

Wyoming Strategic Plan 2005

Wyoming Community College Commission

Wyoming's seven community colleges provide affordable, accessible and lifelong education. The Wyoming Community College Commission supports the colleges through advocacy, coordination and collaboration. In partnership with the colleges, the Commission is committed to improving quality of life through learning.

Results Statements:

Two Wyoming Quality of Life Results are the foundation for the Commission's strategic plan and biennial budget request:

- Students successfully educated and prepared for life's opportunities, and
- A diverse economy that provides a livable income and ensures wage equity.

Contribution to Wyoming Quality of Life:

The Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) collaborates with Wyoming's seven community colleges to provide educational experiences that strengthen, support and enrich communities and prepare students to successfully meet life's challenges and recognize and profit from opportunities.

Basic Facts:

The WCCC is located in Cheyenne and employs 10 full time staff members to support the community colleges. The seven community colleges, along with their 42 combined outreach centers, employ 2,584 individuals and have a presence in every Wyoming county.

Funding: The total 2005-2006 biennial budget is \$235,906,805. Of this amount, \$205,824,886 are General Funds, \$112,500 are Federal Funds, and \$29,969,419 are Other Funds (capital facilities tax [Campbell County] and revenue bonds to fund construction).

Wyoming's community colleges: partners in improving our future

The community colleges respond to the need for a trained and skilled workforce by providing affordable, accessible educational opportunities to all Wyoming residents. For example, in addressing the critical need in healthcare, the colleges are continuing to expand services to train more professionals in this area. In collaboration with the K-12 and UW systems, the colleges are preparing students for success in postsecondary education, with diverse program offerings, quality faculty and a variety of instructional delivery formats.

Embracing the diversity within the state and their own communities, the colleges serve students with a wide range of educational needs and goals. Nearly two-thirds of

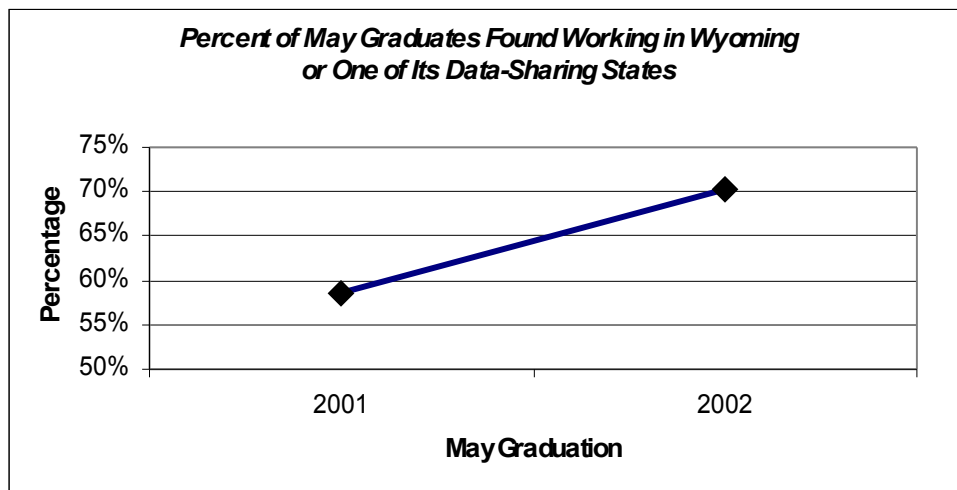
community college students in Wyoming attend part-time, with a majority enrolling in only one or two courses at a time. There really is no “typical” community college student. A person needing Adult Basic Education or a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, a recent high school graduate preparing to transfer to a university, a homebound worker seeking to upgrade vocational skills, or a retired person seeking to enrich understanding in a new subject; all fit the description. The seven colleges and the Wyoming Community College Commission are committed to providing a broad spectrum of services to the widest possible audience. They will continue to recognize and respond to community needs and to advocate for the preeminent place that learning has in our future.

Performance:

Those who enroll in a community college do so for a variety of reasons. Some students have several goals. Wyoming’s seven community colleges successfully served more than 21,000 students during the 2003-04 academic year. About 70 percent of the students are focused on earning an associate’s degree. Almost half intend to transfer to another institution. Other goals of Wyoming’s college students include earning a certificate, upgrading current job skills, developing new job skills and personal enrichment.

Performance #1: Workforce Preparation

Job Placement Rate



Story behind the performance:

Becoming employed after graduation is an important goal and achievement. One year after graduation, almost 60% of the May 2001 graduates from the seven colleges were working in Wyoming or one of the seven states with which Wyoming has data sharing agreements. Over 70% of the 1,277 graduates in May 2002 were employed one year after graduation.

While this percentage increased from one year to the next, the colleges believe the actual percentage is even higher. The colleges are developing a way to identify how many of the graduates who are not employed have transferred to four-year institutions

to complete bachelor's degrees or might be working in a state with which Wyoming does not have a data-sharing agreement.

A 2005 survey conducted by the Wyoming Business Council revealed that "... employers seldom use the state's colleges for recruiting, even though they rate the quality of the schools' graduates as satisfactory to good. Employers prefer to use private vendors for staff training across the occupational spectrum..." Reports from the Department of Workforce Services show that approximately 58% of the workforce training, paid by the workforce training fund, is conducted out-of-state. Through outreach and marketing, Wyoming employers could see the colleges more and more as their training provider of choice.

High-Growth, High-Demand Occupations

Number of May 2002 Graduates Found Working in High-Growth, High-Demand Occupations in Wyoming One Year After Graduation																					
SOC Code & Title	CIP Title																				
	11 Management	13 Business & Financial Operations	Sciences	15 Computer & Mathematical	19 Life, Physical, & Social Science	21 Community & Social Services	23 Legal	25 Education, Training, & Library	29 Healthcare Practitioner & Technical	33 Protective Service	Related	35 Food Preparation & Serving	39 Personal Care & Service	41 Sales & Related	43 Office & Administrative Support	47 Construction & Extraction	51 Production	53 Transportation & Material Moving	Unknown & All Other Occupations	Total	
03 Conservation & Renewable Natural Resources																				1	1
11 Computer & Information Sciences			5				3			1	2	1	1				1	22	36		
13 Education	1	1			2	31	2	8	5	7	10	2				1	25	95			
22 Law & Legal Services					1	2	1						1	5				1	11		
31 Parks, Recreation, Leisure & Fitness Studies							ND												ND		
43 Protective Services			1	1	3	1	4	3	1		2	4				2	16	38			
46 Construction Trades															ND			ND	ND		
47 Mechanics & Repairers	1							1	3			1			1		4	31	42		
48 Precision Production Trades						2	1									4	1	12	20		
49 Transportation & Materials Moving Workers										1			1	1		2	4	9			
51 Health Professions & Related Sciences	1				4	2	127	1	4	3	2	2	ND	1			97	245			
52 Business Management & Administrative Serv.	3	2				1	4	4	1	13	32	4	1	1	1	34	100				
All Other CIP Codes			2		3	16	14	6	26	10	23	36	12	6	7	126	287				
Total	6	3	7	1	11	2	59	150	12	49	23	48	89	30	12	19	373	894			

Source: *Where are They Now? Wyoming Community College Graduates' Labor Market Outcomes 2004*, Wyoming Department of Employment, 2004.

Story behind the performance:

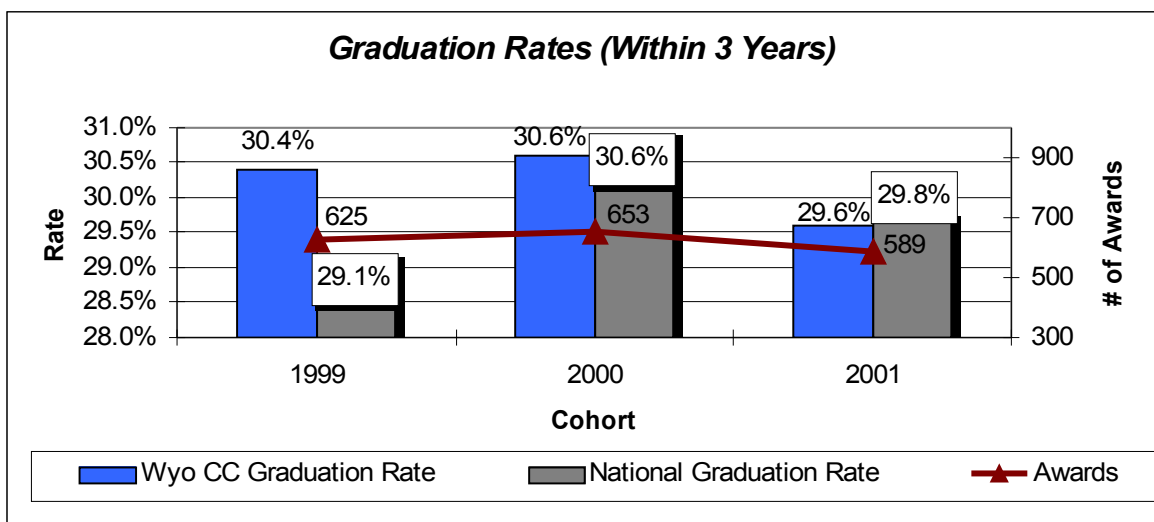
A workforce appropriately trained for Wyoming's high-growth, high-demand occupations positively impacts the economic health of the state. Wyoming's community colleges play a role in providing both short- and long-term training in those critical occupations. A limited number of the colleges' graduates are working in Wyoming's 12 high-growth, high-demand occupations.

What do we propose to do to improve performance in the next two years?

- Update and expand equipment needed for instruction using one-time funding in combination with reallocation of incentive funds. \$ 5,956,422 one-time state funds.

- Propose statutory changes to allow excess funds within the Wyoming Investment in Nursing program to be used to upgrade equipment and facilities used in the nursing programs. No net increase in state funds.
- Develop and carry out a marketing program that provides information about the community college system and raises the awareness of what the colleges offer. One-time state funding of \$425,000.
- Expand and improve partnerships with high school counselors, especially in career counseling areas. No increase in state funding.
- Augment the structure for collecting higher student fees for courses/programs that require more college resources. No net increase in state funds.
- Continue to develop partnerships with businesses and with agencies and organizations that represent specific groups (e.g., retirees). No increase in state funding.
- Recruit and support new faculty in new and existing programs that foster workforce development. Excellence in Higher Education Endowments will provide each college with an endowment when fully funded. No increase in state funding.

Performance #2: Graduation Rate



Story behind the performance:

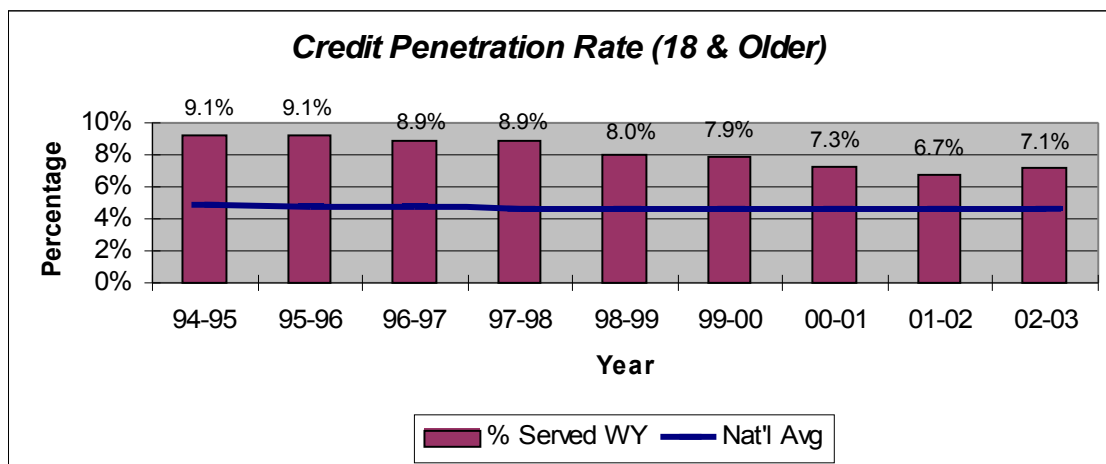
Students at community colleges enroll for a variety of reasons, one of which may be to earn an associate's degree. Over the three-year period from 1999 through 2001, the number of graduates averaged 622. The percentage of graduates has held fairly constant around 30%.

One reason Wyoming's performance is low is because Federal guidelines require the colleges to report graduation rates for only full-time students who complete a degree within three years after enrolling for the first time. In Wyoming's colleges, 63% of the students are enrolled as part-time students (2003-04 academic year) and would not be able to complete a degree in three years. Some students (12.5%) transfer to a four-year institution before graduating with an associate's degree.

What do we propose to do to improve performance in the next two years?

- Provide more student aid, especially for those with limited economic resources. The Hathaway Plan will provide students with both merit and need based assistance. No increase in state funding.
- Increase level of technology support to assist students in technology-based courses through redirection of existing Commission funding (incentive funds). No additional state funding.
- Update and expand equipment needed for instruction using one-time funding. \$ 3,467,174 one-time state funds.
- Develop and implement drug and alcohol mitigation programs on all college campuses. Secure federal and other funding sources, amount to be determined. Minor or no cost to state.
- Continue and enhance tutorial support through the use of programs such as *Smarthinking*. No increase in state funding.
- Provide opportunities for faculty development and mentoring. Excellence in Higher Education Endowments will provide each college with an endowment when fully funded. No increase in state funding.
- Strengthen partnerships with K-12 to expand dual enrollment and similar opportunities for high school students. No increase in state funding.
- Develop and implement a way to more accurately measure the graduation rate for community college students. No increase in state funding.

Performance #3: Outreach (Penetration) Rate



Story behind the performance:

The number of people in Wyoming, 18 and older, who are enrolled in credit classes at a Wyoming community college, is called the penetration rate. The Wyoming rate has been much higher than the national average for the last 9 years. The Wyoming penetration rate has decreased each year since Wyoming's welfare reform eliminated college training as an acceptable path to employment.

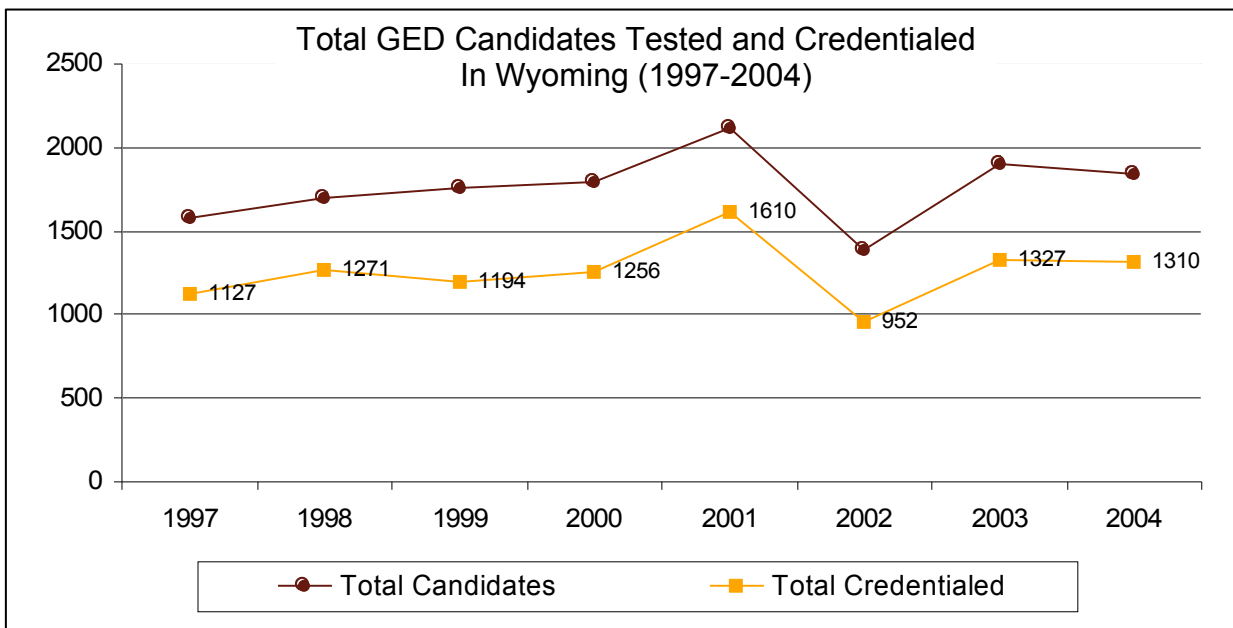
The seven colleges respond to the state's rural character and geographic isolation by taking services to every county in Wyoming through 42 outreach centers.

Each year several hundred thousand participants take advantage of the wide variety of cultural and athletic events, public forums and recreational activities as well as numerous non-credit courses offered by the seven colleges.

What do we propose to do to improve performance in the next two years?

- Develop and carry out a marketing program that provides information about the community college system and raises the awareness of what the colleges offer. Marketing Program (see Performance #1)
- Continue and improve partnerships with other state agencies (DWS, DOE, DFS) to provide more visibility and advocacy for community colleges and the programs they offer. No increase in state funding.
- Enhance partnerships with K-12 to provide expanded opportunities for participation in college courses and programs. No increase in state funding.
- Continue to develop and improve distance education delivery and breadth of online offerings. Utilize existing Commission incentive funding. No increase in state funding.
- Update and expand equipment and technology related to outreach. \$2,695,172 one-time state funds.

Performance #4: ABE/GED and Developmental Education



Story behind the performance:

ABE/GED. Wyoming’s colleges offer much more than academic and occupational-technical degrees and certificates. In 2000, 27,703 Wyoming citizens, age 25 years and older, did not have a high school diploma. For this 12.14% of Wyoming’s population, the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program at each of the colleges is designed to equip these adults with the skills needed for more productive living in our society as well as other goals like earning a GED (General Educational Development) certificate, pursuing postsecondary training and/or employment-related training.

In 2004, 1,310 individuals earned a GED in Wyoming. For many, this important credential is a pathway to postsecondary education (46%) and/or job-related training (64%). The economic value of increased education for the individual is well documented. The median annual income for a person with a high school diploma or a GED was \$24,595 in 2003 compared to \$15,669 for someone without a high school education. For those with an associate's degree, earning power jumps to \$31,509.

Developmental Education. Not all students who enroll in the University of Wyoming or a Wyoming community college are ready for college-level courses. Some are ill prepared despite graduating recently from high school. Others are adults who are starting college later in life and need some refresher training before tackling college courses. According to an ACT Policy Report ("Courses Count: Preparing Students for Postsecondary Success, July 2005), nationwide, "roughly 75 percent of students who graduate from high school go on to some form of postsecondary education within two years of their high school graduation. Yet approximately 28 percent of freshmen entering postsecondary institutions enroll in one or more remedial courses in reading, writing, or mathematics."

For those college students who need help before taking a college-level course, each Wyoming college offers a series of courses in mathematics, English, reading and study skills. In the Fall 2003, enrollment in developmental courses at the seven Wyoming colleges was 5,075 (duplicated headcount).

What do we propose to do to improve performance in the next two years?

- Place administrative responsibility for adult basic education (ABE) and general educational development programs (GED) with the Wyoming Community College Commission. Requires statute change.
- Replace some of the current federal funding support for ABE and GED with state funding. \$2.2M in state funds.
- Enhanced equipment for ABE/GED programs. \$ 519,206 one-time state funds.
- Develop and carry out a marketing program that provides information about the community college system and raises the awareness of what the colleges offer. Marketing Program (see Performance #1).
- Improve affordability and access with increased student aid. When the Hathaway Plan is implemented, most high school students will be taking a more rigorous curriculum, consequently reducing the number requiring developmental courses. Funds from the Hathaway Plan will also permit some student aid to be redirected to economically disadvantaged students. No increase in state funding.
- Provide additional technology support for students in ABE/GED and developmental courses. Redirect Commission's incentive funding to provide this support. No increase in state funding.