

AAFCS Launches Pre-Professional Assessment and Certification (Pre-PAC) Program

The American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) national organization has a proud 100-year history of providing support and leadership for family and consumer sciences professionals. AAFCS is proud to announce the Pre-Professional Assessment and Certification (Pre-PAC) program creating the premier family and consumer sciences pre-professional assessment and certification system in the nation. Pre-PAC utilizes the considerable grass roots network of AAFCS members representing a broad range of business, industry, and education practice settings in collaboration with other stakeholders to develop and administer quality competency assessments and industry-recognized certifications for pre-professionals in family and consumer sciences careers. In addition to drawing heavily on business and industry input, Pre-PAC utilizes information from the National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education and from the National Career Clusters initiative.

AAFCS has a well-established Credentialing Center that includes certification of professionals as Certified in Family and Consumer Sciences (CFCS). With the growing emphasis on assessment and accountability in secondary and postsecondary education, including requirements for Perkins funding for Career and Technical Education, AAFCS believes that it important to move forward by adding to the association's products and services a portfolio of standards-based assessments and industry-recognized certifications to support pre-professional level family and consumer sciences career areas and programs of study.

Assessment/Credential Development Process and Responsibilities

In creating the Pre-PAC program, AAFCS has assumed the major responsibility for providing staff, infrastructure, and other resources supporting the development of competency assessments and corresponding industry-recognized certifications representative of a broad range of pre-professional level family and consumer sciences careers. AAFCS recognizes that program effectiveness depends heavily upon the involvement, contributions, and assistance of a broad range of stakeholders with an interest in assuring that family and consumer sciences education programs are effectively preparing individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary for demanding career opportunities, therefore providing a workforce to meet the needs of business and industry in a challenging economy. These stakeholders include representatives of business/industry providing career opportunities for those trained in family and consumer sciences programs of study; state leadership for secondary family and consumer sciences education and career and technical education; state representatives from post-secondary programs; content specialists; and others responsible for the improvement and accountability of education programs.

Product Portfolio and Development Schedule

The Pre-PAC program is initially developing pre-professional assessments and industry-recognized certifications for those areas of family and consumer sciences where there are current voids. Eleven general career areas are currently targeted for development and launch. Subsequently, additional development will occur based on need and feasibility.

While currently under development and/or pilot testing, the following assessments will be available during 2009-10:

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| Broad Field Family and Consumer Sciences | Fashion, Textiles, and Apparel |
| Culinary Arts | Interior Design |
| Early Childhood Education | Nutrition |
| Education Careers | Personal and Family Finance |
| Family Services | |

The following assessments will be developed, pilot-tested, and made available for 2010-11:

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| Food Science | Housing |
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To learn more about Pre-PAC products and services, visit the website at www.aafcs.org/prepac.

