

COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENROLLMENT SURGE

An Analysis of Estimated Fall 2009 Headcount Enrollments
at Community Colleges



AACC Policy Brief 2009-01PBL
December 2009

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank AACC's member colleges for their participation in the survey and continued service to their students and communities. They would also like to express appreciation to Lumina Foundation for Education for supporting this research. The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of Lumina Foundation for Education, its officers or employees.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Christopher M. Mullin is the program director for policy analysis and Kent Phillippe is the director of research at the American Association for Community Colleges

CONTENTS

| | |
|----|--|
| 4 | Executive Summary |
| 5 | Community College Enrollment Surge |
| 5 | Part 1. Changes in Headcount Enrollment for Credit |
| 6 | Part 2. Factors Contributing to Enrollment Increases |
| 7 | Part 3. Lessons Learned |
| 8 | Part 4. Policy Implications |
| 9 | Technical Appendix |
| 12 | Appendix A. Fall Enrollment Survey |
| 17 | Appendix B. Invitation to Participate in the Survey |
| 18 | Appendix C. Follow-Up Letter |
| 19 | Appendix D. Definitions of Geographic Region and Degree of Urbanization |
| 21 | Notes |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

By fall 2009, the economic recession that started almost two years previously had a dramatic and unforeseen impact on community colleges. In particular, these changed economic circumstances had been broadly viewed as spurring major enrollment increases across the country. These enrollment increases were coupled with widespread funding reductions.

In an attempt to better understand how community colleges responded to the economic maelstrom, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) surveyed its member institutions to examine changes in enrollment, local factors contributing to enrollment shifts, and the lessons learned from their experiences. We found the following.

CHANGES IN ENROLLMENT

- Nationally, the number of students enrolled in credit-bearing courses at community colleges in fall 2009 increased by 11.4% from fall 2008 and 16.9% from fall 2007.
- Full-time enrollment at U.S. community colleges increased 24.1% in a 2-year time period from fall 2007 to fall 2009.
- The largest percentage change from fall 2007 to fall 2009 occurred in U.S. towns and in the Rocky Mountain region.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ENROLLMENT INCREASES

The predominant factors perceived to influence the increased fall 2009 enrollments identified by respondents included the following.

The Availability of Workforce Training

- Increased unemployment for workers reinforced the realization that a college certificate or degree was important for obtaining a job.
- Retooling—or enhancing a current skill set—was important for job retention as well as for preparing for career changes.

Cost Savings

- The limited fiscal resources of previously fiscally secure families positioned community colleges as a viable option due to comparably lower tuition and fees.

Outreach to the Community

- Students saw value because of marketing and advertising campaigns that highlighted institutional quality and created general awareness of campus offerings.
- Partnerships with business, industry, and high schools expanded course and programmatic options available at community colleges.

Structural Capacity

- At some campuses, new construction allowed for increased capacity to provide new or additional courses, while at others existing capacity limited the number of students colleges could serve.
- Enrollment caps at 4-year institutions limited opportunity for some students who, in turn, attended community colleges.

LESSONS LEARNED

From their own perspective, community colleges learned some valuable lessons during the fall 2009 enrollment increase, including but not limited to the following.

- Encourage potential students to apply early for financial aid.
- Use data from multiple sources to respond to changes in demand.
- Reach out to the community—including but not limited to underserved populations, high schools, and job placement centers—to promote the value of a community college education.
- Maintain flexibility in institutional operations to be better prepared to respond to dramatic environmental changes.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- The need for further education and training is occasionally unexpected. As such, all citizens should be made aware of the federal financial assistance programs.
- Improved transfer and articulation policies will be critical in ensuring that some community college students are able to achieve their educational aspirations.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENROLLMENT SURGE

An Analysis of Estimated Fall 2009 Headcount Enrollments at Community Colleges

INTRODUCTION

By fall 2009, the economic recession that started about two years earlier had a dramatic impact on America's community colleges and the students and communities they serve. At community colleges across the country, dislocated workers returned for retraining, traditional-age college students reexamined their options, and institutions were asked to do more with less fiscal support. Within this context, colleges and universities faced the choice of limiting their enrollments or finding ways to adequately serve more students.

Community colleges have traditionally served as an access point for educational opportunity and as a vanguard of innovation. Within the strained fiscal climate of 2009, these trademark characteristics were again tested. In an attempt to better understand how community colleges responded to the economic crisis, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) surveyed its member institutions to examine changes in enrollment, local factors contributing to enrollment shifts, and the lessons learned from their experiences.

This policy brief

- Describes changes in estimated, credit-bearing headcount enrollment from fall 2007 to fall 2009.
- Explores local factors that influenced observed enrollment trends in fall 2009.
- Highlights the lessons learned by community colleges in maintaining open-access institutions during times of fiscal difficulty.

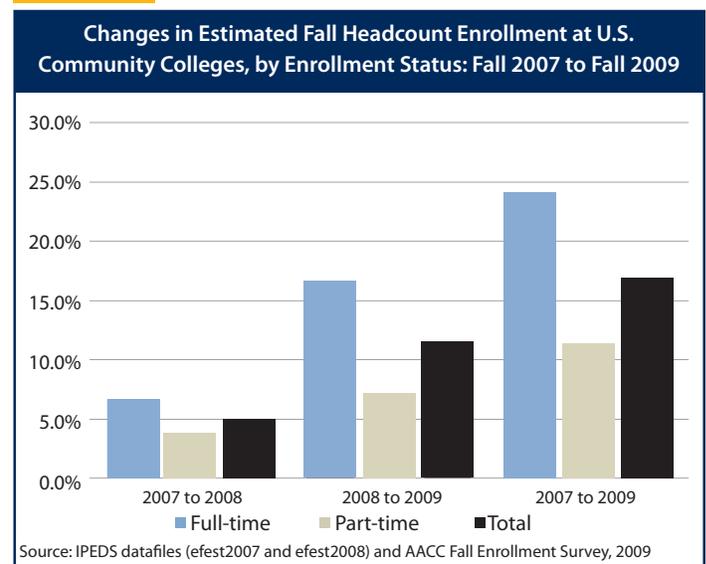
Methodology

A survey of AACC member colleges was conducted in late October and early November of 2009. The survey included six questions for member colleges—three regarding quantifiable information and three asking for experiences and perspectives. The response rate of 38.2% was substantially representative of this sector when considering geographic region or the degree of urbanization. Data collected from the survey were matched to estimated fall enrollment data for 2007 and 2008 from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) for responding colleges. Estimated fall enrollment

data were used since the survey data were estimates and final fall enrollments from fall 2008 were not officially released at the time of analysis. Data in addition to that which is presented in this brief was collected and is currently under analysis (see Technical Appendix).

PART 1. CHANGES IN HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENT FOR CREDIT

FIGURE 1



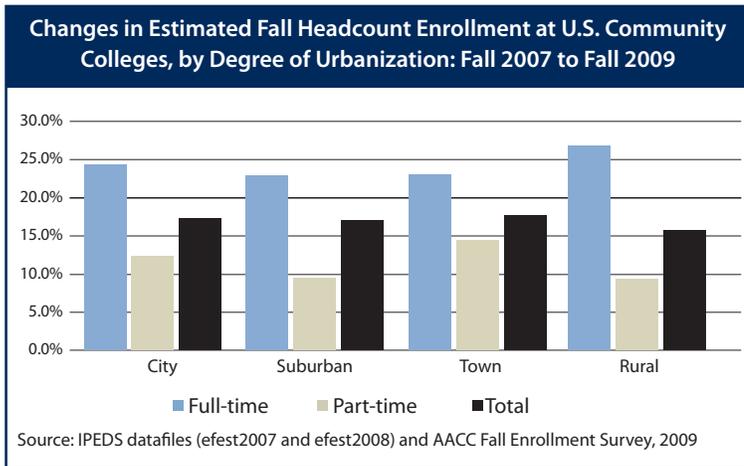
Fall Headcount

As Figure 1 shows, enrollment consistently increased at community colleges over the past two years. The shift in enrollment was most pronounced between fall 2008 and fall 2009, as unemployment increased sharply.

On average nationally, students enrolled in credit-bearing courses at U.S. community colleges in fall 2009 was 11.4% higher than it was in fall 2008 and 16.9% higher than it was in fall 2007. The largest growth came in the full-time student population, which grew by 24.1% between fall 2007 and fall 2009.

With respect to institutions, median enrollment growth closely mirrored overall headcounts. The median institutional headcount change was 4.7% from fall 2007 to fall 2008, 11.8% from fall 2008 to fall 2009, and 16.9% from fall 2007 to fall 2009.

FIGURE 2



Degree of Urbanization

In terms of locality type, the greatest increase between fall 2007 and fall 2009 was in towns (see Figure 2). They led with both the largest total growth (18.7%) and largest growth in part-time students (14.8%), while narrowly placing third in their full-time student growth with an increase of 23.3%. The large increases observed in towns and rural areas suggest that students are staying closer to home, choosing community colleges over other postsecondary options, or have decided to return to college.

Geographic Region

When delineated by geographic region, certain patterns of attendance were observed (see Figure 3). The Rocky

Mountain states—Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming—experienced the largest percentage increase in total enrollment of community college students. Additionally, it was the only category in the study where part-time enrollment growth outpaced full-time, or total enrollment growth. Conversely, the neighboring states in the Far West had relatively little growth in their part-time enrollments and substantial full-time enrollment growth.

While not showing as substantial a difference between full- and part-time enrollments, the Mid East, Great Lakes, and Southeast experienced a comparatively larger growth among full-time students. The New England, Plains, and Southwest regions had comparatively equal growth by both full- and part-time students.

PART 2. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ENROLLMENT INCREASES

The predominant factors perceived to influence the increased fall 2009 enrollments identified by respondents included the following.

The Availability of Workforce Training

- Increased unemployment for workers reinforced the realization that a college certificate or degree was important for obtaining a job.
- Retooling—or enhancing a current skill set—was important for job retention as well as for preparing for career changes.

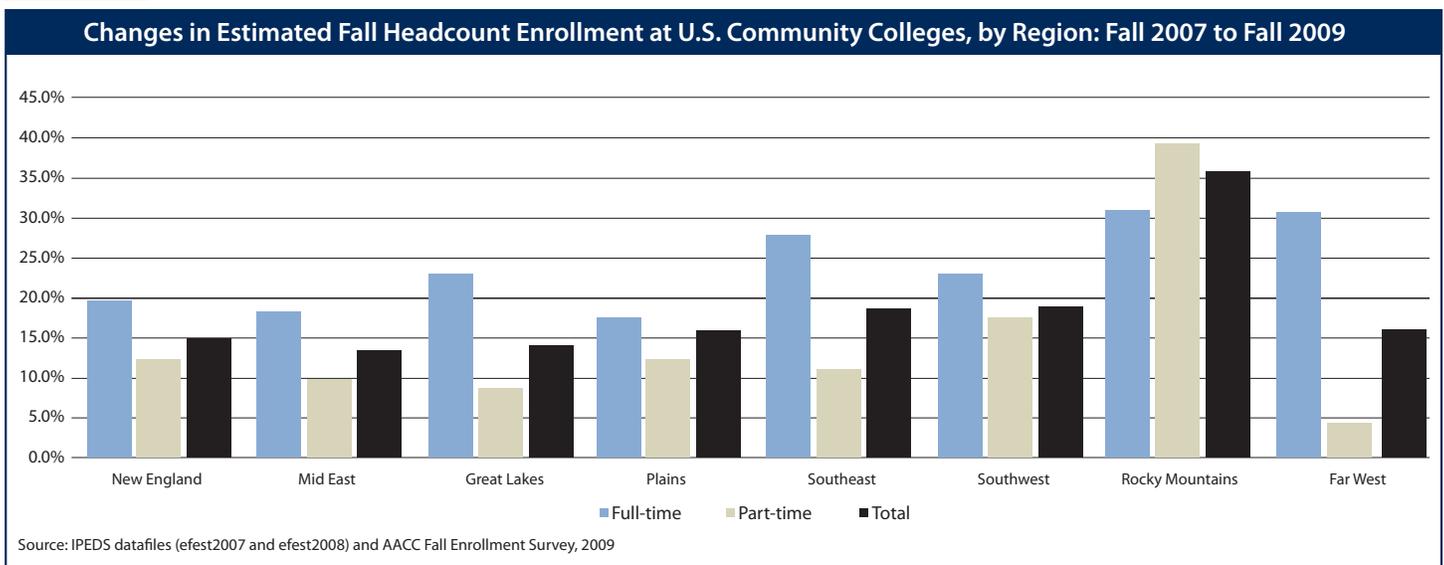
Cost Savings

- The limited fiscal resources of previously fiscally secure families positioned community colleges as a viable option due to comparably lower tuition and fees.

Outreach to the Community

- Students saw value because of marketing and advertising

FIGURE 3



campaigns that highlighted institutional quality and created general awareness of campus offerings.

- Partnerships with business, industry, and high schools expanded course and programmatic options available at community colleges.

Structural Capacity

- At some campuses, new construction allowed for increased capacity to provide new or additional courses, while at others existing capacity limited the number of students colleges could serve.
- Enrollment caps at 4-year institutions limited opportunity for some students who, in turn, attended community colleges.

In addition to the local factors that were perceived to influence enrollments at community colleges, institutional factors that serve as core operating principles of community colleges were mentioned as enrollment influences. Most commonly cited were the lower price relative to similar education at 4-year and proprietary institutions, increased educational opportunities through innovative course scheduling and delivery options, and refocusing program and course offerings to meet local needs.

PART 3. LESSONS LEARNED

All public postsecondary sectors have been faced with challenging environments as a result of the economic downturn. Community colleges maintained their innovative spirit through cooperation and coordination with external entities such as local business and industry as well as with each other. From their own perspective, along the way they learned some valuable lessons, including but not limited to the following.

- *Encourage potential students to apply early for financial aid.*

Institutions consistently expressed concern that people attempted to register without having financial aid applications completed. For those who needed the financial support and did not anticipate needing to return to college, the wait for financial aid application processing meant the difference in being able to register for the courses they sought. While institutions highlighted ways they attempted to work with students on an individual basis, they acknowledged that encouraging early application for federal financial aid—even for those who did not think they needed it—would have been helpful. How to identify and motivate these individuals remains a steep challenge.

- *Use data from multiple sources to respond to changes in demand.*

The phrase “data-driven decision making” has become embedded in the leadership dialogue. This fact was highlighted in the responses of institutions as many reinforced how important it was for them to use historical

data from the preceding semesters to forecast enrollment. Others used data in their service area in combination with local knowledge of pending plant and industry closings to prepare for shifts in their enrollment. Another use of data cited was daily reports of course registration patterns, which allowed institutions to adapt scheduled offerings to meet student demand.

- *Reach out to the community—including but not limited to underserved populations, high schools, and job placement centers—to promote the value of a community college education.*

Respondents suggested several ways in which they attempted to reach out to their communities. Some examples included staffing a call center to answer questions, actively pursuing early application initiatives with high schools, and establishing one-stop registration sites. Other institutions mentioned their efforts to identify underrepresented populations in their community in order to share educational options the college provided. Respondents invariably mentioned the connection their institutions maintained with business, industry, high schools, and local government agencies. This lack of a “town and gown” split allowed institutions to interact with constituents on a regular basis in order to anticipate trends.

- *Maintain flexibility in institutional operations to be better prepared to respond to dramatic environmental changes.*

Examples of institutional flexibility included retaining a list of qualified faculty, offering support to departments on the campus when stressed beyond capacity, and rethinking the delivery of courses. To meet demand, some community colleges have implemented night-time courses, weekend courses, hybrid courses, intense programs where students attend for 7 hours a day for five days a week, and accelerated terms where two intense 8-week semesters are offered.

Who May Have Been Disadvantaged

The reality of enrollment management is that one never knows how many students who wished to enroll were unable to do so. As open-door institutions, community colleges strive to provide access to success for all students. This philosophical stance, however, may have been limited for some populations in fall 2009.

When asked if any type of student was not able to choose a course they wanted because of classes reaching capacity, 34.2% of respondents answered in the affirmative. From their perspective, several factors contributed to limiting opportunity:

- Fiscal factors, including the inability of students to pay for courses.
- Courses did not align with work or life schedules.
- Priority enrollment policies limited opportunity for new

students.

- Last-minute registrations.
- Not completing financial aid paperwork prior to enrolling.
- Courses that had equipment needs (i.e., nursing, labs, studio arts, computer labs) were not able to be expanded in the same way less equipment-dependent courses were.
- Developmental courses tended to reach capacity early in the registration period.

PART 4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Institutions, policymakers, and the public need to be prepared to respond to dramatically changed economic conditions, with their attendant pressures on community colleges.

- *The need for further education and training is occasionally unexpected. As such, all citizens should be made aware of the federal financial assistance programs.*

Many institutions reported that students showed up for registration without having completed financial aid applications. If families were made aware of the potential

federal fiscal support for postsecondary education when receiving their tax returns, it would allow for students to start planning early and reduce the number of late registrants who have been found to be disadvantaged in the enrollment of courses they require. Additionally, where possible, high schools and job placement centers should encourage completing the FAFSA either during the last semester of high school or during the first counseling session.

- *Improved transfer and articulation policies will be critical in ensuring that some community college students are able to achieve their educational aspirations.*

As larger numbers of full-time students attend community colleges, more students will be likely to seek transfer to a 4-year institution. To help these students achieve their aspirations, it is imperative that transfer and articulation policies that work effectively be developed and clearly communicated to students by community colleges, 4-year institutions, and state agencies, where appropriate.

TECHNICAL APPENDIX

SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

The survey was developed internally by two American Association of Community College (AACC) staff members. The intent was to create a short survey that would not burden institutional research staff at colleges while at the same time gathering essential data.

The result of internal deliberations at AACC was a six-question survey including three quantitative questions and three qualitative questions (see Appendix A). The tight turn-around time did not allow for field testing the survey, resulting in the need to clarify for a limited number of participants that the quantitative data solicited were estimates, as currently collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).¹

SAMPLING FRAME

Because all AACC member colleges were invited to participate in the survey, a sampling strategy was not employed. Eligibility to be a member institution, and thereby included in the AACC universe dataset, was determined in accordance with the definition of community college as utilized by AACC. Specifically,

Institutional membership is open to community, junior, and technical colleges and similar postsecondary institutions that offer an associate degree and are accredited by a regional accrediting association recognized by the Council for Higher Education Association (CHEA). (AACC also extends membership to community college system and state offices.) These provisions distinguish the AACC definition from that of the U.S. Education Department's (ED). ED recognizes all postsecondary institutions whose highest award is an associate degree and that are accredited by an accrediting body recognized by ED (all the regional accreditors as well as many national accrediting bodies). As such, any college granting a bachelor's degree (or higher) is not considered to be a community college by ED. AACC employs a more nuanced and complex definition of the term.²

SURVEY DEPLOYMENT

All member colleges of the AACC were e-mailed an invitation to participate and provided a link to the survey (see Appendix B). Additionally, recipients received a PDF version of the survey to review, because they would not be

able to save partial responses and return to them later in the process.

The initial invitation was sent on October 29, 2009. A reminder e-mail with a clarified deadline of November 15, 2009, was sent to those who had yet to complete the survey on November 5, 2009. Conforming to standard practice, a follow-up letter thanking participants for their submissions and encouraging those yet to participate was e-mailed to member colleges on November 17, 2009, (see Appendix C) with a final submission date of November 24, 2009.

Two types of data were collected in the survey. As such, each type of data required a different treatment.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Consistent with a practice starting in 2007,³ we solicited estimated fall headcount enrollment data from member institutions. Data collection was extended beyond full-time and part-time headcount to include enrollment by gender and race/ethnicity. Also requested were noncredit workforce/career-technical headcounts. The following outlines the treatment of the data as part of the analysis for each data point collected.

Survey Response

The AACC universe included 1,094 institutions and district offices, 364 of which responded to the survey. In some cases, both institutions and the community college districts to which they are members responded to the survey. District-by-district determinations were made when considering the nature of the institutional and district data provided, resulting in a reduction of 82 institutions or administrative units ($N=1,012$) from the AACC universe of member institutions, such that a community college district like Seattle was counted as one rather than four separate institutions. Only 4 out of 100 private institutional members responded to the survey; therefore, this sector was removed from the analysis along with institutions outside of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, which resulted in 902 eligible institutions. The Community College of the Air Force was removed due to its unique nature. The result was a dataset with 344 responding institutions representing 38.2% of the population and 3.2 million students enrolled in credit-bearing courses.

Bias

The national scope of survey required a stratification of responses by degree of urbanization and geographical region.⁴ Definitions utilized by NCES's Integrated

Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) for both geographical region and degree of urbanization were employed (see Appendix D). To identify bias, the distribution

TABLE A-1

| Number of Responses and Response Rate by Degree of Urbanization | | | |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Urbanicity | Number of Institutions | | |
| | AACC Universe | Institutional Responses | Response Rate (%) |
| City | 264 | 101 | 38.3 |
| Suburb | 156 | 65 | 41.7 |
| Town | 198 | 87 | 43.9 |
| Rural | 283 | 91 | 32.2 |
| TOTAL | 901 | 344 | 38.2% |

of the reporting institutions by two geographical characteristics was conducted.

Table A-1 presents the degree of urbanization for institutional responses to the relative segment of the universe of AACC member colleges. In most cases, response rates by degree of urbanization were close to the total response rate of 38.2%. The slight underrepresentation comparative to other geographic grouping for rural institutions should be noted, as they make up the largest segment in terms of the number of institutions but serve fewer students than institutions in other segments.

Table A-2 presents the distribution of data by geographic region. Institutions in the New England region were well represented (50.0%), whereas those in the Far West were less well represented (27.8%). The lower response rate in the

TABLE A-2

| Number of Responses and Response Rate by Geographical Region | | | | |
|--|--|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Geographic Region | States | Number of Institutions | | |
| | | AACC Universe | Institutional Responses | Response Rate (%) |
| New England | CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT | 42 | 21 | 50.0 |
| Mid East | DE, DC, MD, NJ, NY, PA | 87 | 44 | 50.6 |
| Great Lakes | IL, IN, MI, OH, WI | 117 | 49 | 41.9 |
| Plains | IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD | 96 | 38 | 40.0 |
| Southeast | AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV | 265 | 97 | 36.6 |
| Southwest | AZ, NM, OK, TX | 101 | 41 | 40.6 |
| Rocky Mountains | CO, ID, MT, UT, WY | 35 | 10 | 28.6 |
| Far West | AK, CA, HI, NV, OR, WA | 158 | 44 | 27.8 |
| TOTAL | | 901 | 344 | 38.2% |

Far West was due in part to the responses from California's community colleges. This potential bias was checked.

There exists in the data a potential bias in who may have reported. The following are potential sources of bias.

- While the news media has picked up on the enrollment surge, it may have been the case that those colleges that did not experience a surge in enrollments chose not to reply.
- Research has identified that many small institutions do not have the research capacity to respond to data requests. Conversations we had with some college presidents supported this earlier finding, as they mentioned their inability to handle the multiple data requests their institution received. One institution, for example, mentioned that it had to pay to outsource data analysis for federal reporting and was not able to participate in the survey for this reason.

To minimize response bias, we employed a two-prong approach during our final solicitation for data. First, we attempted to increase our response rate. In order to do so, we extended the deadline and sent a follow-up letter restating the importance of having all types on institutions represented in the data collected by the survey. This resulted in an increase of 92 institutions.

Second, we obtained total headcount estimates from California and Texas. We then compared the institutionally reported headcounts to those of the states to (1) check for accuracy and (2) see if our respondents were distributed evenly with respect to percentage changes from 2008 to 2009.

In California, we received responses from 28 community colleges in the state. The average percentage change for all institutions in California was 3.07% (for respondents, the average was 5.10%). Twelve of the 28 respondents fell below the state average, while 16 were in excess of the state average.

We received responses from 18 community colleges in Texas. The average percentage change for all institutions was 13.85%. Ten of the 18 respondents fell below this level, while 8 exceeded the state average. The growth in Texas was larger than the observed growth from survey respondents, which in turn was larger than the growth observed in California.

Determination of Representation

We determined that the raw data collected were substantially reflective of the community colleges in the United States. This determination was based on the observed distribution by region and the examinations of response bias, understanding that the numbers presented are early enrollment estimates.

Consideration was given to weighting responses utilizing methods such as post-stratification, raking, and other practices but were not employed because (1) it is understood that the values presented are early estimates, (2) the unique

nature of each state's community colleges did not often provide large enough numbers of institutions to provide for analytical techniques, and (3) our examination of bias revealed a fairly stable estimate.

A "California caveat" does exist in that the large number of community colleges in its system does influence national trends, as observed in the College Board's Trends in College Pricing 2009 report.⁵ It might be that future analysis of this time period may show a slightly lower national estimate due to the lower growth rate described previously.

Credit Headcount

Data on credit headcount were matched with estimated fall headcount data for fall 2008 and 2007 as reported in IPEDS. Data collected from the survey were matched to estimated fall enrollment data for 2007 and 2008 from IPEDS. Estimated fall enrollment data were used because the survey data were estimates and final fall enrollments from fall 2008 were not officially released at the time of analysis. Data included total headcount, part-time headcount, and full-time headcount. These enrollment data were matched to similar data from survey respondents, allowing for trend analyses as presented in the brief.

Data was requested by gender and race/ethnicity. This information is not provided in the report because trend data from the prior year were not available at the time this brief was prepared. Additionally, estimated data collected by IPEDS does not collect gender or race/ethnicity data, and the change

in reporting formats for race/ethnicity data did not allow for comparisons. We plan to use the data in future studies.

Noncredit Headcount

Noncredit headcount data were collected as part of the survey for fall 2008 and fall 2009. Respondents were provided an opportunity to clarify the time period that the reported number covered. The nature of the reported data varied greatly. While a typology was created to assist in classifying the reported data by time period covered, analysis of the data was still in progress at the time this policy brief was prepared. We plan to use the data in future studies.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The analysis of qualitative data did not follow a philosophical or theoretical stance with respect the inquiry (e.g., post-structural, grounded theory, etc.). Rather, the data were collected and read and re-read in order to identify salient themes leading to the creation of statements that reflected the predominant experience of participants. Questions 4, 5, and 6 were analyzed in the same manner.

In the case where both a community college district and an institution that was a member of the district responded to the survey, both responses were included in the analysis. This differed from our analysis of the quantitative data, resulting in qualitative statements from 364 member institutions.

APPENDIX A. FALL ENROLLMENT SURVEY

American Association of Community Colleges 2009 Fall Enrollment Survey

Welcome to the AACC Fall 2009 Headcount Enrollment Survey. This document is provided to you to assist in completing the survey. Please use it prior to completing the survey so you will have all the data available before you begin entering it -- you will not be able to save your responses once started on the survey online.

1) Please provide your full-time and part-time headcount enrollment for Fall 2009 and Fall 2008. This amount should replicate the amount reported to IPEDS in Fall Enrollment Survey (reported to National Center for Education Statistics (NCES))

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Fall 2009 Full-Time | _____ |
| Fall 2009 Part-Time | _____ |
| Fall 2009 Total | _____ |
| Fall 2008 Full-Time | _____ |
| Fall 2008 Part-Time | _____ |
| Fall 2008 Total | _____ |

2) Please estimate your institution's non-credit workforce/career-technical education headcount enrollment for Fall 2009 and Fall 2008 at the same date.

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Fall 2009 Noncredit | _____ |
| Fall 2008 Noncredit | _____ |

What time-frame was used for the noncredit enrollment count?

No word limit

3) Can you report your Fall 2009 credit headcount enrollments disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender?

Yes
No

What race/ethnicity reporting format would you use?

Old IPEDS format (does not include two or more race category)
New IPEDS format (includes two or more race category)

OLD IPEDS FORMAT(does not include two or more race category)

Please complete the matrix below with the appropriate enrollment counts for Males in Fall 2009:

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Non resident Alien | _____ |
| Black, Non-Hispanic | _____ |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | _____ |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | _____ |
| Hispanic | _____ |
| White, Non-Hispanic | _____ |
| Race/Ethnicity Unknown | _____ |
| Total Males | _____ |

Please complete the matrix below with the appropriate enrollment counts for Females in Fall 2009:

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Non resident Alien | _____ |
| Black, Non-Hispanic | _____ |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | _____ |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | _____ |
| Hispanic | _____ |
| White, Non-Hispanic | _____ |
| Race/Ethnicity Unknown | _____ |
| Total Females | _____ |

NEW IPEDS FORMAT (includes two or more race category)

Please complete the matrix below with the appropriate enrollment counts for Males in Fall 2009:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Hispanic | _____ |
| Black or African American | _____ |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | _____ |
| Asian | _____ |
| White | _____ |
| Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander | _____ |
| Two or More Races | _____ |
| Non resident Alien | _____ |
| Race/Ethnicity Unknown | _____ |
| Total Males | _____ |

Please complete the matrix below with the appropriate enrollment counts for Females in Fall 2009:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Hispanic | _____ |
| Black or African American | _____ |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | _____ |
| Asian | _____ |
| White | _____ |
| Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander | _____ |
| Two or More Races | _____ |
| Non resident Alien | _____ |
| Race/Ethnicity Unknown | _____ |
| Total Females | _____ |

4) What local factors may have influenced Fall 2009 enrollment as compared to previous years?

No word limit

5) If your institution had courses reaching capacity before the end of the enrollment period, was a certain type of student disadvantaged?

Yes

No

If Yes, please describe:

No word limit

6) What lesson(s) from your Fall 2009 experience would be beneficial to your community college peers nationally as it relates to advancing the open-access philosophy inherent in the community college mission?

No word limit

Thank you for completing AACC's Fall enrollment survey.

AACC will be making the results available on our website shortly.

If you have any questions, please contact Christopher Mullin at cmullin@aacc.nche.edu

APPENDIX B. INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY

Subject: AACC Survey: Fall 2009 Headcount Enrollments and its Effect on your Campus

October 29, 2009

Dear [Recipient],

Enrollment in the Fall 2009 at community colleges has been a topic of wide discussion as the economy faltered and undergraduate institutions faced the choices of limiting their enrollments or accepting many new students. In order to better understand the enrollment trends of fall 2009, we are asking for your participation in a brief survey.

The data will be used to develop a policy brief issued by AACC and provide data to assist in the creation of the community college fact sheet.

The survey may be accessed by clicking on the following link: [link]

For your convenience, a version of the survey (link to survey) is available for you to review and prepare the responses to the questions as you will not be able to stop and save the online survey once started. Should you have any questions during the process, please feel free to call (202-728-0200 ext. 258) or e-mail (cmullin@aacc.nche.edu) Christopher M. Mullin.

We appreciate your participation as we continue to work on your behalf as The Voice of America's Community Colleges.

Sincerely,



Christopher Mullin
American Association of Community Colleges

APPENDIX C. FOLLOW-UP LETTER

Subject: AACC Fall Enrollment Survey Status: Opportunity extended until November 24

November 17, 2009

Dear [Recipient],

On October 29, 2009 the American Association of Community Colleges e-mailed a survey to its member colleges relating to enrollment in fall 2009. For those of you who have already submitted a response we want to thank you for your participation. If you have not yet had the opportunity to complete the survey we again ask for your participation.

Institutional responses to our 2009 fall enrollment survey are important for two reasons. First, there is a strong interest on the behalf of federal policymakers in the results of the survey. Second, it is important to include your experience in the analysis to ensure we are inclusive of institutions in all states and of all sizes.

The survey includes 6 questions. The first three questions ask for estimated headcounts at your institution. The last three questions ask for your perspective and experiences during the fall 2009 enrollment period.

To ensure you have the opportunity to participate we have extended the deadline through TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2009. The survey may be accessed by clicking the following link: [link]

I thank you in advance for your consideration of our request. For your convenience a version of the survey (link to survey) is available for you to review prior to completing the survey as you will not be able to stop and save the online survey once started. If you have any questions about the survey please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,



Christopher M. Mullin, Ph.D.
Program Director for Policy Analysis
American Association of Community Colleges
One Dupont Circle, NW
Suite 410
Washington, DC 20036
T: (202) 728-0200 ext. 258
F: (202) 833-2467
cmullin@aacc.nche.edu



APPENDIX D. DEFINITIONS OF GEOGRAPHIC REGION AND DEGREE OF URBANIZATION

The following definitions were extracted from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System of the National Center for Education Statistics on November 18, 2009.

Title: Geographic Region

Description: Geographic region code.

- 0 - US Service schools
- 1 - New England CT ME MA NH RI VT
- 2 - Mid East DE DC MD NJ NY PA
- 3 - Great Lakes IL IN MI OH WI
- 4 - Plains IA KS MN MO NE ND SD
- 5 - Southeast AL AR FL GA KY LA MS NC SC TN VA WV
- 6 - Southwest AZ NM OK TX
- 7 - Rocky Mountains CO ID MT UT WY
- 8 - Far West AK CA HI NV OR WA
- 9 - Outlying areas AS FM GU MH MP PR PW VI
- 3 - Not available

Title: Degree of urbanization (Urban-centric locale)

Description: Locale codes identify the geographic status of a school on an urban continuum ranging from “large city” to “rural.” They are based on a school’s physical address. The urban-centric locale codes introduced in this file are assigned through a methodology developed by the U.S. Census Bureau’s Population Division in 2005. The urban-centric locale codes apply current geographic concepts to the original NCES locale codes used on IPEDS files through 2004.

11 = City: Large: Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population of 250,000 or more.

12 = City: Midsize: Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000.

13 = City: Small: Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 100,000.

21 = Suburb: Large: Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population of 250,000 or more.

22 = Suburb: Midsize: Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000.

23 = Suburb: Small: Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 100,000.

31 = Town: Fringe: Territory inside an urban cluster that is less than or equal to 10 miles from an urbanized area.

32 = Town: Distant: Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an urbanized area.

33 = Town: Remote: Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 35 miles of an urbanized area.

41 - Rural: Fringe: Census-defined rural territory that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an urban cluster.

42 = Rural: Distant: Census-defined rural territory that is more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural

43 = Rural: Remote: Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster.

American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, were not assigned a locale code because the geographic and governmental structures of these entities do not fit the definitional scheme used to derive the code.

¹The National Center for Education Statistics began collecting estimated fall headcount enrollments in the fall of 2007.

²American Association of Community Colleges, “Defining a Community College” (Washington, DC: Author, 2008).

³ See “Part B—Organization—Student Enrollment, Institutional Characteristics” [Electronic data file] (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Survey Instrument Archive, http://www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/surveys/2007/pdf/ic_2007.pdf)

⁴ Floyd J. Fowler, Jr., *Survey Research Methods*, Second Ed. [Applied Social Research Methods Series, Vol. 1] (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1993).

⁵ College Board, *Trends in College Pricing 2009* [Trends in Higher Education Series] (Washington, Author, October 2009).



One Dupont Circle, NW | Suite 410
Washington, DC 20036
T. 202-728-0200 | F. 202-833-2467
www.aacc.nche.edu

AACC MISSION

Building a Nation of Learners by Advancing
America's Community Colleges