

Competency-based Approaches to Occupational Licensing

Rep. Norm Thurston
September 12, 2019

Policy Goal

Consider competency-based alternatives to licensing

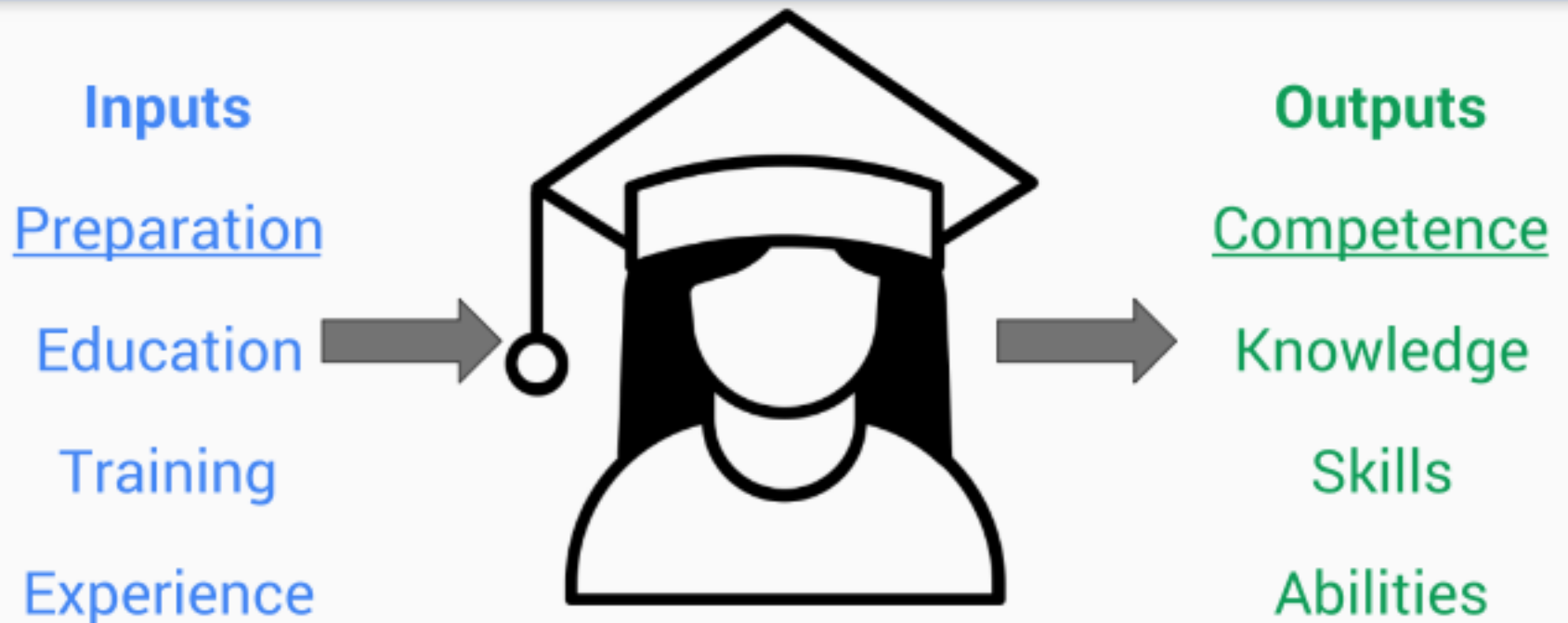
Competency-Based
Education (CBE)



Competency-Based
Assessment (CBA)

Important Note: These tools have applications in many other settings

Creating Qualified Workers - The Theory



Created by Shastry
from New Project

The Hours + Testing (H+T) Model

In this model, the focus is primarily on **measuring the inputs**, supplemented with some form of testing.

Inputs

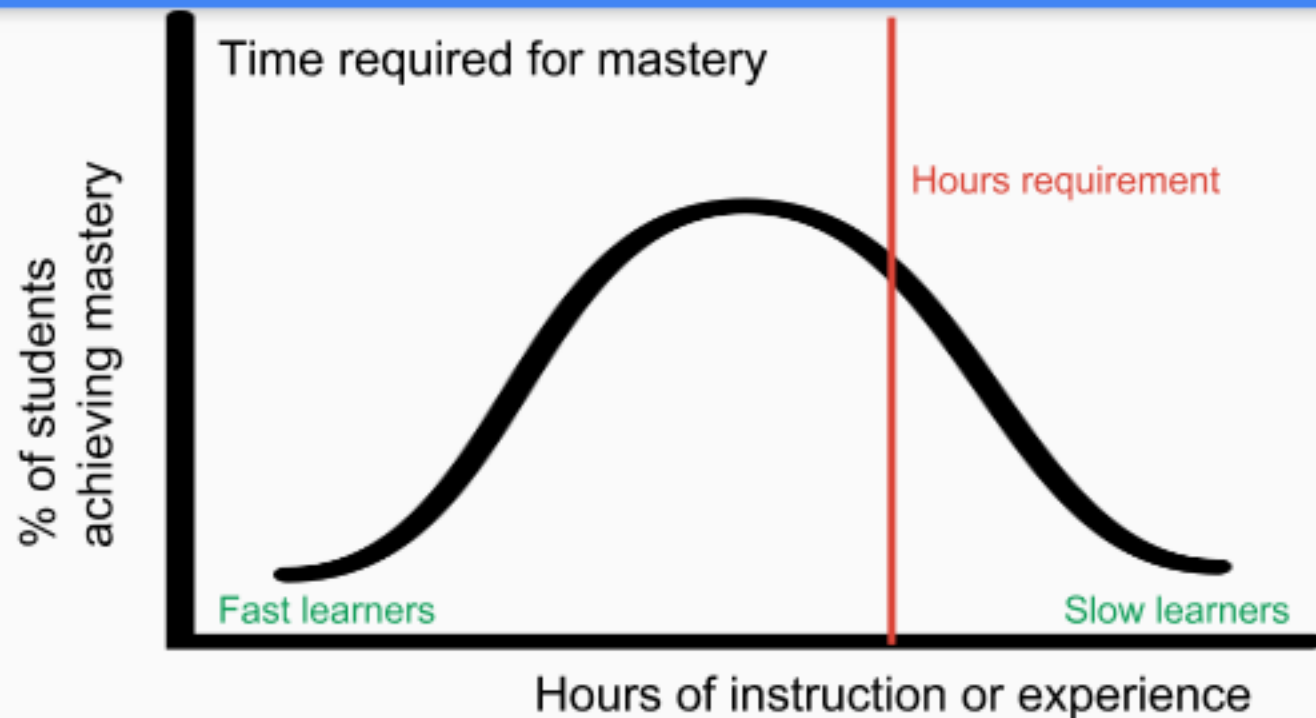
- Hours
- Credits
- Courses



Proficiency Exam

- Written Test
- Practical Demonstration

The Effect of Focusing on Inputs



Drawbacks of the H+T model

Focus on Input Measurement

- No guarantee of mastery
- Punishes fast learners
 - Delays opportunity to work
- Disadvantages workers that perform poorly on tests
- All-or-nothing format

Proficiency exams

- At best are “spot checks”
- Minimum passing scores
 - “Cs & Ds get degrees”
- Don't replicate real-world
- Wasted effort to learn specifically for the exam

Logically inconsistent to require both Hours and Testing

Review of Research Findings: NCSL experts' general conclusions

Hours Requirements

1. Increase costs to consumers
2. Limit Practitioners and competition
3. Don't have a clear impact on quality

Apprenticeships (leading to licensure)

1. Better pipelines for skilled industry professionals
2. Reduce costs of the service to consumers
3. Improve the quality of service provided

There is a Better Way: The application of CBE model to licensing

CBE Program Design

Acquire Knowledge,
Skills and Abilities at
your own pace



Competency-based Assessment

Document mastery
as it occurs

What is Competency Based Education?

- Measures *Learning* instead of *Time*
- Students progress by *demonstrating* competence
- Students study and learn at their own pace
- Can be ideal for adult students who are looking to “upgrade”
- Adult learners come to the program already knowing different things and learn at different rates

Creating Competency Based Programs

- Industry experts advise training programs to define necessary competencies - what does the student need to know? What do they need to be able to do?
- Assessment ensures that the right things are being measured

Competency Based Programs

- Learn theory - lectures, assignments, activities
- Demonstration of hands-on skills
- Practice performing skills
- Pass off the skills
- Re-teaching is done until student is 100% proficient
- Internship can also be utilized
- Students receive timely, differentiated support based on individual needs

What does a Competent Employee Look Like?

How can competence be

Identified?

Assessed?

Documented?



Using Technology to Assess Competency

- It is possible for **independent assessment of competency**
 - Video clips, documents, and other information
- Technology allows a student to develop a portfolio of competencies
- Defensible evidence of skills and abilities - Proof that they know what they are doing

Competency Based Licensure

For students seeking license or certification:

- Must demonstrate competencies that correspond to industry standards
- Competencies include explicit, measurable, transferable learning objectives
- Prior learning and experience are recognized
- Students demonstrate competency as they learn (not all at once)
- A full license requires competency in a comprehensive list of areas
- This approach bases licensing on *outputs* instead of *inputs*

Competency Based Licensure

- Competence in performing the tasks is more important than the length of the training
- Would allow for partial or continuum licensure - Allow you to get paid to do what you know how to do, as you learn and progress
- May be more of a political problem than a practical problem

Utah's new law – HB226 Occupational Licensing Revisions

- Authorizes the Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing to **waive hours requirements** for a competency based training program
- What were the politics like?
 - Technical Colleges
 - Skilled Trades & Licensed Occupations

Implementation of Competency Based Licensure

- What will happen now?
- We need to find a training program to be first
- The program will need a CBA tool