

# National Generic Standards and Program Development Guidelines

*For WITT Courses, Exploratory Courses for Women in Trades, Technology, Operations and Blue Collar Work and for Trade/Technology Specific Courses for Women*

## Preamble

The aim of this course is the empowerment and skill training of women through facilitative instruction using methodologies appropriate to their learning styles. As we recognize the need of our society to handle the complex training and working environments, we must provide students with the tools to analyse and effectively deal with both technical problems and the effects of a society that has tended to discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, disability, and sexual preference, particularly in the performance of trades and technical work. Special skills and tools are needed in these cases. Within the context of the following goals and objectives, we hope to provide the tools to use in all applications, both technical and societal, to enable the students to survive, and thrive in the trades and technical environments in which we hope to find many of them. The following material was developed through a modified Dacum process involving technical training and women's technical training experts from eight provinces in Canada.

## Program Goals

1. Increase the employment and further training/education potential of participants, especially in trades, technology, operations and blue collar work. (TTO/BCW)
2. Provide participants with the opportunity to explore a broad range of employment and training options in *TTO/BCW*,
3. Provide participants with a realistic understanding of the physical, emotional and academic requirements of training and/or employment in *TTO/BCW*,
4. Provide participants with a series of empowering skills which will assist them in becoming competent workers in *TTO/BCW*.

## Objectives

Participants will:

1. Acquire knowledge of the range of possible occupations in *TTO/BCW*
2. Develop strategies for dealing with the multiple roles of working women
3. Apply practical math, science, workplace literacy, and communication skills in *TTO/BCW* studies
4. Develop basic technical skills in a wide range of *TTO/BCW*
5. Make informed career occupational choices through knowledge of the labour market, skills in career planning and job search techniques
6. Realistically assess their own ability to work successfully in *TTO/BCW* environments through hands-on work experience in industry
7. Develop occupational fitness skills
8. Develop skills to work effectively in groups
9. Enhance self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-motivation through the group process and an interactive learning environment

## Methodology

1. Feminist Perspective  
Defined by the WITT National Network as "moving towards equality of women by accommodating differences – e.g. economic, social, racial, political, physical and cultural."
2. Practice Effective Adult Learning Principles  
Voluntary Participation (Adults decide on a course of action to meet their own needs; Mutual Respect (the variety of past experiences must be recognized and built upon), Collaborative Spirit (the facilitator and participants need to agree upon needs, objectives, methods and evaluation); Action and Reflection (Praxis) (by doing something and then taking the time to reflect upon it, individuals will process information into something which has meaning for themselves); Critical Reflection (a critically aware frame of mind will assist in analysing the culture and philosophical basis of their education), Self-direction (to foster the feeling of empowerment in participants). This material was synthesized from *Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning* by S.D. Brookfield, Milton Keynes, England: Open University Press (1986), and from *Adult Characteristics and Effective Learning Principles* (March 1990),

by Janis McKeag.

### 3. Respect Learning Styles & Use Appropriate Teaching Strategies

Lecture/readings, demonstration, practice, discussion; participation; role models, tours; multi-media: work experience in industry. See *Instructor's Handbook*, *Working with Female Relational Learners in Technology and Trades Training* by Carol Brooks, Ph.D., Ministry of Skills Development Ontario (1986) and *Orientation to Trades and Technology: A Curriculum Guide and Resource Book with a Special Emphasis on the Needs of Women* by Marcia Braundy, Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, British Columbia (1997).

### **Student/Instructor Ratio**

For a 35/hr per week course, for a course of 16 students, 2 full time - 35/hr per week positions. This can be allocated among several instructors, but the importance of having some continuity for the coordinator/instructor must be stressed.

Female tradesworkers and technologists make excellent role models, and should be used as coordinators/instructors whenever possible, as well as resource people in the classroom.

### **Funding**

Courses should be funded under direct purchase, or within college base budgets allowing a broad cross-section of EI, SARS, *program/mainstream* and fee-paying students. Most effectively, these courses would be funded on a regular ongoing basis to provide continuity and support for students and instructional personnel.

### **Entry/Selection Criteria**

Depending on available course length, a coordinator must set minimum academic entry standards for math, science, reading and writing skills. Instructors/Coordinators must show some flexibility, weighing such factors as motivation and interest.

It is important to provide informational sessions during the recruitment phase, using questionnaires (samples available at national office), and interviews so that instructor/coordinators, working with Advisory Committee members, can select students on the basis of commitment, interest, and motivation. Instructors have the right to terminate any student not living up to learning contract.

### **Women Training with Women**

The need for women-only exploratory courses must be stressed. Gaining skills and confidence in cooperative/supportive environments will enable them to then be successful in mixed courses where women are expected to compete with men who have often had greater prior experience in the field.

### **Expected Outcomes**

Entering further technical or other training is as satisfactory an outcome as finding full-time paid employment because it will lead to better paying jobs with greater potential for advancement in the long run. This is an exploratory course.

### **Recommended Industrial/Technological Sectors for WITT Courses**

- Power & Energy
- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Transportation
- Communications
- Environment
- Natural Resources
- Research & Development
- New Technologies

### **Time Frames**

The time frames outlined here are for courses where the students have, for the most part, basic Grade 10 education and English as their first language. For those courses where more extensive math, science or English upgrading or English as a Second Language training were necessary, the time frames would have to be modified appropriately.

A minimum of 3 weeks lead-time and 2 weeks follow-up are necessary to ensure positive negotiations and scheduling with area employers and unions, other technical instruction personnel, potential role models and resource people from the community and government agencies, and preparing evaluations of program and assisting students with realizing their training and employment objective.

The most effective way to run these courses is in an ongoing fashion, so that continued follow-up and support for students is possible, or to ensure there is an individual identified to play that role for students and graduates on a regular basis.

**Minimum:**

5 weeks lead and follow-up for Coordinator + 20 weeks Grade 10 and English first language

**Maximum:**

5 weeks lead and follow-up + 40 weeks

**Average Course:**

Professional Development  
Occupational Health and Fitness  
Technological Literacy  
Handle Work Related Issues  
Shop Time  
Communications  
Career Exploration & Development  
Work Experience

**Minimum**

3 Weeks  
3 Weeks  
2 Weeks  
1 Weeks  
8 Weeks  
2 Weeks  
1 Weeks  
4 Weeks  
24 Weeks

**Trade/Technology Specific Courses**

All graduates of trades/technology specific courses as well as WITT exploratory courses will have taken the skill units described here. If they have done so prior to participation in the course, some accommodations can be made in course content or participation.

**Supplementary Materials**

WITT National Network will be reviewing available Canadian course outlines and curricula, and will be making recommendations re those which most effectively meet the guidelines decided upon by the national WITT DACUM Advisory Group. Please contact the WITT National Network office for further Information and resources: **[We regret that WITT's national office has closed. Please check the Internet for a local WITT organization near you.]**

**These standards, developed by WITT National Network's Industrial Adjustment Committee, can be found in Appendix A to the Orientation to Trades and Technology Curriculum Guide and Resource Book with a Special Emphasis on the Needs of Women, available from British Columbia's Queen's Printer:**  
[http://www.crownpub.bc.ca/Product/Details/7960003191\\_S](http://www.crownpub.bc.ca/Product/Details/7960003191_S)