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ABSTRACT

Prince George's Community College (PGCC) created a Student Outcomes Report in December 1996 that measures course completion, retention, student achievement, program completion, transfer, and certification. Findings indicated that though the course pass rate was 75%, individual course completion ranged from 44% to 100%. Divisional pass rates ranged from a low of 60% in Educational Development to a high of 94% in Health Technology. Retention rates suggest that one-fourth of the new students entering the college each fall fail to return for a second semester at PGCC. In terms of student achievement, 30% of the 1995 entering students had transferred or attained sophomore status in good academic standing 5 years after entry to PGCC. Low rates of program completion may be attributed to the majority part-time status and individual student conflicts. After 5 years, seven percent of the students had graduated, and only one percent had graduated within 2 years of entry to PGCC. Approximately one in eight students transfer to a 4-year school within 4 years, and about half achieve GPAs between 2.00-2.99. The highest pass rates for certification exams in 1995 were in radiography and respiratory therapy, while the lowest were in nuclear medicine and health information technology. (YKH)

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Student Outcomes Report

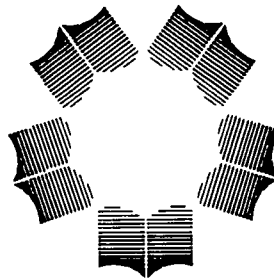
- Course Completion
- Retention
- Program Completion
- Transfer
- Certification

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Report BT97-7

December 1996

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PRINCE GEORGE'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Office of Institutional Research and Analysis

STUDENT OUTCOMES REPORT
Board of Trustees Report BT97-7
December 1996

Introduction

This report continues the annual series of reports to the Board of Trustees on student outcomes that began in 1988. The reports issued from 1991 through 1995 followed guidelines mandated by the Maryland Higher Education Commission. Starting in 1996, the Commission adopted a revised accountability process, including annual *Institutional Performance Accountability Reports* incorporating a spreadsheet with trend data and benchmarks for 32 accountability indicators, covering the areas of quality, effectiveness, access, diversity, and allocation of resources. A separate, comprehensive student outcomes report is no longer required by the Commission.

This report presents the most recent course completion, term retention, program completion, transfer, and certification findings for use by the Board, faculty, and staff of Prince George's Community College.

Course Completion

Student performance in individual courses constitutes a fundamental learning outcome. Assessment, reflected in the final course grade, is the responsibility of the faculty member teaching the course. Successful course completion is a prerequisite for progress in a curriculum, and a useful indicator in itself. Examination of student outcomes at the course level is particularly appropriate at community colleges, where as many as half the students enrolled in credit courses may have no intention of earning an Associate degree. Course pass rates, the percentage of initial enrollees receiving passing grades, provide a ready means of assessing student course success.

Collegewide course pass rates over the 1977-86 period had been stable, at 71-72 percent. Course pass rates have gradually increased since 1986. In fall 1995, three of every four course enrollments ended with a passing grade. Compared to this collegewide pass rate of 75 percent, individual course pass rates have ranged from a low of 44 percent (Developmental Math 003) to a high of 100 percent for courses in Education. Divisional pass rates ranged from a low of 60 percent in Educational Development to a high of 94 percent in Health Technology. Disciplines with consistently low course pass rates include Developmental Mathematics, Anthropology,

Mathematics, and Chemistry. (For detailed course pass rate findings, see OIRA report EA96-5, *Course Pass Rates in Fall 1995*, March 1996. For an analysis of student performance in chemistry, see *Correlates of Chemistry 101 Course Performance*, research brief RB97-8, August 1996.)

Fall Course Pass Rates by Division				
	1992	1993	1994	1995
Health Technology	92%	95%	92%	94%
Humanities	83%	82%	80%	83%
Business and Management	83%	82%	84%	82%
Computer/Engineering Technology	80%	80%	81%	80%
Physical and Health Education	86%	85%	85%	80%
English Studies	75%	78%	77%	75%
Social Sciences	78%	75%	78%	74%
Science and Mathematics	69%	67%	68%	66%
Educational Development	64%	63%	63%	60%

Retention

To increase the college's understanding of student attendance patterns, progress toward degree completion, and eventual goal achievement, the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis has instituted a series of longitudinal cohort analyses tracking the experiences of students entering the college each fall since 1990. The analyses include identification of the term-by-term attendance and performance of students in each fall cohort, facilitating retention research.

A total of 2,643 students entered PGCC as first-time college students in fall 1990. Sixty-one percent (1,614 students) returned in spring 1991, although an additional 12 percent or 318 students would enroll at PGCC in a later semester during the five-year period ending with the summer I 1996 term. This adjusted retention rate, which accounts for interrupted or "stop-out" behavior, suggests that one-fourth of the new students entering the college each fall fail to return for a second semester at PGCC. Such early attrition is not uncommon at community colleges, and is partially accounted for by students with short-term, non-degree goals.

Fall 1990 Entrants, Attendance by Term				
	Students Attending Specified Term		Students Attending Specified or Subsequent Term	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Fall 1990	2,643	100%	2,643	100%
Spring 1991	1,614	61%	1,932	73%
Summer I 1991	267	10%	1,582	60%
Summer II 1991	160	6%	1,561	59%
Fall 1991	1,175	44%	1,548	59%
Spring 1992	968	37%	1,370	52%
Summer I 1992	187	7%	1,141	43%
Summer II 1992	115	4%	1,121	42%
Fall 1992	727	28%	1,107	42%
Spring 1993	595	23%	967	37%
Summer I 1993	125	5%	797	30%
Summer II 1993	92	3%	784	30%
Fall 1993	462	17%	760	29%
Spring 1994	344	13%	647	24%
Summer I 1994	84	3%	545	21%
Summer II 1994	58	2%	532	20%
Fall 1994	326	12%	520	20%
Spring 1995	269	10%	427	16%
Summer I 1995	61	2%	335	13%
Summer II 1995	46	2%	319	12%
Fall 1995	229	9%	302	11%
Spring 1996	194	7%	206	8%
Summer I 1996	47	2%	47	2%

How much progress toward a degree had these fall 1990 entrants made by the end of spring 1996? A total of 184 had earned an Associate degree. Another 108 had earned at least 60 credits. (Some Associate degrees require a minimum of 70 credit hours; other students, pursuing the baccalaureate, may transfer without applying for the Associate degree.) Thus 292, or 11 percent, of the fall 1990 entrants had earned 60 credits or completed the equivalent of two years of college by the end of spring 1996, six years after entry to PGCC.

Cumulative Credits and Associate Degrees Earned by Fall 1990 Entrants As of End of Spring Terms, 1991-1996						
Total Credits	Spring 1991	Spring 1992	Spring 1993	Spring 1994	Spring 1995	Spring 1996
0	669	572	540	519	506	505
1 - 5	613	521	495	482	470	467
6 - 11	573	458	405	395	387	388
12 - 17	357	298	265	245	245	243
18 - 23	242	211	194	194	186	174
24 - 29	150	152	154	150	138	130
30 - 44	39	264	276	261	258	256
45 - 59	0	144	183	199	201	188
60+	0	23	131	198	252	292
Degrees	0	11	73	120	156	184

Nearly a fifth of the fall 1990 entrants (505 students) failed to earn a single credit at PGCC. These students may have completed developmental courses, which do not award credit toward a degree, but they failed or withdrew from all credit courses they may have taken.

Student Achievement

Implementation of the Transfer Student System (TSS) by the Maryland Higher Education Commission has made meaningful longitudinal outcomes analysis possible. Since the incidence of transfer is twice that of graduation, information about student transfer to four-year colleges and universities is essential in estimating levels of

student goal achievement. While the Commission's TSS data are restricted to public colleges in Maryland, and thus miss transfers out-of-state or to independent institutions, survey research suggests that typically 90 percent of PGCC transfers continue at in-state public colleges. Thus, acknowledging that transfer will be somewhat underestimated (and the "drop-out" rate thus overstated), the college is able to construct reasonable estimates of student outcomes after specified periods of time. For example, the table below displays student outcomes after five years for students entering the college in the fall of 1990:

Student Outcomes After Five Years Outcomes as of the End of Summer II 1995 of Students Entering in Fall 1990		
Outcome	Number	Percent
Award and transfer	71	3%
Transfer, no award	249	10%
Award, no transfer	104	4%
Sophomore w/2.0+ GPA	297	12%
Achievers	721	30%
Enrolled Spring 95 <30 credits/2.0	121	5%
Non-achievers	1,552	65%
Total degree-seeking students	2,394	100%
Special motive (excluded from above)	249	

A total of 249 of the first-time college students entering PGCC in fall 1990 had short-term, non-degree goals and are excluded from the outcomes statistics reported here. Of the 2,394 degree-seeking students, 721 or 30 percent had graduated, transferred, or attained sophomore status in good academic standing five years after

entry to PGCC. Five percent (121 students) were still attending PGCC but had not earned 30 credits with a 2.00 cumulative grade point average. The remaining sixty-five percent, or 1,552 students, had not graduated, transferred, or attained sophomore status and were no longer attending PGCC.

The following table shows the achievement rates for all four cohorts currently tracked by the research office. Achievement rates at the end of two, three, four, and five years are displayed. On average, a fifth of the students had achieved (in terms of graduation, transfer, or attaining sophomore status in good standing) by the end of their second year at PGCC. After three years, a fourth of the students were classified as achievers. After four years, achievement rates were 27-28 percent. Finally, as discussed above, after five years 30 percent of the fall 1990 cohort (the only group that could be tracked five years) had graduated, transferred, or attained sophomore status.

Number and Percent of Students Graduating, Transferring, or Reaching Sophomore Status in Good Standing ("Achievers") Fall 1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993 Degree-seeking Entrants								
Fall Cohort	After 2 Years		After 3 Years		After 4 Years		After 5 Years	
	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
1990 Cohort	472	20%	612	26%	674	28%	721	30%
1991 Cohort	412	19%	537	25%	587	27%		
1992 Cohort	363	17%	522	24%				
1993 Cohort	393	18%						

Excluding attainment of sophomore status and looking only at the achievement of graduation or transfer goals, analysis revealed that 18 percent of the fall 1990 entrants had succeeded after five years. If the percentage of students graduating or transferring after two years is an indication, more recent cohorts may be taking longer to reach their goals. For example, while eight percent of the fall 1990 entrants had graduated or transferred two years after entering PGCC, only three percent of the fall 1993 entrants had done so. (All percentages are based on the number of degree-seeking students in each cohort. The fall 1990 cohort had 2,394 degree-seeking students; fall 1991 had 2,154; fall 1992 had 2,182; and fall 1993 had 2,149. For more details, see *First-time Entering Student Academic Outcomes: Comparative Cohort Analysis Results 1990-95*, report EA97-1, July 1996.)

Number and Percent of Students Graduating or Transferring Fall 1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993 Degree-seeking Entrants								
Fall Cohort	After 2 Years		After 3 Years		After 4 Years		After 5 Years	
	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
1990 Cohort	184	8%	312	13%	382	16%	424	18%
1991 Cohort	144	7%	265	14%	321	15%		
1992 Cohort	109	5%	194	9%				
1993 Cohort	55	3%						

Program Completion

While the more comprehensive success rates discussed above are more appropriate for community college students, many of whom do not intend to earn a degree at the community college, colleges are often asked to report their graduation rate. The number and percent of students in each fall cohort earning an award at PGCC are reported in the table below. After five years, seven percent of the students entering PGCC in fall 1990 had graduated from the college. Only one percent of the students in each cohort had graduated within two years of entry to PGCC.

Number and Percent of Students Graduating After 2, 3, 4, and 5 Years Fall 1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993 Degree-seeking Entrants								
Fall Cohort	After 2 Years		After 3 Years		After 4 Years		After 5 Years	
	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
1990 Cohort	14	1%	81	3%	135	6%	175	7%
1991 Cohort	20	1%	65	3%	114	5%		
1992 Cohort	14	1%	68	3%				
1993 Cohort	13	1%						

It is clear that progress toward degree completion is a slow process. In contrast to most four-year college students, community college students are disproportionately part-time, often interrupt their studies due to family or employment

demands, and frequently must complete developmental courses before embarking on degree-credit work. At PGCC, three-fourths are part-time, between a fourth and a third stop out, and two-thirds require developmental work. In addition, open-admissions colleges admit some students who are simply not prepared for the demands of college--academically, psychologically, or in other ways--at the time they enroll. At PGCC, this proportion may be as high as one fifth--the proportion of fall entrants who fail to earn a single credit at the college.

Transfer to Four-year Colleges and Universities

Approximately one in eight students entering PGCC in the fall will successfully transfer to a four-year school within four years of their entry to PGCC. Half of these transfers take place within two years of community college entry. Less than a fourth of the transfers will have earned an award from PGCC. (As noted above, these transfer estimates understate the true rate of transfer since they are based on data limited to in-state, public institutions. In addition, only students transferring 12 or more credits are identified as transfer students by the senior institutions. Students transferring to out-of-state or independent colleges are missed, as are students transferring fewer than 12 credits to Maryland public colleges.)

Number and Percent of Students Transferring After 2, 3, 4, and 5 Years Fall 1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993 Degree-seeking Entrants								
Fall Cohort	After 2 Years		After 3 Years		After 4 Years		After 5 Years	
	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
1990 Cohort	175	7%	270	11%	309	13%	320	13%
1991 Cohort	132	6%	233	11%	249	12%		
1992 Cohort	98	4%	141	6%				
1993 Cohort	43	2%						

Where do PGCC students transfer to continue their education? Using statewide fall enrollment reporting systems, staff at the Maryland Higher Education Commission generate a report each year showing the fall-to-fall enrollment migration of students among Maryland public colleges and universities. The resulting "transfer matrix" provides one indicator of transfer volume and destinations, by showing where students enrolled at a particular campus one fall are enrolled the following fall. Students who transfer during a spring or summer session and do not continue in the

fall are missed by this method, as are students who transfer out-of-state or to independent institutions.

The transfer matrix identified 810 students enrolled at PGCC in fall 1994 who were enrolled in fall 1995 at a Maryland public four-year college or university. The most popular destination was the University of Maryland at College Park, accounting for over a third of the PGCC transfers. The University of Maryland University College was second most popular among PGCC students, followed by Bowie State University. Together, UMCP, UMUC, and Bowie accounted for 81 percent of PGCC's in-state transfers.

PGCC Transfers to Maryland Senior Colleges and Universities Fall-to-fall Enrollment Migration				
	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
UM--College Park	345	293	269	286
UM--University College	225	242	234	218
Bowie State University	147	146	167	156
UM--Baltimore County	67	61	56	46
Towson State University	50	54	33	29
Morgan State University	18	17	20	19
Salisbury State Univ.	25	26	13	15
Frostburg State Univ.	12	20	11	11
UM at Baltimore	9	16	18	11
UM--Eastern Shore	20	19	10	11
Saint Mary's College	10	5	3	3
Univ. of Baltimore	5	4	4	3
Coppin State College	2	3	8	2
Totals	935	906	846	810

How well do former PGCC students do at their transfer schools? Information from the Commission's Transfer Student System (TSS) provides some answers. Four-year, public colleges and universities in Maryland are required to submit information

such as cumulative grade point averages and bachelor's degree attainment rates for Maryland community college transfers attending their institutions. The most recent TSS data reflect the achievements of community college transfers as of spring 1995.

Cumulative grade point average data were reported for 960 former PGCC students who had transferred to a Maryland college or university during the 1990-91 academic year. Sixteen percent had GPAs below 2.00, while nearly half (47 percent) had averages in the 2.00 to 2.99 range. Thirty-seven percent had GPAs of 3.0 and above, including three percent with perfect 4.0 averages. The grade point averages attained by PGCC transfers were, as a group, somewhat below those earned by other Maryland community college transfers. Forty-three percent of the transfers from other community colleges had GPAs of 3.0 or above, compared to 37 percent for former PGCC students.

Cumulative Grade Point Averages at Maryland Senior Institutions as of Spring 1995 of Community College Students Transferring During 1990-91 (Percentage Distribution)		
Grade Point Average	Transfers from Prince George's Community College	All Other Maryland Community College Transfers
0 - .99	4%	4%
1.00 - 1.99	12%	10%
2.00 - 2.99	47%	42%
3.00 - 3.99	34%	40%
4.00	3%	3%
Total students (100%)	960	6,091

The Transfer Student System also reported bachelor's degree attainment for students transferring during 1990-91. Degree attainment at senior institutions with at least 50 former PGCC students ranged from 29 percent at University College to 76 percent Towson State. PGCC students had a higher graduation rate than other Maryland community college transfers at Towson, but lower rates at Bowie State and the Baltimore County, College Park, and University College campuses of the University of Maryland.

Bachelor's Degree Attainment Rates as of Spring 1995 of Community College Transfers during 1990-91		
	Transfers from Prince George's Community College	All Other Maryland Community College Transfers
Bowie State University	50% (N = 143)	54% (N = 78)
Towson State University	76% (N = 71)	68% (N = 1,187)
UM-Baltimore County	40% (N = 53)	53% (N = 957)
UM-College Park	59% (N = 360)	65% (N = 1,246)
UM-University College	29% (N = 244)	31% (N = 541)

Certification Examination Results

Graduates of PGCC's health technology programs usually take licensure or certification examinations shortly after graduation. The conventional measure for program evaluation is the pass rate (number passing divided by number tested) of first-time examinees on the entry-level exam.

PGCC's programs in radiography and respiratory therapy have consistently achieved high pass rates on their respective certification examinations. Indeed, respiratory therapy had a 100 percent pass rate in 1993 and 1994, as did radiography in 1993. The graduates continued their good performance in 1995, achieving pass rates of 94 and 97 percent.

Less than half (45 percent) of the college's nuclear medicine technology graduates passed the examination in 1995; this was the lowest pass rate in the history of the program. During the 1980s it was common for all PGCC nuclear medicine candidates to pass the examination.

The Maryland Board of Nursing expects programs to achieve a minimum pass rate of 85 percent on the NCLEX-RN examination. PGCC's nursing graduates met this standard in 1994 and 1995 after slipping to 81 percent in 1993. Pass rates of PGCC's Health Information Technology graduates notably improved in 1994 and 1995.

Pass Rates of PGCC Graduates on Certification Exams First-time Candidates				
	1992	1993	1994	1995
Health Information Technology	67% (N=6)	57% (N=7)	82% (N=11)	80% (N=10)
Nuclear Medicine	78% (N=9)	80% (N=10)	100% (N=13)	45% (N=11)
Nursing	90% (N=77)	81% (N=120)	85% (N=149)	86% (N=98)
Radiography	81% (N=21)	100% (N=15)	97% (N=29)	97% (N=30)
Respiratory Therapy	93% (N=15)	100% (N=14)	100% (N=14)	94% (N=16)

Conclusion

This report has presented selected student outcomes information for use by the college's Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff. Most of the data displays update information provided in prior summary reports. More detailed analyses of the data presented here are available in other publications issued by the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis (OIRA). Findings from the annual graduate follow-up surveys conducted by OIRA will be disseminated in a forthcoming report.

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