Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges  
Western Association of Schools and Colleges  

Annual Report Summary on Enrollments and Student Achievement  
June 7, 2013  

Member institutions submitted Annual Reports to the Commission by March 31, 2013. The reports provided information related to compliance with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies, and included categories of information related to substantive change, representation of accredited status, enrollment, student learning outcomes, and student achievement. The Commission monitors the Annual Report (AR) for indicators of needed follow-up with institutions. It also looks at the AR data in summary format to get a snapshot of practice across the region. This report examines data reported by the member institutions related to enrollments and student achievement.  

Headcount Enrollments  

Unduplicated headcount enrollments across the member institutions have declined by 7.7% over the past three years, representing a reduction in headcount of 135,730 students. Over this period, the downward trend in headcount slowed by about 1% per year. Students in pre-collegiate coursework represented 17% of total enrollments across the field. Online and correspondence enrollments represented less than 2% of the total. In this period of overall declining enrollments, distance education saw an increase of 3%, and correspondence education increased 9% (to .3% of total enrollments across the region).  

While declining enrollments were the norm across the region, 25 member institutions (18.6%) experienced growth.  

![Colleges with Growth 2010-2012](image)

The colleges experiencing growth spanned the range of membership, in terms of size, location, and public-private. The median point in growth rates was 7%. The highest three-year growth level was 33% (college size under 150). Two California public institutions with enrollments around 20,000 experienced growth over 20% during this period.  

Tab6. Doc1
Student Achievement

Course Completion (students who enrolled in the course and received a successful grade, fall 2012): Course completion levels across the membership ranged from 62.4% to 100%, with the average being 71.4%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion percentages</th>
<th>Fall 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>below 60%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of Colleges

Three private nonprofit institutions and two for-profit institutions had completion percentages of 90-100%, and the colleges with 80-89% completion rates included two for-profit institutions, a California public nursing college, and a college from the Western Pacific.

Twenty-six colleges did not have an institution-set standard for course completion. For the rest, the average completion standard was 68.5%. Most institutions were within 3% of their standard, plus or minus.

Fall-to-Fall Retention (students who completed a course in fall 2011 and enrolled in a course fall 2012): Retention ranged from 29.40% to 95% across the field, with the average fall-to-fall retention being 51.9%. The institution-set standards for retention averaged 50%, and the median retention rate was 50%.

Fall-to-Fall Retention, Institution-Set Standard

Colleges which did not have an institution-set standard for course completion also did not have a standard for retention. Some of the lowest retention rates were held by institutions without institutional standards. However, there were high-performing colleges without standards as well.

Degree Completion (the number of students who received a degree, 2011-2012): Member institutions reported 103,198 degree completions for 2011-2012. Eighty-four percent of member institutions reported granting of degrees at less than 10% of the headcount enrollments. Across the region, degrees as a percentage of enrollments were 6.2%.

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Only three colleges linked their institution-set standards for degrees to enrollments. Twenty-seven member institutions did not have any college-wide standard set in this area of student achievement. Colleges which had an institution-set standard for degree completion numbers exceeded their standards by 10%.

Transfer (the number of students who transferred to a 4-year college or university in 2011-2012): Transfer is not an educational objective for ten member institutions. Students are prepared for immediate transition into the workplace. For the rest of the colleges, transfers as a proportion of total students (unduplicated headcount) ranged from .4% to 34%. Across the region, institutional transfers represented 6.3% of the student body.

Five member institutions had institution-set standards for transfer as a percentage of the student body. Twenty-five colleges with transfer as an educational objective did not have any college-wide standards set for transfer.

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Certificate Completion (the number of students who received a certificate in 2011-2012):
Granting of certificates is not an educational objective for five of our member institutions. For those colleges which do offer certificates, the certificates granted as a percentage of the number of students (unduplicated headcount) ranged from 0% to more than 100%. At three of the colleges, the certificates earned and awarded were between two and three per student.

Certificates as a Percentage of Enrollments

Twenty-six of the colleges which have certificates as a part of the educational objectives do not have institution-set standards for certificate completions. Seven institutions have standards set as percentages of enrollments. These standards ranged from 3% to 80%.

Licensure Pass Rates and Job Placements

While data in the area of licensure pass rates and job placement can be incomplete, institutions have become accustomed to reporting and comparing across the available data for state tracking, Perkins funding reports, and so on. Institutions reported licensure pass rates for 565 programs. The programs ranged the spectrum from nursing and other health-related occupations, to cosmetology, automotive, dental, veterinary, and many other fields including aviation. Cosmetology licensure passage rates ranged from 66% to 100%. Nursing rates ranged from 60% to 100%. Job placement rates were reported for more than 1500 programs across the member institutions, with placement rates of 0 to 100%, in part affected by the newness of the programs and numbers of students enrolled in them. It will be useful for evaluation teams visiting institutions which offer career-technical programs to consider the norms of licensure pass rates and job placements for institutions offering like programs in the Western region.

Conclusion

The year 2013 marked the first time that colleges were asked to report their institution-set standards in areas of student achievement. While student achievement data have been a part of institutional evaluation for several decades, the requested declaration of expected levels of performance in these areas at an institutional level generated a wide range of responses. It is expected that reporting will be more complete next year as colleges become aware of how best to communicate their own established performance standards and use them to ensure appropriate evaluation and improvement of student achievement.

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Recommendation on Monitoring
Student Learning and Student Achievement in the Annual Report
June 7, 2013

**Recommended:** That the Commission form an ad hoc task force made up of members in the field, to identify data elements which will provide the information needed for appropriate annual monitoring in the area of student achievement and student learning; that task force input is used to revise the AR, as necessary, and to create areas that can be flagged for possible further review; and further, that the task force also explore the value of having a second level of review to ensure prompt and appropriate response to the college information.

The task force will issue a report and recommendation for submission to the Commission at its January 2014 meeting.

ACCJC Practice in Periodic Monitoring

The ACCJC conducts periodic monitoring of college performance as a part of its accreditation practice. This monitoring fulfills an expectation by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) that the Commission gather information on a regular basis in some matters, annually, to assess institutional compliance with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The data collected annually by the Commission include:

- Headcount enrollment data
- Data and indicators of student achievement and student learning
- Data and indicators of fiscal stewardship and stability
- Such other elements as determined by the Commission

The information used in annual monitoring is provided to the Commission by member institutions in the Annual Report (AR), the Annual Fiscal Report (AFR), and, for 2012-2013, the College Status Report on Student Learning Outcomes Implementation (SLO Status Report). The AR and AFR are submitted electronically in the spring of each year by each college, upon certification by the college president. In addition, colleges submit annual audited financial statements to the Commission at that time, or within six months after the close of the institution’s fiscal year.

The Annual Report data are analyzed and presented to the Commission in a summary report each year at the June Commission meeting, in the Public Session. The information provides a status update about the field. Annual reports submitted by an individual college since the most recent comprehensive evaluation are provided to evaluation teams preparing to visit the college. The data provide an insight into the strengths and stability of an institution as well as into areas for which validation of compliance with standards is needed.
In order to provide monitoring in a concise and consistent manner, the initial analysis identifies areas to be flagged for possible further review. The areas to be flagged are used to ascertain responses from which compliance with Standards may be in question, or for which the USDE requests follow-up. Questions raised in this analysis concerning any of the information provided by a college may be addressed to the college with a request for further response. Ultimately, information provided by a college on the monitoring reports is a part of the institution’s accreditation relationship with the ACCJC.

Financial Monitoring

In 2012, the Commission adopted a change in the annual monitoring of data arising from the Annual Fiscal Report. The Financial Reviewer Process was added to provide a level of greater analysis of financial information provided by institutions in the AFR and audited financial statements. If the initial analysis of a college’s AFR indicates certain areas of risk, then the process now provides for this second level of review. In this manner, information is reviewed promptly and addressed expeditiously. For those institutions about which additional concerns remain, the Commission may act to request a Special Report or take such other action as appropriate.

Details of this change in practice were reported in the Public Session of the June 2012 Commission meeting, and were announced to the field in a communication to college chief executive officers and accreditation liaison officers.

Initiating a Change Related to Student Achievement and Student Learning Monitoring

In order to ensure the process of review for student achievement and student learning data submitted by a college is sufficiently thorough and appropriate for examining compliance with Accreditation Standards and Commission policies, it is recommended the Commission initiate a process similar to that used for revising financial monitoring.