

Lana Gordon, Secretary

Sam Brownback, Governor

January 21, 2015

Kansas Board of Regents
1000 SW Jackson Street, Suite 520
Topeka, KS 66612-1368

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is presented in support of Barton Community College's proposal to establish an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Occupational Safety and Health.

As the first and only OSHA Training Institute Education Center within the state of Kansas, Barton has established itself as the premier provider of occupational safety and health training. This new degree is a natural progression in the growth of a high quality program fulfilling the needs of a rapidly changing workforce throughout the state.

Workplace practices continue to change dramatically in the new economy. To compete more effectively many organizations have restructured and downsized workforces, increased reliance on nontraditional employment practices, employed temporary workers and adopted more flexible and lean production technologies. The resulting effects on the safety and health of the Kansas Workforce are an increasing area of concern. Safety personnel must have a vast knowledge of safety principles, methods, and techniques to recognize hazardous conditions and eliminate or control them. When employing safety personnel these skills are crucial for any entry level.

Barton Community College is proposing to establish an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Occupational Safety as well as several OSHA certificates that provide credentials that are recognized nationally. This initiative will address these extensively needed job skills throughout the region.

I highly recommend that the degree and certificates be approved without delay. Doing so will provide a significant educational and technical training opportunity to Kansans which are currently unavailable in the state. In support of Barton's venture, the Kansas Department of Labor pledges the following:

- Participation on curriculum advisory boards and meetings
- Opportunities for practicum projects
- Opportunities for faculty and company safety personnel to meet.

We look forward to collaborating with Barton Community College in its efforts to offer this new degree within the region and across the state.

Sincerely,



Lana Gordon
Secretary, Kansas Department of Labor