

ADVISORY COMMITTEE HANDBOOK



NICOLET
COLLEGE

Welcome Advisory Committee Member:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Nicolet College as a member of a program advisory committee. We are grateful for your involvement. Our programs rely on an advisory committee to help ensure students gain the essential experience and skills needed to succeed in their careers.

The role of advisory committee members is to share professional insights that keep our classes relevant to the workforce and meaningful to our students. Your expertise and knowledge will help us improve our students' outcomes and our communities' success.

This Advisory Committee Handbook was developed to help you in your work as a committee member. It includes information about the College and outlines the responsibilities of advisory committee members.

On behalf of the employees and students of Nicolet College, thank you for your participation. Your contributions matter. We look forward to learning from and with you.

In gratitude,
Kate Ferrel, President
Nicolet College



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What is the role of an Advisory Committee?

Advisory committees play a vital role in shaping Nicolet College's programs to meet the evolving needs of students, employers, and the community. These committees provide expert advice and guidance to ensure that the College's programs remain relevant, responsive, and of the highest quality.

Nicolet College will ask the following of its advisory committees:

- Offer insight into current industry trends, workforce demands, and emerging technologies
- Validate curriculum and program outcomes to align with employer expectations and job market requirements
- Assist in identifying equipment, tools, and resources necessary to maintain state-of-the-art learning environments
- Support student success through advocacy in exploring experiential learning and other workplace opportunities
- Act as a bridge between the College and the community by fostering partnerships and promoting programs

While decisions about program implementation and changes ultimately rest with the College, advisory committees play a valuable role in informing these decisions. As the name of the committees signify, they advise, given a spectrum of expertise and perspectives. Ultimately, through informed decisions, the goal is to ensure that Nicolet College graduates are prepared to excel in their careers and contribute to the workforce.

What are the benefits of being an Advisory Committee member?

Members gain both professional and personal rewards, including the following:

- Influence on Education: Guide the development of programs and curricula to meet industry needs, ensuring students are prepared for real-world challenges
- Access to Talent: Establish a direct connection with a pool of skilled graduates who are well-prepared to join your organization or industry

- **Professional Recognition:** Gain prestige and visibility by contributing to the success of a respected educational institution
- **Community Impact:** Support the growth of the local economy and community by strengthening the link between education and employment
- **Networking Opportunities:** Build relationships with fellow professionals, educators, and community leaders through collaboration on committee initiatives
- **Personal Fulfillment:** Experience the satisfaction of mentoring students, sharing expertise, and contributing to the advancement of your field
- **Professional Development:** Gain diverse perspectives and leadership skills from collaborating with others in your field
- **Advocacy and Partnership:** Play a role in advocating for programs and services that align with the evolving needs of your industry and region

By serving as an advisory committee member, you make a lasting impact on students, the workforce, and the community while gaining valuable insights and connections in return.

What does Nicolet College expect from me as an Advisory Committee member?

As a valued advisory committee member, your expertise and active participation are essential to the success of Nicolet College's programs. Here's what we ask of you:

- **Engage Actively:** Attend scheduled meetings (annually or biannually) and participate fully in discussions, sharing your insights and expertise to support program improvement. Consider serving as Chairperson of the committee if offered the opportunity
- **Periodically participate in ad hoc committees and attend special campus events**
- **Provide Industry Insight:** Offer updates on workforce trends, technology advancements, skill requirements, and other developments in your field to help ensure programs remain relevant and effective. Communicate these updates both in real time and during regular meetings
- **Contribute to Decision-Making:** Share recommendations on curriculum, equipment, and program outcomes, understanding that your role is advisory and decisions rest with the College
- **Be Prepared:** Review agendas, minutes, and materials in advance of meetings, and come ready to contribute ideas and feedback

- **Support Students:** Act as a mentor, participating in program events or sharing workplace experiences with students
- **Foster Collaboration:** Serve as a bridge between the College and the community, promoting partnerships and supporting initiatives that benefit students and local industries
- **Uphold Professionalism:** Respect the privacy of other members and the advisory process, maintaining a collegial and constructive atmosphere during meetings

By fulfilling these expectations, you help Nicolet College deliver high-quality programs that meet the needs of students, employers, and the community.

What types of support can I anticipate from Nicolet College in this role?

Nicolet College deeply values your time, expertise, and commitment as an advisory committee member. To ensure your experience is productive and rewarding, the College provides the following support:

- **Clear Communication:** Agendas, minutes, and supporting materials will be sent in advance of each meeting to help you prepare
- **Convenient Scheduling:** Regular meetings will be scheduled at times that accommodate most members, with remote participation options when available
- **Collaborative Support:** Faculty and staff will work closely with you, providing program updates, answering your questions, and facilitating productive discussions
- **Professional Guidance:** The Chair and College staff will ensure meetings follow a clear agenda while maintaining an informal and collegial atmosphere
- **Recognition of Contributions:** Your efforts will be acknowledged publicly, whether through College publications, events, or other forms of recognition
- **Timely Follow-Up:** Recommendations and feedback from the committee will be addressed promptly, with reports on outcomes or explanations when suggestions cannot be implemented
- **Streamlined Involvement:** We aim to respect your time by keeping meetings focused and avoiding unnecessary demands outside of scheduled sessions

Nicolet College is committed to making your service on the advisory committee a meaningful and impactful experience, fostering collaboration that benefits students, programs, and the broader community.

How long will I be on the Advisory Committee?

Advisory committee members are appointed to serve a term of three years. At the end of the term, members may be reappointed based on their continued engagement, interest, and availability.

To maintain fresh perspectives and balanced membership, committees regularly review and recommend potential new members while encouraging the continued involvement of experienced contributors. This structure ensures a dynamic and collaborative environment while providing flexibility for members to renew their commitment or step aside as needed.

How are Committees structured?

The structure of Nicolet College's advisory committees ensures effective collaboration and representation to guide the College's programs.

Membership: Each advisory committee is composed of a diverse group of professionals, which may include the following:

- Employers and employees from relevant industries
- Employers and employees from different geographic areas of the district
- Representatives from secondary schools, post-secondary institutions, and community organizations
- Alumni
- Current students of the program operating as Honorary Advisors, whose input is appreciated as non-voting members
- Size: Committees typically consist of a minimum of six members, with no prescribed maximum
- Leadership:
 - *Chair*: Elected by the committee members, the Chair leads meetings, collaborates with staff to set agendas, and ensures discussions remain focused and productive
 - *Recorder*: Responsible for documenting meeting minutes, capturing key recommendations and decisions

- **Ex-Officio Members:** Faculty, program directors, and other College staff participate in meetings as non-voting resources, providing updates and facilitating discussions
- **Decision-Making:** Recommendations are made by consensus, with formal voting used only when necessary, such as in discussion of significant program changes. The Chair oversees any votes, ensuring transparency and fairness

This structure promotes effective collaboration and ensures all voices are heard while maintaining clear roles and responsibilities for productive meetings.

What are the qualifications for membership?

Advisory committee members are selected based on their expertise, experience, and ability to contribute to the success of Nicolet College programs. Members should meet most of the following qualifications:

- **Industry Experience:** Members must have direct experience as a professional in, or consumer of, the industry related to the program. This ensures they bring relevant knowledge and insights to guide program development
- **Commitment to Education:** Members should have a genuine interest in supporting technical and higher education and a willingness to share their time and expertise for the benefit of students and the community
- **Professional Credibility:** Members are respected professionals in their fields, recognized for their skills, achievements, and contributions to their industries
- **Diversity of Perspective:** Membership should represent a cross-section of employers, employees, educators, alumni, and community stakeholders to reflect the diversity of the industry and community. Geographic, racial, and gender diversity are also important considerations

By meeting these qualifications, members help ensure the advisory committee is a dynamic and valuable resource for the College, its programs, and its students.

What does a typical meeting look like?

A typical meeting, supported by an agenda, includes the following items:

- Welcome and introductions
- Approval of previous meeting minutes
- Program updates (enrollment, curriculum, equipment, workforce trends)
- Member insights into industry needs and trends
- Recommendations for program improvements
- Discussion of future priorities or projects
- Setting the next meeting date and adjournment

About Nicolet College

Nicolet College is one of Wisconsin's 16 technical college districts, offering a range of occupational and university transfer associate degrees, technical diplomas, and certificates. Located on the scenic shores of Lake Julia in Rhinelander, our main campus serves as the hub of higher education for the Northwoods. With additional academic centers throughout the district and a variety of online programs, Nicolet College provides flexible, high-quality education tailored to fit your schedule, support your goals, and prepare you for a successful career anywhere in the world.

Nicolet College Mission and Values

Mission

In service to the people of Northern Wisconsin, we deliver superior community college education that transforms lives, enriches communities, fosters economic development, and expands employment opportunities.

Values

- We believe in the worth and dignity of the individual, and we therefore commit to treating each person with kindness and respect.
- We honor individual freedom of inquiry and individual and group contributions to governance.
- We value education as a lifelong process.

- We value our students, and we strive to empower them to realize their educational goals.
- We value our staff and Board, and we strive to support each other in our common efforts to contribute fully to the success of Nicolet and each other.
- We value our communities, and we strive to enrich them by being responsive to their needs through partnerships.

Core Abilities

Nicolet College has identified a set of core abilities central to a person's future success. They are incorporated into educational programs and co-curricular experiences to enhance our students' development. Our employees are also expected to develop and demonstrate these abilities and behaviors in their daily work and their interactions with others. Similarly, work completed by advisory committees should seek to further these skills and dispositions within our College district.

Apply Mathematic, Scientific, Artistic, and Technological Concepts

Success as a member of our complex society requires proficient application of mathematical, scientific, artistic, and technological skills.

Build Community

Success in building communities requires teamwork, social awareness, and civic engagement which enhances the full range of human relationships at the local, national, and global levels.

Communicate Effectively

Success as a communicator requires comprehensive application of language and visual arts skills across multiple settings to engage multiple audiences.

Embrace Lifelong Learning

Success as a lifelong learner requires a committed pursuit of professional and personal development to navigate change over a lifetime.

Live Ethically

Success in ethical living requires rational reflection on behavior that leads a person to make principled and sustainable decisions.

Think Critically and Creatively

Success as a critical and creative thinker requires independent and rigorous reasoning that leads to informed decisions, innovation, and personal empowerment.

Strategic Planning at Nicolet College

Strategic planning at Nicolet College is a collaborative process influenced by the Board of Trustees. In alignment with the function of advisory committees, this periodic effort ensures the College remains aligned with the evolving needs of students, employers and the community. For the most current strategic plan and related initiatives, please visit our website [Horizons 2025 | Nicolet College](#).

Accreditation

Nicolet College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a regional accreditor recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. This accreditation ensures that the College meets rigorous standards of quality in its academic programs, governance, financial stability, and student services. HLC accreditation not only validates the excellence of our programs but also allows students to transfer credits, access federal financial aid, and gain the confidence of employers. For more information about our accreditation status, visit nicoletcollege.edu/about/accreditation.



Nicolet College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to manage inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:
VP of Finance and College Operations
Nicolet Area Technical College
PO Box 518, Rhinelander, WI 54501-0518
Telephone: 715.365.4553 TTY: 800.947.3529 or 711

