

## FLATE Response to the National Visiting Committee 2009 Report

March 9, 2009

The FLATE leadership team and staff would like to thank the members of our National Visiting Committee (NVC) for their continued energetic support and their strong commitment to FLATE as evidenced by sincere participation in our process. This document responds to several opportunities suggested in the NVC report that was sent to NSF and FLATE after the January 2009 meeting. For convenience, the conclusion of that report is repeated here. Additionally, the reader can refer back to FLATE's Goal Status Report submitted to the NVC for the 2009 meeting and the NVC's report to FLATE and NSF following the meeting.

*“Conclusion: The members of the FLATE National Visiting Committee members continue to be proud of our association with this exemplary effort in technological education reformation. We retain a high degree of respect and admiration for the staff and commend them for their candor in reporting to the committee. The evidence before the NVC is that FLATE has accomplished its stated goal of reforming manufacturing oriented technical education in its original target region of central Florida and stands poised to export this reform mission to a broader market encompassing the entire state.*

*Once again, it is without reservation that the NVC stands unanimously behind FLATE, confident in its ability to accomplish its stated goals and objectives. As always, we wish to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the FLATE Executive Committee and staff and want to thank them for all submissions in support of this report.”*

Our response follows the flow of the NVC's written report, interjecting other relevant requests and advice we heard during appropriate related discussions at the NVC meeting. We have also responded to opportunities not included in the written report that were presented during the oral debriefing after the NVC closed session.

### Outreach

1. Although FLATE usually considers its activities with community colleges to implement the new Engineering Technology Degree as curriculum activities, the NVC chose to include it under outreach in their report, so we will respond here. With respect to the question of getting the degree implemented in more colleges, we appreciate the directive, however the implementation process is slow, as most academic professionals will acknowledge. The ET Frameworks were approved in January of 2007 by the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE). Four colleges are now using these frameworks and started offering courses during the 2008-2009 academic year. One additional school adopted in November 2008, bringing the number to 5 colleges. FLATE continues to work with other colleges across the state as they proceed through the adoption process. Although a summary was provided in the Goal Status Report, a table showing adoption progress at community colleges in Florida will be included in FLATE annual evaluation report. We believe we have disseminated the degree to all community colleges in Florida. Not all colleges have a local need for the Engineering Technology Degree.

2. We will reach out to get on the agenda of the State Occupational Deans in either June or October this year. However, the NVC should understand that this particular organization deals with many other technical programmatic areas besides engineering technologies including health sciences, community services, and business technologies. Most of these programs are larger than Engineering Technology. The effort may provide few, if any additional college interested in adoption of the degree. There are several colleges that are somewhat interested, but have not been motivated to adopt yet for various reasons. With this background, the FLATE leadership is not sure it would be worth an industry partner's time to join such a presentation, but will be in contact with Don Gugliuzza, who offered to assist with identifying an industry partner or attend himself as this opportunity develops.
3. Once we evaluate the degree of success of such a presentation to the Occupational Deans, we will consider a similar presentation to the college presidents via the Council of Presidents. We hope the NVC realizes that in the current economic climate, the college presidents are very pre-occupied with keeping their institutions afloat and emerging technologies and new/revised programs may not spark any interest in the near future. An alternative may be to try to bring some college presidents to the MAF summit for even more exposure to the industry sector and engage them in that venue with professionals in the manufacturing industry.

### **Curriculum**

1. To feed the pipeline, FLATE spent a lot of time, effort and energy in 2008 working with industry, the FLDOE, and other stakeholders to develop a new secondary and post-secondary vocational (PSAV) curriculum framework that seamlessly aligns with the Engineering Technology AS/AAS degree. That work was completed in the fall of 2008 in conjunction with the Manufacturing cluster Working Group at the FLDOE. The framework is up for final approval in March for implementation in the 2009-10 academic year. Several high schools have requested information and we anticipate 2-4 adoptions for 2009-10 as their framework adoption window occurs within the next 6-8 weeks. We will continue to promote the new HS framework first to partner feeder high schools of colleges that have adopted the ET degree, then expanding to others with related technical programs. We will also engage colleges with the ET Degree to reach out to their own feeder secondary programs. Our next effort will be to engage the PSAV programs at technical schools. This is a education delivery group that FLATE needs to develop a better relationship with. Both secondary programs and technical school programs that use these frameworks can provide a pool of students for local ET Degree programs.
2. The FLATE leadership believes that it has developed and disseminated a national model for career and education pathways using industry certification based articulation by the many accepted papers and presentations and the many informational requests we have received about it. We have given a number of presentations at national and regional venues, several of which included a published paper in the proceedings, and all of which have been posted on our FLATE website. Additionally, we believe we have a significant amount of information on our website about the degree program with supporting documentation and other resources. Regional and national venues have included Florida Technology Teachers Association

(FTEA); Florida Association of Career and Technical Education (FACTE); American Association of Engineering Education (ASEE); Conference for Industry and Education Collaboration (CIEC); League for Innovation; National Conference on Workforce Education, and the Advanced Manufacturing Workforce Development Summit. Dissemination will continue in this fashion as opportunities arise.

### **Professional Development**

The FLATE leadership is unclear about how its engagement of the rising technology teachers can be an effective dissemination or professional development strategy. Most programmatic changes in secondary schools are initiated by Career and Technical Education administrators who interact with their communities. New secondary technical teachers rarely have the opportunity to choose to set up a new program, e.g., one that would feed into the Engineering Technology Degree. Although it might be inappropriate to engage all rising technology teachers as a collective group, we will identify the appropriate subgroups and offer them MSSC CPT Certification information and professional development. On the advice of the NVC, the FLATE leadership will re-explore connections with the Technology Education divisions of the College of Education at the state colleges and universities and report to the NVC next winter.

### **Quality Assessment**

The FLATE leadership will forward our annual evaluation report to the NVC committee when it is completed and submitted to NSF (April 30, 2009) that document is intended to answer all questions about outcomes. A summary of the results from the joint FLATE/Banner Center Stakeholders Summit is appended to this document. A draft working organization chart outlining a comprehensive workforce education and development organization is also appended.

### **NVC**

Several ideas related to the meeting format, agenda and venue were suggested. We understand that the call for change might actually be evidence that FLATE, including our National Visiting Committee and other committees, has matured to a new level and, with that, our old meeting formats and typical agenda no longer are effective. We look forward to our challenges and changes. We heard and read the following suggestions for future meetings.

- Ensure that industry representation is  $\geq 50\%$  (currently at 45%) and includes more of the state; include Tropicana and possibly the IAC committee chairperson. Don G offered to work with the FLATE leadership and would provide a matrix of members (sector/size of company/location/etc)
- Develop a 1-hour on-boarding session for new members (Drs. Ryan and Barger)
- Have IAC chairperson provide an annual report/update to NVC
- Explore alternative schedule for the NVC meeting
- Include more reports directly from partners and staff (e.g., the IAC suggestion above)
- Report directly on outcomes and key performance indicators
- Explore an east coast of Florida venue for 2010, if cost is not prohibitive.

The FLATE leadership and staff all thank the committee members for the continued advice, advocacy, and assessment. You are an integral part of our organization and we truly appreciate your time, energy and enthusiasm for FLATE and its initiatives. We will be in contact during the year to report on our progress. In the meantime, I am seeking 1 or 2 volunteers from the NVC to work with me on an ad hoc committee this year to help revamp the format of our NVC meeting for 2010.

Sincerely submitted,

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