

Improving Accessibility to 2 + 2 B.S. Degrees to Technology Students

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Abstract

The NSF ATE Center CREATE is committed to developing and adapting increased 2+2 B.S. degree programs that articulate with community college technical programs. Dr. Kathleen Alfano, from College of the Canyons, and Dr. Sharlene Katz, from California State University, Northridge, will describe how they have developed new opportunities for 2+2 partnerships to give technical students access to B.S. degrees.

DESCRIPTION

As the Director/Principal Investigator and co-Principal Investigator of the National Science Foundation Advanced Technological Education (ATE) Regional Center CREATE in Southern California, we have worked with faculty in community colleges and universities in Southern California for nine years to improve access to the credit technician education that industry requires for its current and future employees. The Center's goal is to address the needs of industry by producing, as a multi-county consortium, highly skilled and educated technicians to better meet national and state workforce demands in the fields of information and manufacturing technologies. Since 1997 over 20,000 students have completed at least one credit CREATE technical course that applies to an A.S. degree and program and the articulation agreements that we have negotiated give these students access to a pathway to a B.S., which employers say is important to higher paying positions and management jobs. Three programs will be highlighted: the new CREATE-sponsored 2+2 B.S. in Information Technology at California State University, Channel Islands; the CREATE cohort now completing the 2+2 B.S. in Industrial Technology at California State University, Fresno; and the new feasibility study proposed for a 2+2 B.S. in Mechatronics at California State University, Northridge. A discussion will also be facilitated on developing community college-university partnerships in other locales that can lead to 2+2 degree programs.

KATHLEEN ALFANO

Kathleen Alfano is the principal investigator of CREATE's NSF ATE Regional Center for Information and Manufacturing Technologies and has led CREATE (California Regional Consortium for Engineering Advances in Technical Education) since its development in 1996-1997. She previously served as Dean of Academic Computing and Professional Programs and is currently also a faculty member at College of the Canyons. She has over Twenty years of successful faculty leadership, administration of technical departments, and leadership of State and Federal curriculum projects, especially in the areas of technical education. Dr. Alfano has a B.S. in Chemistry, M.S. in Education/Counseling, and a Ph.D. from UCLA in Higher Education, Work, and Adult Development. She also directs the Cisco Academy Training Center (CATC) for California and Nevada.

SHARLENE KATZ

Sharlene Katz is a co-Principal Investigator of CREATE and Professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) where she has been for over 25 years. She graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles with B.S. (1975), M.S. (1976), and Ph.D. (1986) degrees in Electrical Engineering. She has served as both Associate Dean and Department Chair at CSUN. Recently, her areas of research interest have been in engineering education techniques and neural networks. Dr. Katz is a licensed professional engineer in the state of California.