

CRACTC Program Handbook  
2023-2024

*Mission: To provide high-quality Career and Technical Education opportunities and experiences regardless of school size or geography!*

*Motto: Helping prepare today's students for tomorrow's experiences!*

The Program Handbook is an outline of the basic programmatic practices and procedures in the Central Regional Area Career and Technical Center (CRACTC) in accordance with the policies administered within the Bismarck Public School (BPS) system. It contains general statements of Bismarck Public School District policy and it should not be read as including the fine details of each policy, nor as forming an express or implied contract or promise that the policies discussed in it will be applied in all cases, nor is it to be interpreted to alter, amend, or extend any of the terms of any written contract of employment existing between the employee and the district/organization. The CRACTC may add to the practices and/or procedures in the handbook or revoke or modify them from time to time. Management will try to keep the handbook current, but there may be times when policy will change before this material can be revised and published. A complete up-to-date set of district policies is available for review in the office of the Human Resource Manager for Bismarck Public Schools or online at <https://sites.google.com/a/bismarckschools.org/schoolboard/>

**Employee Status**

As “Exempt” Employees as defined in the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), CRACTC administration and instructors are paid for producing outcomes or results expected for their position regardless of the hours required. Exempt Employees are not eligible for “comp time.” For course activities that “require additional coordination and travel”, beyond the standard work day, employees can record and complete a district travel reimbursement form to receive applicable compensation; pre-approval of the program director is required.

Participation in student organization and field trip activities, are considered integral parts of these courses (where applicable), however, instructors are not eligible for additional compensation except as provided in an extra duty contract as the club advisor to the student organization; pre-approval of the program director is required.

**Course Requirements**

Course content will align with State and National standards as identified for their respective area of Career and Technical Education. Courses will be adapted as appropriate to meet specific student needs and considerations per State and Federal law.

The course instructor will develop and submit a course syllabus and course outline for all applicable courses they are teaching during the current school year to the program director, assistant director and participating students, on or prior to the first day of classes for the school year (semester two course syllabus and course outlines should be provided to the program director or assistant director in August of the current school year); it should also be made available to school administrators and course facilitators prior to the start of classes each semester as appropriate.

Course instructors will access their course daily – 5 days per week excluding school breaks and holidays. It is expected that the instructor will spend a minimum of 8 hours per week for each class working on course related content/materials. This may include interaction with students, modification of course content, contact with participating school administrators and/or facilitators, updating grades, research related to the course, and other activities related to their respective courses and school/department as necessary.

Course instructors will organize and conduct the course utilizing an approved course management system such as Moodle, Google Classroom, as approved by the program director. The Instructor will monitor and support student performance in order to enable student success. The teacher may make adjustments and adaptations to the course as appropriate to specific student needs and school considerations. The contact minutes expected for an online or ITV course is 50 minutes daily.

It is required that each instructor distribute and collect student's surveys within their course one time per applicable term per course unless otherwise preapproved by the program director; program administration may provide assistance with survey development and/or administer additional surveys to course students as deemed necessary for program information and/or feedback.

### **Course Grading**

The CRACTC grading scale will follow the unified grade scale used at Bismarck Public Schools secondary schools. The grade scale shall be; A = 92-100, B = 83-91, C = 74-82, D = 65-73, 64 and below = failing. Dual credit courses will utilize the collegiate grade scale for the applicable course. Local Administrators transferring grades to a local PowerSchool are reminded to maintain the integrity of the **letter grade**. No student will receive a modified grade unless identified in an IEP/504 or by an IEP/504 team which will determine if a modified grade is required or just accommodations in general.

Course materials/assignments will be graded within 1 week of the due date or sooner. Grades must be posted/updated on PowerSchool at least every 10 days and weekly is strongly encouraged to instructional staff.

Semester grades must be posted by 9am within five working days following the conclusion of the appropriate semester – following the CRACTC calendar. Local administrators/facilitators will be informed they will be able to access the CRACTC PowerSchool site and transfer official grades to their local PowerSchool records after that time. If there is a need to change a students' grade after the end of a semester, the instructor will notify the PowerSchool administrator, program administrations (i.e. program director/assistant director), and the appropriate school administration/facilitator of such changes as soon as possible so the changes can be made on the CRACTC PowerSchool as well as the local school's PowerSchool.

Late work

Late or missing work will be given a zero grade until submitted satisfactorily. Instructors will allow students to make up missing or late work following BPS school guidelines – 2 days for each day missed for an excused absence.

Students may receive a grade for late work up to two weeks after the assignment due date with an acceptable reason that is communicated to the teacher; if a pattern of consistent assignment tardiness is deemed by the course instructor, this privilege may be reduced or removed entirely. A percentage of the assignment grade may be immediately reduced for late work/assignments. No extensions will be given for late work/assignments given to students within the last two weeks of a given semester. Extensions for course tests/exams are at the discretion of the course instructor throughout the entire semester. Assignment and/or test “redo” or “retakes” are at the discretion of the course instructor.

Instructors will notify students and facilitators of late or missing work at least weekly or more frequently if necessary. Adjustments may be made for special circumstances with approval of the director or assigned designee.

Withdrawal and credit loss grades

If a student withdraws from a class prior to the end of 12 weeks into a semester, the grade will be recorded as a W (withdrawal, no grade, no credit). If the student withdraws after the twelve weeks the grade will be recorded as a WP (withdrawal pass, no credit) or WF (withdrawal fail, no credit, counted as an F and will count on the students’ GPA). During the first 10 days of a semester, any class that is dropped would not show up on the transcript.

**Career Ready Practices**

Career Ready Practices (CRPs) or “soft skills” are an integral part of students learning within Career and Technical Education and life. These practices or skills are the more intangible and non-technical abilities that are sought after by industry once students enter the workforce. CRACTC instructors will assess and report the following career ready practices for all students registered within their applicable courses:

- a) Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee
- b) Communicate clearly, effectively, and with reason
- c) Technical skills
- d) Teamwork/Collaboration
- e) Critical Thinking Skills

For more information on the CRPs, the individual competencies, and the rubric to be utilized for student assessment of career ready practices, go to:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1trJ\\_9zEFKpVYVSaLoJ9SO8Uy5rbAYhIV5SNk\\_eHTjE/edit?pli=1](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1trJ_9zEFKpVYVSaLoJ9SO8Uy5rbAYhIV5SNk_eHTjE/edit?pli=1)

Career Ready Practices will be assessed by course instructors at a minimum of two times per semester and submitted within the CRACTC PowerSchool site for each student enrolled in each course. CRP assessment submission dates will be provided by program administration each semester.

**Course Communications**

Course communications are a vital component to any learning platform, regardless of the mode in which it is delivered. Daily response to students is expected. There will be a maximum of 24-hour response, or 48-hour response on non-school days, to questions or other communications from students/facilitators

unless other factors could cause a delay in response. Instructors are encouraged to schedule open office hours that they would be available for email, text or video chats. If the instructor cannot adequately respond within these time frames, they must inform the student/facilitator when a more detailed response will be provided.

At the start of classes in each semester, the course instructor will send emails directly to their registered students with the student's confidential course Username and Password. Teachers will maintain a list of these in order to assist students that may lose this information. They may also contact the PowerSchool administrator for this information. Students are to be encouraged to share their CRACTC username and password with their parents; CRACTC program staff will not be sending PowerSchool login information to parents. We assume that parents will have access to their students' grades through their local school's power school site or through the school administrator who has access to the CRACTC site. Confidentiality must be maintained.

It is recommended that the use of the messaging feature within Moodle, or other course management system as approved by the program director, be used as the primary communications tool between instructors and students. These records can be used to aid in dispute/conflict resolution between students and instructors. Additional communication strategies such as videoconferencing, telephone calls/texts, other professional video applications, and/or face-to-face visits are strongly encouraged to help build rapport and professional relationship with students, especially during circumstances in which students are struggling and/or failing.

Instructors are encouraged to keep students/local facilitators/administrators informed of student progress, especially when a student is having difficulty or is not accessing their course on a regular basis and may be falling behind and/or failing. Instructors will notify students of late or missing work at least weekly or more frequently if necessary, depending on the course design. Instructors will notify school administrators and local facilitators per email when a student is failing an CRACTC class; it should not be assumed that PowerSchool grades are being accessed on a regular basis.

### **Course Activities**

Course instructors will provide learners with a reliable schedule of class activities and time frames and will communicate changes/adjustments to the schedule in a timely manner. It is expected that the instructor will access the course daily excluding holidays, school breaks or emergencies. It is expected that adequate notice will be given to students/facilitators and supervisors prior to any extended leave such as personal or professional leave and in case of personal emergencies or sick leave, that the instructor will provide information as soon as possible regarding anticipated duration.

It is strongly recommended that applicable school facilitators be informed of scheduled tests in advance to enable proper monitoring of students to ensure academic integrity.

The CRACTC will support the teachers' use of a smartphone for use in receiving and sending correspondence from students, administrators and/or facilitators. CRACTC will reimburse Instructors a maximum of \$45 per month towards cell phone and will be reimbursed to the instructor using the approved travel reimbursement form. Reimbursement for cell phone use will only be applicable during contracted time (i.e. teachers are contracted August – May, unless receiving an extra or extended contract).

## **Instructor Evaluations**

The evaluation of the instructor will include at least one administrator review utilizing the Bismarck Public Schools established rubrics and/or the CRACTC Online Faculty Evaluation rubrics annually. Instructors not contracted through Bismarck Public School will be evaluated by their local administration with input from CRACTC administration.

## **Professional Learning**

CRACTC program administration recognize the importance of professional learning to ensure awareness and application of modern instructional trends, strategies, rules/regulations, etc. CRACTC instructors are encouraged to participate in at least one professional development activity related to instruction that they would be able to apply in an online environment each year as approved by the Director. CRACTC instructional staff may be requested and/or required to participate in specific professional learning opportunities as deemed appropriate by the CRACTC administration.

## **Instructors Teaching Load**

For each section – a full year 1-credit class would be 20% FTE and a semester length 0.5-credit class would be 10% FTE. The recommended number of students per section per course will be based on the course total enrollment, the number of receiving schools served, equipment needs required for the course, tutorial time for specific student needs, and other factors deemed appropriate by the program director.

*No instructor would be expected to teach over 300 Minutes (100% time) without additional compensation. 300 minutes includes 5 sections@ 50 minutes plus 50 minutes for tutorial time.*

## **Course Development**

For each new course to be developed and implemented into CRACTC course offerings, the course instructor will receive a stipend for a semester length course and/or a full year length course, to be completed and approved a minimum of two weeks prior to the beginning of the course offering. The stipend will be based on the teacher's current salary hourly rate of 100 hours maximum for semester length courses and 200 hours maximum for yearlong courses. Course development stipends will only be provided prior to the first semester/year in which the course is administered to students.

*In the event course development includes more than one teacher, the course development stipend will be divided among participating teachers.*

## **Instructor Travel**

It will be necessary for Instructors to travel within the CRACTC area, within North Dakota and beyond as needed to fulfill the goals of their course(s). Personal vehicles will be necessary for travel more often than agency vehicles. CRACTC Instructors are encouraged to regularly make face to face visits to schools/students in their online or ITV classes. CRACTC Instructor travel, with pre-approval of the Director or Assistant Director, will be reimbursed utilizing CRACTC CTE travel reimbursement forms and established rates.

## **Alternative Work Arrangements**

Working away from the main office, career academy or other home school is not a universal benefit, and not an option to be taken lightly or at the last minute. Employees who because of their presence at

locations away from the Career Academy (Main Office) may be expected to be held accountable for work hours, and other reporting as may be requested by the Director. Instructors who believe that an alternative working arrangement or working from home will enhance their ability to teach online, may submit a formal request to the director outlining how the arrangement will benefit the CRACTC. If granted, the arrangement may be revoked at any time. The CRACTC will not be responsible for additional expenses the instructor may incur as a result of the arrangement.

**Participating Schools**

CRACTC courses and instructors will follow the CRACTC calendar as approved by the CREA Governing Board. When there are differences with the Bismarck Public Schools calendar, including professional development days, holidays and other non-school days, compromises may be necessary to meet requirements for 175 instructional days. These will especially affect instructors with Interactive Television (ITV) courses. Compromises may include providing substitutes, excusing attendance for class times, or other arrangements as approved by the program director.

Courses taught online require students to access their courses on a daily basis. We recommend that a period of the school day be set aside for that class, as with any other, but there is great flexibility in that the course can be scheduled into any open period for each individual student. Online students need to be motivated and responsible, for most students this will be their first experience in a “virtual classroom”.

**Advisory Committees**

Each program will establish and meet at least 2 times annually with a local program advisory committee as required by the State Board for Career and Technical Education. CRACTC programs are encouraged to collaborate with established Advisory Committees through Bismarck Public Schools and/or the Career Academy/Technology Center where possible and/or applicable.

**Hands-On Learning and Field Trip Opportunities**

Individual CTE courses will have required days for hands-on training and certification activities. In some instances, the instructors will arrange for regional meeting sites and travel to those sites to train students from that area. LEAs will be responsible for providing the transportation of students to the training sites. LEAs may submit for travel reimbursement from the CRACTC when necessary (CRACTC member districts only). Travel reimbursement will be provided to schools not individuals. Schools are encouraged to pool travel together when possible. Alternative assignments will be provided to students who are unable to attend face-to-face learning opportunities, although students should be strongly encouraged to attend for a deeper learning experience of course content and/or career exploration learning. Participating schools with enrolled students in CRACTC courses at a distance of more than 125 miles from a learning day location will not be required to attend the learning day, but will receive an alternative assignment or virtual learning opportunity similar to the face-to-face learning day opportunity. Schools/students may still attend the learning days if desired. Schools/students must understand that by not participating in learning day opportunities, may result in student’s inability to receive specific industry certifications associated with the course (i.e. CPR, First Aid, CNA).

Field trip opportunities are encouraged to provide enhanced career exploration opportunities to students in each Career and Technical program area. A maximum of one field trip experience per semester per CTE area will be supported, unless otherwise approved by the program director. Overnight field trips/learning opportunities can be highly encouraged but not required, alternative

career exploration assignments should be provided to students not participating in the learning opportunity. Instructors/Approved Chaperones are required for each trip at the rate of approximately 1 chaperone per 20 - 25 students; field trips involving out of area travel and/or accommodations require pre-approval of the program director or assigned designee.

Students will be expected to cover a portion of the transportation/housing costs for out of area learning opportunities, as well as most of their own meal costs on such trips. Students will be required to complete parent permission, medical release, media permission and code of conduct forms prior to travel.

### **Facilitator Guidelines**

Having an active local facilitator is key to successful online courses. Instructors rely on the local facilitator to handle many of the daily needs that an instructor cannot address from a distance. The role of the facilitator is multifaceted;

1. To provide for student needs.
2. To provide for site needs.
3. To assist with hands-on activities.
4. To serve as the contact person between the instructor and the local school.

The facilitator is the “go-to” person for the instructor to turn to when it comes to behavior and attendance and making sure the student is using their time wisely and properly. The facilitator is the person may be the point of contact to assist in troubleshooting technology issues and provide assistance or contact local technology coordinators to solve problems as they arise.

We rely on local facilitators to monitor the use and care, as well as the security of equipment used in these courses, and to communicate any issues with hardware or software used.

Providing assistance with hands-on assignments, monitoring student pacing, and identifying students that may be struggling are also important. Facilitators are the conduit for students with IEP’s or other special needs. Local facilitators are asked to help insure academic integrity, monitor tests and quizzes, review student grades and transfer grades from the CRACTC power school site to the local schools’ power school.

Facilitators provide important feedback to instructors, they keep the instructor informed of student absences and local events as well as differences in school calendars. They also may be asked to make arrangements for transportation and supervision of students for hands-on days, field trips and career fairs.

CRACTC recognizes the importance of having a local facilitator for online courses. Instructors rely on the local facilitators to supervise and manage many of the daily needs that an instructor cannot address at a distance in the virtual environment. CRACTC provides reimbursement of 60% of up to a \$2,000 stipend for one facilitator in each of our member schools (maximum total reimbursement per school year is \$1,200). Schools may apply for reimbursement at the end of each school year semester.



**CRACTC Equipment/Materials/Supplies**

The State Department of Career and Technical Education does not provide the CRACTC reimbursement for equipment or instructional aid purchases, nor does the CRACTC receive a Perkins allocation that could be used for the purchase of equipment and instructional aids. In order to provide the equipment and instructional aids needed for the operation of quality programs, these purchases must be provided for by the local school or by utilizing CRACTC grants or other funds approved by the CREA Governing Board.

The CRACTC supports the acquisition of equipment necessary to enhance programs and courses provided to our schools. One priority for use of CRACTC funds is to purchase equipment/instructional aids for a specific program (such as Electronics, Health Careers, Information Technology, etc.), and that program would retain control and maintain an inventory of the equipment. This equipment is to be placed in the enrolled schools to be used by the students throughout the duration of the course. (example: the equipment necessary to complete the electronics curriculum). Course instructors are responsible for distributing, arranging return and maintaining the inventory. Losses for damaged or unreturned items will be charged to the local school.

The CRACTC may also elect to participate in the acquisition of equipment necessary to improve the quality of a Local Educational Agency’s (LEA’s) program by enhancing equipment available to students at the local school on a cost-share or grant basis. Such purchases would require the approval of the CREA/CRACTC Board.

An inventory record of all equipment purchased in whole or part with CRACTC funds must be maintained by the local CRACTC school (LEA). When equipment is acquired by the LEA in this manner, title shall be vested in the local school. The LEA is responsible for the repair, and/or replacement of any item lost, damaged, stolen or destroyed and notification must be given to the CRACTC Director of those items.

The local school shall obtain, retain and use this equipment only in approved career and technical education programs for educational purposes.

The LEA must maintain a control system for all equipment to insure adequate safeguards for the prevention of loss, damage or theft. Any loss, damage or theft of equipment shall be investigated and documented in writing by local police or other authorities.

Adequate maintenance procedures shall be implemented by the LEA to keep the equipment in good working condition. The cost of such maintenance is the responsibility of the LEA.

State Board for Career and Technical Education Policies for “Disposition of Equipment” and “Depreciation Methods” will be followed. When a program no longer needs a piece of equipment, if the equipment becomes worn out or obsolete, or the local program is terminated while there is still a depreciated value, the LEA must notify the CRACTC and appropriate disposition procedures will be determined. This may include transfer to another program, sale or trade-in of the equipment. Equipment that is fully depreciated according to the CTE Equipment Policy and Procedure guide becomes the sole property of the LEA.



CRACTC will provide reimbursement for approved welding program supplies at 40% of up to \$3,000 of approved supplies annually. Reimbursements must be submitted to the CRACTC office no later than June 1 of the applicable school year.

**Grievance Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment**

CRACTC follows Bismarck Public Schools policies and procedures associated with non-discrimination and anti-harassment situations. Please refer to the Bismarck Public School website for the most up-to-date non-discrimination and anti-harassment policy.

<https://sites.google.com/a/bismarckschools.org/schoolboard/system/app/pages/search?scope=search-site&q=non-discrimination>

Any CRACTC student, staff, or personnel who feels they are, or have been, discriminated or harassed during or within CRACTC course parameters (i.e. online/ITV/face-to-face), contact your local school administrator to report the incident(s), with the local school administrator reporting to the CRACTC assistant director. The CRACTC assistant director will contact the BPS Title IX coordinator to begin the proper procedures and investigations in cooperation with the applicable local school administration. If the incident involves the local administrator, the applicable individual(s) shall directly contact the CRACTC assistant director. If the incident involves the CRACTC assistant director, contact the CRACTC director to begin the proper procedures.

**Grievance and Harassment Filing Procedure:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4ZW3eBSjly6NWFEZ2dLdFkzRWs/view>

**PLEASE FIND, COMPLETE, AND SUBMIT TO CRACTC PROGRAM DIRECTOR (OR ASSIGNED DESIGNEE) THE ATTACHED DISCLAIMER SIGNATURE BELOW**

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**DISCLAIMER**

This employee handbook has been drafted as a guideline for our employees. It shall NOT be construed to form a contract between the Central Regional Area Career and Technical Center (CRACTC) and its employees. Rather, it describes the program’s general philosophy concerning practices and procedures in the Central Regional Area Career and Technical Center (CRACTC) in accordance with the policies administered within the Bismarck Public School (BPS) system.

Please sign and detach this portion and return to your supervisor. I have read and understand the information presented in the Central Regional Area Career and Technical Center (CRACTC) Program Handbook.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_