

Automotive Technology Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: November 13, 2024

Time: 5:30pm

External Participants:

Marc Schmidt – Service Manager, Tom Sparks Automotive

Meghan Huber – Owner, Motor Works

Corey Arndt – Owner, Arndt Automotive

Joe Wagner – Teacher, Hampshire High School

Dave Murphy – Operations in Service, Standard Equipment Co.

Bill White – Owner, C.A.R. Hospital

Tim Tekiela – Teacher, Kishwaukee Education Consortium

Internal Participants:

Chase Budziak – Dean of Instruction

Jescelyne Gibbons – Associate Dean of Instruction

Timothy Banasiak – Automotive Faculty

Shawn Long – Automotive Faculty

Catherine Macias – Administrative Specialist

- I. Program Update
 - A. Review Previous Meeting
 - i. In Fall 2023, committee members convened to review the midterm report for the ongoing ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) accreditation process.
 - B. Fall 2024 Enrollment
 - i. College-Wide Growth: Enrollment has increased by 7.7% compared to Fall 2023.
 - ii. Automotive Program: The Automotive Maintenance Technology (AMT) program recorded 573 credit hours in Fall 2024, reflecting a 1.6% increase (9 additional credit hours) from Fall 2023. The program enrolled 45 unique students, including a diverse student body, with over 40% identifying as Hispanic/Latinx.
 - C. Events – Past and Upcoming
 - i. DeKalb Township Senior Car Clinic (April 2024)
 1. Held on campus in partnership with DeKalb Township and the DeKalb County TRIAD.
 2. Forty senior citizens participated, receiving safety inspections and fluid top-offs for their vehicles.

3. Kishwaukee students managed the service, with sophomore students leading eight work teams under faculty supervision.
 4. The department will host the event again on April 25, 2025.
- ii. Budget – Funding & Grants
 1. Federal Perkins Grant and College Foundation Funding
 - a. Purchased 12 tool sets for student lab use to ease student costs.
 2. College Capital Funding
 - a. Acquired a used Toyota Prius in May 2024 to enhance hands-on training. Plans are underway to purchase 8 virtual/augmented reality devices to improve lecture engagement and pre-lab preparation for students. These devices will support experiential learning and industry readiness.
 3. Illinois Green Energy Network Grant
 - a. Purchased two electric vehicle (EV) safety equipment carts.
 4. REV UP Electric Vehicle Grant Application:
 - a. Submitted a \$525,000 funding request through the Illinois Community College Board.
- D. Professional Development and Staffing
 - i. Automotive faculty recently attended professional development training on electric vehicle technology.
 - ii. Faculty are evaluating and modifying the curriculum to incorporate additional content on EV and hybrid vehicles.
- II. Employer Discussion & Feedback
 - A. Accreditation Discussion – National Institute of Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Education Foundation
 - i. Committee discussed continuing accreditation with the ASE Education Foundation.
 - ii. The committee values ASE accreditation for distinguishing graduates from non-accredited institutions and setting future standards for the college.
 - iii. The College seeks the committee’s partnership support for meetings and requirements for maintaining ASE accreditation. The committee agrees to support the automotive program.
 - iv. The committee recommends that the College explore ASE Education Foundation accreditation in fiscal years 2025 and 2026.
- III. Partner Updates
 - A. Trends

- i. While electric vehicles are not yet common in local shops, hybrid vehicles are increasingly prevalent.
 - ii. Employers emphasized the importance of effective service repair writing and its role in documentation for warranty claims and insurance transparency.
 - iii. The discussion highlighted the Technical Report Writing class that AAS students take, with employers showing interest in how the course integrates communication skills and critical thinking to ensure proper documentation processes. (Note: The technical writing course, English 109, is undergoing a redesign in Fall 2025 based on feedback from several advisory committees.)
- B. Hiring
 - i. Employers highlighted the demand for trained technicians and noted that Kishwaukee College provides an excellent foundation for employment.
 - ii. The two-year program is particularly valuable as it allows students to earn ASE certification faster, with two years of technical training substituting for one year of on-the-job experience. This is valuable as employers only hire individuals that have ASE credentials or technical training.
- C. Skills
 - i. Employers expressed interest in a light-duty diesel class, as technicians are increasingly required to work on diesel trucks.
 - ii. Fundamentals of electricity and electronics remain critical and should continue to be emphasized in the curriculum.
- D. Curriculum Feedback
 - i. Faculty are developing a hybrid drive-train course with an additional focus on safety. The committee endorsed this initiative, recognizing its relevance for student success in the evolving automotive industry.