

CJC Implementation Research Protocol: College and Career Dean, College Prep Manager and Academy Director

Abt Associates IRB Approval No. XXXX

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Introduction of and Informed Consent for the Study *(read to all respondents)*

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview today.

My name is **(insert name here)**, and I'm a researcher from MDRC, located in **(Oakland CA or New York, NY)**. I'm here because Abt Associates and MDRC, on behalf of the United States Department of Labor (DOL), are conducting a five-year study of the Cascades Program.

We are visiting to conduct in-person interviews with center staff and partners (such as referral partners and employers) to learn what is happening on the ground and what are the challenges of implementing this new program. Interviews will cover the organizational characteristics of the center, as well as its mission and vision, and how it fits within the Job Corps network.

These interviews will provide important qualitative information on the implementation at Cascades. We will use what we learn from these interviews to contribute to a report about the impacts and implementation of the Cascades program. This report will be submitted to DOL to inform the federal government about this new model.

Privacy Statement *[Interviewer must read this to all respondents]*

Before beginning the interview, **I (we)** want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study and remind you that your participation is voluntary. **I (we)** know that you are busy and will try to be as brief as possible. We have many questions and are going to talk to many different people, so please do not feel as though we expect you to be able to answer every question. You may also refuse to answer any question. The interview today should last about 90 minutes. This interview is *not* part of a Job Corps audit or a compliance review. We are interested in learning about your ideas, experiences, and opinions about Cascades' implementation. There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what you think.

You can send comments regarding the time estimate or any other aspect of this interview, including suggestions for reducing the duration, to **(insert contact name and provide address if necessary)**.

In addition, before we start, I want to let you know that although we will take notes during these interviews, information is never repeated with the name of the respondent in any reports or in any discussions with supervisors, colleagues, or any one from DOL. When we write our reports and discuss our findings, information from all the people we speak with is compiled and presented so that no one person can be identified. There is a small risk of loss of privacy, but we have many procedures in place to ensure your information does not get lost.

To help me accurately report on the information you share, it would help if I could tape record this call; of course, I could turn off the recorder at any point if you so desire. I do not have a recorder on now; is it okay with you for me to turn it on?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Do I have your permission to begin the interview?

- These questions will be asked of the College and Career Dean, the College Prep Manager and the Academy Director. Questions exclusive to each position are noted below.
- Text in italics is background information for the interviewer.
- Please allow 90 minutes for the interview

Staff Title: Title

Staff Role:

Staff Initials: Initials

Interviewer: Interviewer last name

Write-up: Last name of person doing write-up

INTERVIEW DATE/TIME: Date/Time

Staff Background [College and Career Dean, College Prep Manager and Academy Director]

You may use this section to verify information you already know about the interviewee or as a means of rapport building with the interviewee.

1. Please describe the major responsibilities of your position. Describe
2. How long have you been at Cascades? 0.00 years
3. How long have you been in your current role at Cascades? 0.00 years
4. How long have you worked at other Job Corps Centers? 0.00 years
5. What made you interested in working at Cascades? Describe

Academic Staff Management and Training [For College and Career Dean only]

We want to understand how students flow from College Prep to CTT, and the qualifications of teaching staff, such as if they have prior experience working with an at-risk population. We also want to learn how the Dean manages his/her academic and vocational staff and partners (Skagit Valley staff, Sedro-Woolley instructors, and Northwest Academy staff)

6. How do you supervise your academic staff? [Probes: How often do you meet with academic managers? Instructors? Do you sit in on classroom instruction? What is your management style?] Describe
7. What professional development opportunities are available to your staff? Describe
8. What additional opportunities do you think your staff would benefit from? Describe

Cascades' Values and Center Environment [College and Career Dean, College Prep Manager and Academy Director]

The next questions are designed to learn more about how the values and culture of Cascades are put into action in the day-to-day activities of staff. Listen for how infused is the career and college orientation in staff's mindsets and actions? Similarly, how infused is the teaching of non-cognitive skills in all staff's interactions with students?

9. How would you describe Cascades' values and philosophy? Describe

10. How would you describe the environment that Cascades intends to create for students? [Probes: How do you want students to feel when they are at Cascades? What strategies do you use create this environment?] Describe

For College and Career Dean and College Prep Manager only:

11. What do you want your instructors' relationships with the students to look like? [Probes: Provide examples. Do staff interact with the students outside the classroom, before or after classes, in other activities? What percentage of them are very close with their students?] Describe

12. What type of messages do staff give students about the goals of Cascade? Describe

For Academy Director only:

13. Do these values and philosophy differ from those of other Job Corps Centers? Describe

14. Can you describe the practices you currently use to maintain a safe environment for the students at your center? [Potential probes: Describe a recent safety incident at your center and how the incident was handled. Describe how your center's discipline policy supports a safe environment.] Describe

15. In what ways, if any, is the behavior management system reflective of a student-center design? Describe

16. How do you use the Job Corps policy manual to guide the day-to-day operations of your center? [Probe: How closely to you follow the policy manual?] Describe

17. In what ways do you think the culture and philosophy of Cascades is different than other Job Corps centers? Describe

Enrollment and College and Career Planning [College and Career Dean and College Prep Manager]

In the intake and enrollment section, we want to understand how academic staff in particular are involved in making decisions about who comes to Cascades, how they are assessed, and how decisions related to their academic plans are made. Do not focus on the general intake process. This is covered in other interviews.

18. Describe the process you use to determine what academic and vocational services are appropriate for an individual student, including how you use the STAR 360 assessment or other intake assessments.. [Probe: is this a group process or individual process? Which staff are involved in determining what services students need? Are the students themselves involved?] Describe

For College Prep Manager only:

19. Describe the process for putting together the Individual Career Pathway Plan including the needed academic and technical skills preparation plan. [Probes: Who is involved? Are students involved in the development of their Individual Career Pathway Plan? How are these plans created? What assessments or records are used to create these plans?] Describe

20. How do you determine a student's schedule after their industry Foundation and Center Life courses? Describe

Center Management & Staffing [Academy Director]

This section is intended to get a high-level picture of the center’s management structure, both between the center and Job Corps National and regional offices, and within the center. We also want to understand staffing issues, such as if turnover is a problem and opportunities for professional development.

- 21. What types of supports do you receive from the Job Corps regional and National office? (probe for a recent example.) Describe
- 22. Are there challenges to working with either of them? (probe for a recent example.) Describe
- 23. Has staff turnover been an issue for you so far (IN FUTURE VISITS: “since our last visit”? Describe
- 24. If so, are there particular positions for which it has been an issue?

Position (check all that apply)	Description of turnover issues (reasons for turnover)
<input type="checkbox"/> Management (ED, SSM, AM)	Describe
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff	Describe
<input type="checkbox"/> Counseling Staff	Describe
<input type="checkbox"/> Other staff roles	Describe

- 25. Do you currently face challenges in recruiting qualified staff? If yes, are there particular positions for which finding qualified staff is more difficult? Describe
- 26. What training opportunities do you think your current staff benefit the most from? Describe
- 27. Are there additional training opportunities you think your staff need? Describe
- 28. How would you describe your management style or approach? Describe

College and Career Academy Services [College and Career Dean and College Prep Manager]

Academic Services. *This section dives into the specifics of the center’s academic offerings. The goal is to understand the big picture of what services are provided, what curricula and teaching methods are used and what special services are offered (ESE, ELL, intensive reading).*

- 29. What types of academic services are now provided (high school diploma, GED)? [Probe: If you offer GED, what do these services look like? Who takes advantage of GED services compared with HS diploma services? Are these mostly online instruction or instructor led?]

High school diploma services (math, reading, science)	Describe high school diploma services
GED services	Describe GED services
Use of HS diploma services vs. GED	Describe differences in who uses HS vs. GED
Critical Thinking	Describe

30. How do the academic services offered by Cascades differ from the traditional Job Corps setting (Probe: To what degree are these college prep courses occupation-infused (i.e. IT or healthcare topic or problems)? Get examples.) Describe
31. Can you describe the particular strength and challenges of this type of academic program? Describe
32. What types of college-level academic services are now provided (such as advanced college-level course work, dual enrollment, early college high school courses)? [Probe: What do these services look like? Are they located off center? How do students get there? Who takes advantage of college-level classes?] Describe
33. What type of supplemental academic services, such as on-site tutoring, online classes and evening classes are offered now? Describe
34. How do students earn credits? [Probe: Is it about education hours or demonstrating competency through a test or prior learning assessments?] Describe
35. (For later round:) Since our last visit in (month/year of last visit), how is your academic program changed? Describe

For College and Career Dean only:

36. Do instructors attempt to infuse workplace examples into academic instruction? (Probe: Does this differ by teacher characteristics? Does the Sedro-Woolley teachers do it as much as the Cascades staff? Describe
37. What challenges do you face now providing instruction? Describe
38. Do students receive extra support or guidance if they fall behind in their studies? [Probe: How-- tutoring, instruction tailored to a specific learning disability?] Describe

For College Prep Manager only:

39. To what extent are you able to tailor the classes you offer to the specific needs of the students? Describe
40. What non-student related challenges do you face delivering college prep instruction [Probes: Staffing, facilities, curriculum, etc.]? Describe
41. What are you and/or your instructors doing to mitigate these challenges? Describe
42. What specialized academic services does your program offer? (ESL, special needs)? [Probes: To what extent are you able to accommodate ESL students and students with special needs?]

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| ESL: | Describe ESL services |
| Special Needs: | Describe ELL services |
| Other: | Describe other special services provided |

Career Development and Technical Training. [For College and Career Dean only]

This section examines the specifics of the center's Technical Training offerings. The goal is to understand the big picture of what services are provided and how particular students give these options.

43. Can you describe the career planning/work readiness services offered now by your center? Describe
44. How do students transition into Career and Technical Training? (Probe: Do they have to pass a test? Complete a certain number of hours of college prep classes? Have a GED or diploma?) Describe
45. Can you briefly describe the Technical Offering services offered now (we will be talking with the Healthcare and IT managers) by your center, including what the foundation course, job shadowing, and the degree to which instruction may or may be yet use work-based learning and project-based instruction (Probe: If they have either of the latter two, find out how common it is and get examples)?

Healthcare: Describe HC services

IT: Describe IT services

46. How are decisions made regarding which occupations are targeted for instruction in the Healthcare and IT industries? [Probe: how aligned is technical instruction with labor market demand and the skills employers are seeking to fill? Has the occupational focus shifted over time since you have worked here?]

Academic and Non-Cognitive Skills Development [College and Career Dean and College Prep Manager]

We want to understand how the staff are addressing non-cognitive skill development such as work habits, time management, interpersonal skills, and the other nonacademic factors that get in students way to success. Are there special lectures? To what degree, if at all, do staff use their regular interactions with the students as “teaching moments”? If so how—thru discipline? Modelling? Guiding students thru an issue? To what extend is the residential setting used to instill or reinforce specific 21st century skills?

47. Other than academics, what do the students struggle with when they come to their classes? Describe
48. How does Cascades in general and your instructors in particular deal with this? [Probe on how they incorporate the “grit mindset” goals and other strategies listed in the University of Chicago curriculum “Teaching Adolescents to Become Learners.”] Describe

For College Prep Manager only:

49. What academic challenges do your students face? Describe academic ones
50. How does Cascades and the instructors deal with this? Describe

Partnerships [College and Career Dean, College Prep Manager and Academy Director]

A center’s relationship with the school district, local colleges, other service organizations and employers will be a crucial source of variation of how it is structured and the services they offer. Therefore, we want to really understand the dynamics of these relationships. We also want to understand how other partners might be involved in delivering academic services.

College and Career Dean and College Prep Manager only:

51. To what extent and how is the school district involved in your academic programming and the day-to-day operations of your academic program? (Probe: get specifics and examples)? Describe
52. Are there challenges associated with your relationship with the school district? Describe

- 53. To what extent and how are local colleges or post-secondary institutions involved in your academic program or the day-to-day operations of your academic program? Describe
- 54. Are there challenges associated with your relationship with the college? Describe
- 55. Besides the school district and the local college, what other partners are involved in the delivery of academic services at your center, such as employers or other organizations?

Name	Description of services or resources provided	How is partnership formalized (contract, informal)
Name	Describe	Describe
Name	Describe	Describe
Name	Describe	Describe
Name	Describe	Describe
Name	Describe	Describe

For College Prep Manager only:

- 56. What resources does the school district provide you? (Probes: Books, equipment, training, food, transportation, staffing) Describe
- 57. Is it easy to access the information you need from the school district? Describe
- 58. What resources does the college provide you? (Probes: Books, equipment, training, food, transportation, staffing) Describe
- 59. Is it easy to communicate and get what you need from the college? Describe

For Academy Director only:

These questions are intended to get a high-level picture of the center’s partnerships in the community, which will at a minimum, include the local school district and employers.

- 60. Can you describe your current relationship with your local school district(s)? [Probes: What are specific examples of interactions? What are the benefits and/or challenges of the relationship?] Describe
- 61. Can you describe your current relationship with your local college(s)? [Probes: What are specific examples of interactions? What are the benefits and/or challenges of the relationship?] Describe
- 62. Can you describe your current relationships with employers? [Probes: What are specific examples of interactions? What are the benefits and/or challenges of the relationship?] Describe
- 63. Besides employers and the school district and colleges, what other outside partners would you say are central to your center’s activities at this point? [This includes service partners, referral partners and other community partners. Please include the names and role partners play.] Describe
- 64. Can you describe difficulties you have encountered finding and working with partners? (in the second round add: “since our last visit in month/year”) Describe

65. Are there other ways that you currently involve the community in the implementation of your program? Describe

Random Assignment [College and Career Dean, College Prep Manager and Academy Director]

College and Career Dean and College Prep Manager only:

66. Did random assignment have an impact on the academic services your center provides? Describe

Academy Director only:

67. Describe any challenges your center has encountered in implementing the random assignment study (e.g. recruitment, relationships with partners). Describe