

6/17/2026

Dear Regional CTE Committee;

Gavilan College respectfully requests approval to offer the Certificate of Achievement in Esthetician (TOP 3007.00) program. While the COE Labor Market Information (LMI) data indicates that regional wage thresholds are not fully met, Gavilan College asserts that this program serves a critical workforce and community need that extends beyond traditional wage-based metrics - particularly for the populations this institution is committed to serving.

Although LMI data reflects wage levels that fall below the standard threshold for Certificate of Achievement approval, local and regional demand for esthetician services remains consistently strong. The San Benito County area, in particular, has demonstrated sustained need for qualified esthetician professionals. This regional demand is not fully captured by statewide or broad LMI datasets, which tend to underrepresent rural and emerging local markets.

Importantly, the esthetician field is characterized by a predominantly self-employed and entrepreneurial workforce. Graduates frequently establish independent businesses, build private clientele, and operate in part-time or flexible capacities — employment models that are systematically underreported in traditional wage data. As a result, LMI figures alone do not accurately reflect the true economic outcomes and earning potential of program completers.

This program disproportionately serves nontraditional student populations, including working adults, first-generation college students, and individuals seeking economic mobility through vocational licensure. For these students, the Certificate of Achievement in Esthetician represents a direct, accessible pathway to sustainable self-employment and career advancement.

Program completers have demonstrated measurable success in the field, securing employment, building independent businesses, and achieving licensure, affirming that outcomes exceed what wage data alone would suggest. Continued community and employer demand for this program further validates its relevance and effectiveness.

The Esthetician program requires students to complete 600 hours of coursework, which exceeds 16.5 units of instruction. This scope of study meets and is consistent with the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office unit requirements for a Certificate of Achievement designation. The program's rigor, structure, and contact hours fully supports the awarding of this credential.

Upon completion, students are eligible to sit for the California State Board Cosmetology licensing examination — a state-recognized, industry-required credential that directly enables graduates to enter the workforce and operate legally as licensed estheticians.

The Gavilan College community strongly supports the continuation and formal recognition of this program. Approval of this Certificate of Achievement will ensure that students — especially those from underserved communities — have equitable access to a credential that leads to meaningful, lasting careers.

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