Competency-Based Education: “The Skunk Works”
A Competency Based MBA Degree

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Mission
To provide flexible, high-quality, collegiate learning opportunities for self-directed adults.

Purpose
Provide diverse and alternative methods of achieving a collegiate education of the highest quality for mature adults.
The 21st higher education market is like no other in educational history.

- Colleges and universities are being called upon to operate in increasingly complex environments
  - Rapid changes in educational requirements
  - Industry mandates for workforce readiness
  - Diminishing federal and state funding sources.

- This presents some unique challenges for institutions
  - Maintaining program quality and content relevance
  - Experimenting with and innovating new educational strategies
  - Producing continuous value and increasing financial margins.

- These conditions challenge institutions to continually reinvent themselves in order to compete, survive and sustain.
Does this look like a diagram of educational, organizational and marketplace conditions your institution is considering or managing?
Increasingly, industry and higher education leaders are acknowledging that traditional models and methods of education do not adequately preparing college graduates for the 21st century workplace.
Competency-based education (CBE) is being piloted at a number of higher education institutions, as well as secondary schools, to determine its effectiveness in

- improving workforce readiness,
- skill transparency
- college completion.
Institutions are implementing competency-based degree several specific disciplines.

Many of the competency-based degrees are being launched in business and management.

- Argosy University
- Southern New Hampshire University
- Capella University - *FlexPath* Program
- Western Governors University

A review of the emergent competency-based literature and higher education practice suggests that business, management, and other practitioner-based degrees have emerged as the preferred topic areas for this new experimental methodology.
This discussion traces the development of Thomas Edison State College’s, School of Business and Management competency-based MBA degree.

It provides developmental insight, challenges and tips associated with curriculum development, content relevance and assessment metrics.
Phases of The Skunk Works

- Phase I - Directions, Dialogues and Discussions
- Phase II - Framing and Mechanics
  - Building a Framework that Fits
  - How Big is a Competency?
- Phase III - Doing the New Work
  - Competency Domains and Competency Statements
  - Intake Interviews and Pilot Testing
- Phase IV - Dangers of Distractions
Key Themes Framing the Discussion

- Marketplace complexity and competitive global environment
- Increasing career preparation requirements
- Industry mandates for graduate workforce readiness
- Current educational degree program relevance
- An emerging solution… *competency-based education*

*Change Provides Us With the Opportunity to be Architects or Victims of our own Future”*

*Managing at the Speed of Change (1990)*  
*Daryl Conner*
This is not the end, nor is it the beginning of the end, but perhaps, it is the end of the beginning.

Winston Churchill
Thank you for your attention and participation!

Enjoy the Conference!