



# El Centro College

DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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## **El Centro offers 'super' Retail Management Certificate**

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(DALLAS) — El Centro College has partnered with the Western Association of Food Chains (WAFC) to provide a new Retail Management Certificate as part of this industry organization's ongoing mission to provide quality education and career opportunities for their employees.

The White House recently lauded the Retail Management Certificate as part of President Barack Obama's Upskill Initiative that focuses on realizing the full potential of America's workforce by empowering Americans with the education and training needed to develop new skills and earn higher wages.

The El Centro College certificate consists of nine separate classes ranging from "Principles of Management" to "Business Technology." The academic credits received from these classes may be used toward eventually earning an associate or bachelor's degree, if a student desires to continue learning beyond the certificate program.

"We are elated to bring this wonderful certificate program to El Centro College," said Bryan Kaltenbach, WAFC president and chairman and president of Food4Less/Foods Co., a division of Kroger. "It's important that we provide American workers with the skills and education to remain competitive in the world market. Dallas has long been a city that thrives on good management and entrepreneurial spirit, and we are honored to continue with that legacy."

Beginning this fall, all of the retail management certificate classes will be available for both full-time and part-time students and will be offered in a 16-week or 8-week format, as well as a 5-week accelerated format during the summer. Courses will be taught both online and in traditional classroom formats. El Centro faculty have already agreed to teach some of these classes directly on-site of employers and other convenient locations.

Only two other colleges in Texas - Tyler Junior College and Tarrant County College - currently offer the WAFC certificate program. Nationwide, more than 15.6 million people currently work in the retail trade sector, including those employed by food and beverage stores, including supermarkets and membership warehouse clubs, gasoline stations and convenience stores, and other various subsectors of retail, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"We understand the busy schedule of these new students, who are already working their way up in the retail sector," said Lea Davis, El Centro business administration and management faculty chair. "We want to provide an opportunity for these employees to enhance their skills and have a better chance at getting a promotion in their respective companies and throughout this industry." Davis added that although the certificate program was initially created at the bequest of the food chain sector, the integrated curriculum is applicable to all aspects of management throughout the retail industry.

William Whitsett, a student from the state of Washington, recently completed the WAFC program and subsequently saw his salary almost double.

"It's an excellent educational program that has helped catapult me ahead in a successful retail career," Whitsett

said. “What you folks are doing at the WAFC is something special, and if continued, it will change the retail industry for the better, for many generations to come.” Whitsett's personal experience mirrors President Obama's strong desire for businesses to help workers of all ages earn an opportunity at better, higher-paying jobs, even if they do not have a higher education. (<https://youtu.be/a510IBk5D0k>)

The Western Association of Food Chains (<http://www.wafc.com/>) is the recognized leader in identifying and facilitating food industry-related educational programming that helps food industry associates become leaders within the industry. While not entirely constrained geographically, the focus for these efforts remains rooted in the 14 western states of the United States, including Texas.

The Business Administration and Management programs at El Centro College (<http://elcentrocollege.edu/programs/business-administration/>) provide training in a wide range of business-related topics including accounting, marketing, economics, human resources, management, and technology, all combined to help students develop skills in teamwork and leadership, motivation, and communications.

Registration at El Centro College for the fall semester is currently under way. For more information about the program, contact Lea Davis ([leadavis@dccd.edu](mailto:leadavis@dccd.edu)) at 214.860.2202.

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