



Enterprise Development

DED THROUGH THE DECADES

1960 –

ORIGIN STORY

1970

The University of Texas at Arlington's Division of Continuing Ed (CE) was founded in 1968, then later renamed The Division for Enterprise Development (DED) in 2005.

It began as a small unit that specialized in Art, Home, Garden, Sports, and Real Estate. These programs, offering enrichment to the community and training to workers, have remained at the heart of DED as it has grown and progressed.

In 1968, the department hosted the first Transmission and Substation Design and Operation Symposium, in conjunction with Texas utility companies. It was an early example of the department looking for a need that wasn't being met and designing a program to fulfill it. This Symposium is still a mainstay of DED programming to the current day.

1970 –

1980

NEW BEGINNINGS

DED began with a humble revenue of roughly \$200 a year. It developed into a meaningful program under the leadership of UT Arlington's former president, President Wendell Nedderman (who became acting president in 1972 and officially served from 1974 - 1994). Nedderman stated, "A somewhat unique aspect of my tenure has been associated with a relatively new, rapidly growing university, whose role and scope has been in a constant state of evolution toward graduate programs and research, as well as with other facets associated with a comprehensive, maturing university." One of those facets was the still-new Continuing Education program.

1980 –

1990

TRANSFORMATION AND EXPANSION

The program moved into The Swift Center in 1987. The building was an old elementary school, and the University converted part of the square footage into classrooms – and used the additional space for hosting conferences and seminars. This relocation allowed space for wider course selection, and adding additional programs. This was a big job for the roughly ten-person staff.

The conferences drew increasing audiences and nationally-recognized speakers, such as Stephen Covey and Tom Peters.

In 1989, CE began to offer introductory computer courses for workers needing to add skills to their resumes, as well as advanced classes in several computer languages, allowing students to gain Microsoft, UNIX, and Oracle certifications.

1990 –

2000

DIVERSE OFFERINGS AND INNOVATIONS

The 1990's saw the department offering additional programs, in many subcategories such as management and other business-related courses, professional development for a number of occupations, and even more technology and computer programming classes.

The Health Careers Institute was formed, offering classes to jumpstart careers as nursing assistants, EKG technicians and more.

The Kids & Teens University also started offering enrichment opportunities to K-12 students, through summer programs focused on specific interests, from math to creative writing. This program evolved into a STEM-learning program, giving youth participants formative experiences through hands-on activities (including visits to the UTA Planetarium) and challenging computer programming courses.

Beginning in 1997, The Center for Distance Education began offering online courses, keeping pace with available technology.

Pennie Boyett was featured on The Dallas Morning Show sharing details of all the programs offered at the Division for Enterprise Development.

2000 –

2010

IMPACT ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In December of 2004, former UTA president, President James D. Spaniolo partnered with The Arlington Chamber of Commerce, The University of Texas Arlington, WorkForce Solutions of Tarrant County, and The City of Arlington to construct the Continuing Education Building. This marked the beginning of an ongoing partnership with the Texas Workforce Commission. Estrella "Star" Connell said the idea was to create, "a one stop shop for displaced workers to get all the services they needed." The focus of the division was, and continues to be, improving employability, enhancing job skills, and identifying career paths for prospective workers.

DED earned their initial TxDOT contract in 2004, worth around \$275K. This stabilized the division and provided the foundation for the department's entire non-CE portfolio.

DED delivered over 500 courses each fiscal year with new programs such as: Transportation and Training Services (TTS), The Environmental Training Institute (ETI), Safety and Health Training, and nursing. Many programs were funded by local workforce agencies, so that students could attend courses, even if they couldn't pay. During the summer of 2007, DED was awarded the North Central Texas Workforce grant, totaling \$136,985 in revenue.

DED's public courses were also often funded by local partnerships. These partnerships allowed community members to take courses, even if they did not have the resources to pay. By this point, DED had started offering preparation courses for the SAT, GMAT, GRE, and LSAT to help students enhance their test scores. They were also looking into unique ways to connect with the community, such as through the Tarrant-County-exclusive Bassmaster University.

Children's programming was coined The Kids & Teens University and continued to offer enrichment opportunities to K-12 students, through summer programs focused on specific interests, from math to creative writing. This program evolved into a STEM-learning program, giving youth participants formative experiences through hands-on activities (including visits to the UTA Planetarium) and challenging computer programming courses.

At the same time, DED was able to begin offering companies private, customized corporate training and consulting. Resources from state and federal grants have often been used to help subsidize employer's costs for group training. DED has worked to assist companies in finding and writing these grants to support financial needs.

The awarding-winning OSHA Education Center opened in 2008, offering certification programs in Specialist in Safety and Health (SSH), Certified Safety and Health Official (CSHO), Safety, Health, and Environmental Professional (SHEP), and the Master Certification (MC). Additionally, four levels of professional certifications are available in multiple tracks including: Safety and Health, Construction, General Industry, Oil and Gas, and Risk Management.

During this time and on into the 2010s, Current Vice President Teresea Madden and former Director, Lisa London re-organized DED into multiple business units, and brought in large contracts that generated a 500% increase in revenue, making DED a more profitable venture long-term. This included work for the Texas Department of Transportation, which now outsources all of its training through DED. DED instructors began to travel state-wide to deliver TxDOT training courses, expanding the understanding of what continuing education could look like.

2010 –

2020

FOSTERING COLLABORATION AND GROWTH

DED continued to settle into the new building and utilize the space together with the Texas Workforce Commission and other partners, such as the Arlington Chamber of Commerce and the Fort Worth ISD Adult Education Center. The first floor of the building is 37,233 square feet featuring multi-function offices and resources for partners and clients. The second floor is 23,221 square feet, featuring 4 training rooms, 8 computer labs and 6 classrooms. The Tenth Anniversary Celebration of the Center for Continuing Education and Workforce Development was held in 2014. It was attended by the National Community Development Association Conference attendees, as a stop on their program to view a success story.

The Center for Environmental Excellence (CEE) at the University of Texas at Arlington opened, with the goal of providing consulting services, field work, project management, and staffing with specialists in a broad range of environmental disciplines.

2020 –

Now

EMPOWERING PARTNERSHIPS

The department is continuing to look for ways to find community and industry needs and offer programs tailored to fill them. The Arlington Music Industry conference, set for April 2023, is an example. It will bring together professionals in marketing, production and songwriting to network and assist aspiring artists. With the speed at which technologies and marketing strategies are changing, it is important to offer learning opportunities for participants to keep pace.

Classes now include summer boot camps, accelerated programs that allow participants to gain skills or certifications in a flexible manner, in the smallest amount of time. There are also classes dedicated for serving the needs of the military community, through the military service center.

The department has more than tripled its full-time staff from the days when it was in the Swift Center, and it involves hundreds of well-qualified instructors each semester in providing quality courses, webinars, conferences and seminars.

The program has certainly grown and changed, from a time when data was input by hand using typewriters to a streamlined database for keeping track of students, classes and certificates. The program was able to pivot, in the midst of the COVID crisis, into offering many of the programs as virtual classes or webinars. Once COVID restrictions eased, many programs were able to be offered as a hybrid in-person/on-line option. Students are now able to complete many certificate programs entirely on-line. This ability to adapt may well shape the future of DED as the impact of recent events changes the needs and priorities of both clients and instructors.

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Division for Enterprise Development

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