caukin Building)
 1. Thursday, March 20th at 7:00pm and Monday, March 31st at 7:00pm.
- ii. SkillsUSA Regionals
 1. 18 competed at Regionals in Diesel Equipment; Power Equipment: Heavy Equipment.
 - a. 9 students for Heavy Equipment, 5 for Power Equipment and 1 for Diesel qualified for state competition.
 2. Received the Illinois REV UP EV Grant - \$446,250 through June 2026 which will help fund tools, training materials, equipment, and safety equipment.
 - a. REV UP EV Grant will start on January 1, 2026, through June 30, 2026.
- iii. Facilities, Equipment, Supplies and Needs
 1. Diesel Power Technology Lab in Caukin building upgraded LED lighting which significantly improved visibility.
 2. There is a lack of visual aids for electric vehicle (EV) training.
 - a. The program is in need of electric vehicle parts. If employers have anything to donate, contact DPT Faculty Mark Engel.
 3. Current DPT staff operating at 25-40% over normal load capacity. DPT instructors may become a need in the next 5 years due to retirement and growth goals.

II. Department Initiatives

A. REV UP – EV Heavy-Duty Grant Update

- i. Equipment & Supplies
 1. Final quarters of the REV UP grant
 - a. The College has purchased 4 electric vehicles (Tesla, Ford Lightening, Volvo Mini Excavator, and a small wheel loader) along with other safety equipment, tools, storage, and multimeters.
 - b. The College is planning to invest in more small engines and virtual reality computers.
- ii. Curriculum Changes
 1. CDL for DPT Students – piloted in Jan 2025. 7 DPT students participated and obtained their CDL licenses.

- a. Originally CDL licensing requires a 4-week, 160-hour program. The College was able to incorporate it into the DPT program with a 56–60-hour requirement.
 - b. The Illinois Community College Board provided the Noncredit Workforce Grant for this work. The grant paid \$1500 of the tuition resulting in a \$1,000 per student cost for the CDL pilot program.
 - c. The committee shared the importance of CDL licensing and the potential to use grant funding to subsidize internship opportunities.
 - d. The College is looking into Financial Aid options for CDL certification to help offset the costs for the students.
 - e. Budziak discussed the shift to automatic versus manual in the semis, and the committee agreed it is important for students to know how to operate both systems.
- 2. Curriculum will be adjusted to 6-8 diesel power technology courses to include more emphasis on safety and new electrical standards due to the REV UP initiative.
 - a. The curriculum will be revised to focus more on the importance of technical writing skills and communication.
 - i. The College is considering the use of laptops or tablets to aid in data entry skills.
 - ii. Spring 2026 revision to ENG 109 (Technical Writing) course to focus on perfecting efficient technical writing skills.
- iii. Employer Feedback & Discussion
 - 1. Interview Day Debrief
 - a. The committee shared that this year's group of students was the best they have seen thus far.
 - b. DPT students were well prepared, conducted research on the companies they were interviewing for and engaged in meaningful two-way conversations.
 - c. The employers appreciated the timing of the event and would like to maintain the same schedule for next spring.
 - d. The Tool Day event along with panel meeting discussions for DPT careers class helped the students to be well prepared for the Interview Day event.
- iv. Promotional Banners and Foundation Fund
 - 1. Budziak will explore customizing banners with company-specific equipment images for each employer and will reach out to

advisory committee members for assistance in forming a separate committee to develop an agreement for endowment fund usage.

- a. The College DPT endowment fund that will be created with the Foundation will support offsetting costs for CDL, supporting SkillsUSA, or providing scholarships.

v. Industry Update/Employer Needs

1. Trends

- a. The committee shared that the market is flooded with warranty jobs, approaching 52% of most business at dealerships compared to under 25% in previous years.

2. Skills

- a. The committee shared the importance of students understanding electronic systems, schematics, technical writing, diagnosing issues and being able to effectively communicate with customers.
- b. The committee shared the 3-Cs in the industry (complaint, cause, and correction) for students to understand.

3. Kish Graduates/Students

- a. Laura Gregory, Coordinator of Employment & Job Placement Services, will assist employers interested in hiring interns through the Illinois Corporate Work Study Grant.