



CareerGPS – Student Pathways Website for Applicants to Community Colleges in Massachusetts

Website: <https://careergps.mass.edu/home>

Summary of Innovation: CareerGPS is an online student pathway application that includes information on community college programs in Massachusetts, O*NET labor market information on occupations and state and regional listings of high growth occupations (hot jobs), including current number of openings. The application helps prospective students to explore occupations and to review their interests and skills and then connects them to degree and certificate programs at a community college of their choice.

The **Guided Pathway** option allows the applicant to provide information on their current educational, work and/or military status, and their professional and career interests. Individuals can take the O*NET Interest Profiler (60 questions) to help clarify their interests, how they relate to careers and how to select an occupation. For individuals who know the career they want to pursue, the option **Create Your Own Map** starts with selecting an occupational category and then exploring the related programs at the college of their choice. Both options result with the selection of an occupation and the related program(s) at a college. Applicants create a user account to send their profile and contact information to the college. There is also a link to the [MyExperienceCounts](#) website for individuals to explore the possibilities of credit for prior learning.

Applicants can enter preferences for college programs including:

- Program type – degree, certificate, noncredit workforce
- Availability – full-time/part-time; day, evening, weekend, online
- Comfort level for programs that require math (5 point scale)

Occupational listings include the following elements:

- starting salary, number of openings, projected job growth;
- job title (O*NET) and brief description including job tasks;
- educational requirements and required experience; and
- a search function that filters by workforce area of applicant's home zip code.

The CareerGPS website includes information on all occupations and all associate degree or certificate programs at Massachusetts community colleges. Noncredit workforce programs will be added over the next year.

The CareerGPS application has been in development since October 2015. The website went live on February 26, 2018. There is no cost to use the CareerGPS to explore careers and current high demand jobs, the training and competencies needed for those careers, and/or to submit applications to the college of their choice.

Targeted Populations: Any prospective student may use the CareerGPS website, but a target population is adult learners who want new skills to advance in their job or who want to explore changing careers.

Partners: The CareerGPS website was developed with funding from the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant¹ for the Guided Pathways to STEM (GPSTEM) project of the Massachusetts Community College Consortium, with Massasoit Community College as the lead grantee. A software development firm, fivestar*, designed the application, working with GPSTEM Data Integration Committees of community colleges and staff from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education.

Bringing the Innovation to Scale: The development of the CareerGPS website has been supported by the GPSTEM grant, which ends September 30, 2018. The community college consortium and DHE are committed to sustaining the CareerGPS website after the grant, but the funding source(s) and the level of resources to sustain CareerGPS have not yet been identified. With the recent start-up of the website, individual colleges will need to explore how the CareerGPS can complement and/or be integrated with their local admission processes and their college websites. A planned statewide marketing campaign to be released in March 2018. At this point, it is unclear what the volume of applications will be and the local resources needed to respond in a timely manner.

¹ This website was 100% supported by funding from the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant to the Massachusetts Community College Consortium, awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, Grant #TC-26450-14-60-A-25.