

DEGREE COMPLETION
BOARD RULE 400.0200.00
DEMOGRAPHIC STUDIES OF STUDENTS COMPARED TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING: DECEMBER 3, 2009

The Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) and the Chancellor of the University System of Ohio (USO) include demographic characteristics of students in accountability metrics. An example of one metric for assessing institutional success calls for an annual count of the number of degrees awarded to *first-generation* college students. Definitions for this metric stipulate that institutions are to include in their count, those students who completed the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) and indicated on the form that neither parent “completed any college.” The baseline level for this measurement was set by OBR as 2006-2007, and Belmont’s count of *first-generation* college students awarded degrees during that year was 96 students.

Comparing the demographic characteristics profile of Belmont Technical College students with profiles of students enrolled in other institutions serves as a key indicator for the Board of Trustees (*Policy Manual, Ends, Section IV, 400.0200.00, Degree Completion, 2007*). The demographic profile of students compiled for the report is based upon characteristics that are related to educational attainment, or degree completion. Criteria for developing the comparison report are based upon accountability metrics identified for USO institutions by the Ohio Board of Regents.

Data

This report compares demographic profile data for students enrolled at six institutions: Belmont Technical College (BTC); Hocking College (HC); Jefferson Community College (JCC); Marion Technical College (MTC); Rio Grande Community College (RGCC) and Zane State College (Zane). The variables used for comparison are: 1.) Postsecondary enrollment (fall total), 2.) Enrollment age 25 and older (fall total), 3.) Degrees awarded to first-generation college students (total by fiscal year), 4.) Degrees awarded to Black, Hispanic, and Native American students (percent for fiscal year); and 5.) Number of students enrolled for fall quarter engaged in internships and co-ops during the fiscal year. Variables presented in this report are those variables related to the demographic profiles of students and outlined in the Strategic Plan for the University System of Ohio. The Ohio Association of Community Colleges (OACC) has tracked Ohio community college data for the accountability metrics and provides updates for OACC institutions.

Data are presented in five tables corresponding to five *University System of Ohio Accountability Measures*. Total enrollment data for Belmont have been updated to reflect demographic information gathered for fall quarter 2009. Updated information for other institutions will be included when that information becomes available through the HEI Web site or from the OACC.

Chart 1, Total Postsecondary Enrollments (fall)

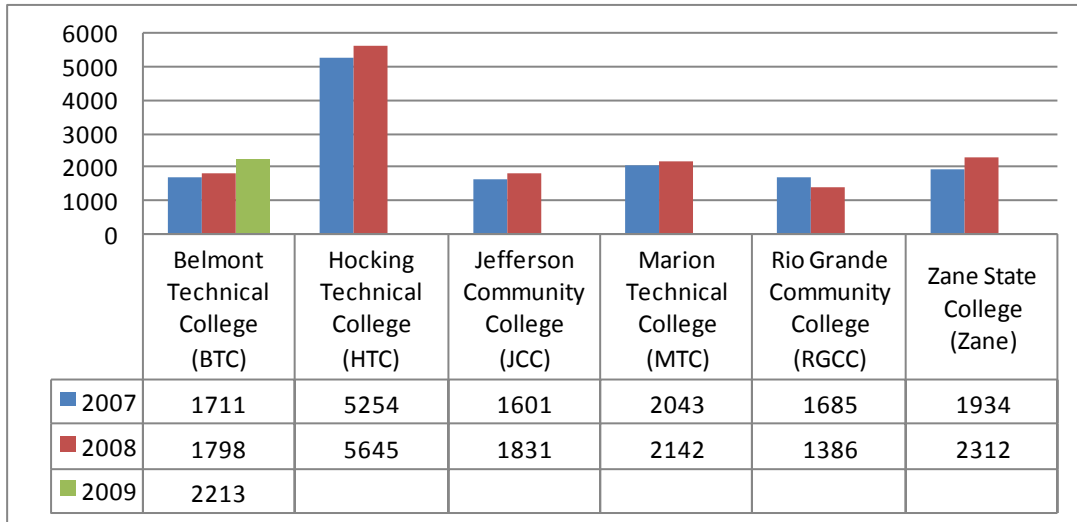


Chart 2, Total Enrollments Age 25 and Older (fall)

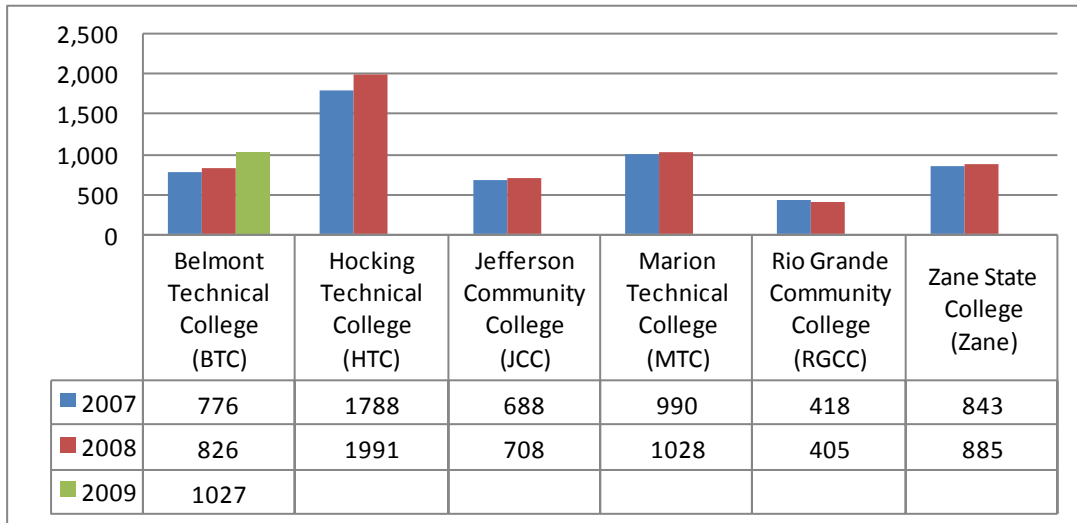


Chart 3, Total Degrees Awarded to First-Generation Students (fiscal year)

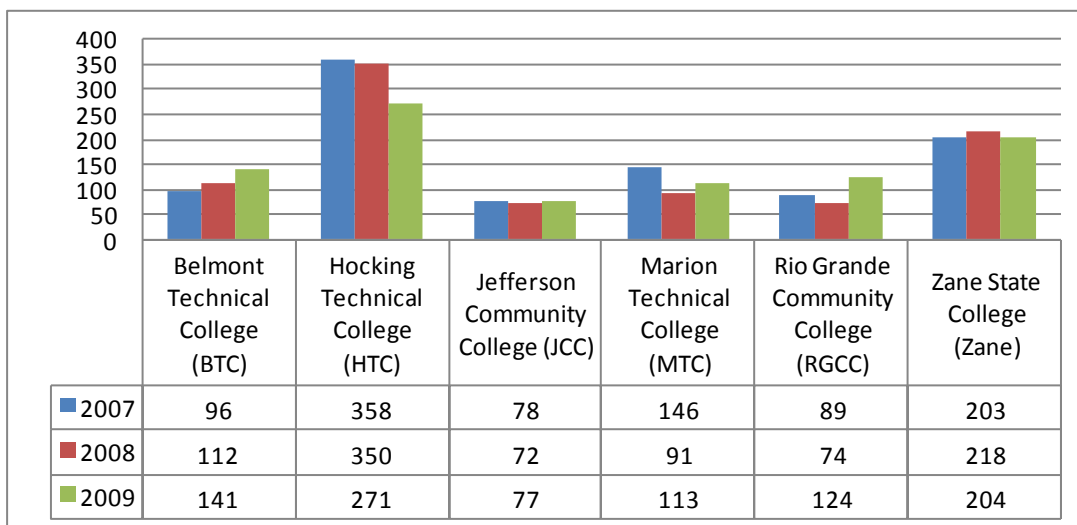


Chart 4, *Percent of Degrees Awarded to Black, Hispanic, and Native American Students (fiscal year)*

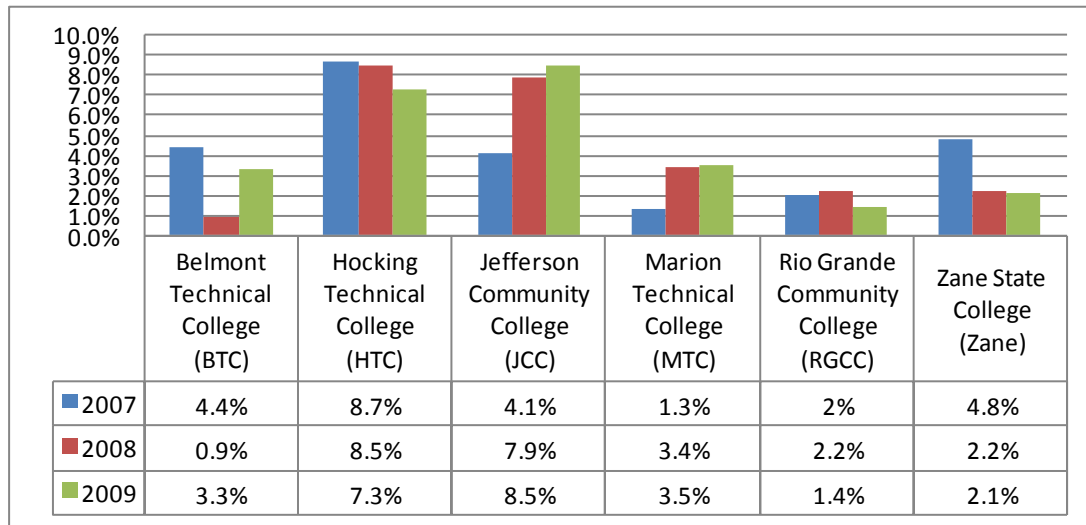
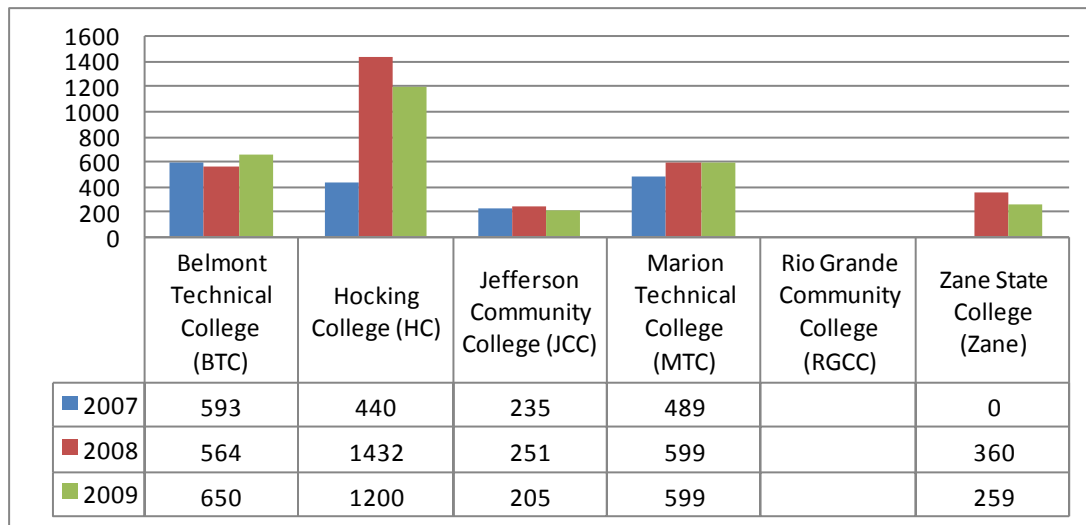


Chart 5, *Number of Students (fall enrollment) Engaged in Internships and Co-ops (fiscal year)*



Analysis

Data presented in this report cover a three-year period. Enrollments at Belmont over that time period reflect increases and a positive trend for four of the five measures i.e. total enrollment, enrollment of students age 25 and over, total degrees awarded to first-generation college students, and number of students engaged in internships and co-ops. Belmont is the only institution of the six included for comparison that has a positive trend across three years on four of these measures.

The measure for which Belmont has not shown an increase over the three-year period is displayed in Chart 4, *Percent of Degrees Awarded to Black, Hispanic, and Native American Students (fiscal year)*. A possible explanation for why this measure does not show an increase that is consistent with other measures is that the reporting definitions and guidelines have been clarified by OBR since the projections were first done in 2008.

It is also valuable to note that determining the percent of degrees awarded to minority students rests upon students self-identifying as being members of a minority when they enroll at Belmont or update their personal information. Belmont does not require that students identify their race or ethnicity, and some students choose not to categorize themselves in that way. In any case, the Cultural Diversity Team has been working to enhance awareness of all cultures and to bring programs to the college that support students' learning about, and acceptance of cultural differences. Recently, the college hosted a South American Medicine Man who visited on October 27 and spoke to a group of students, board and staff members about cultural heritage. Programs such as the Belmont's annual *Cultural Pearls* evening are presented not only to increase awareness of cultural diversity, but also to encourage members of the BTC community to take pride in their heritage, to feel valued as members of the college community, and to promote the achievement of academic goals in the college environment.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Comparative data that is useful for decision-making is not readily accessible and lags behind action-planning. National surveys, such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), administered at Belmont during spring 2009 are sampled in such a way as to even out differences among institutional populations. As a result, Belmont's Strategic Plan embeds action plans and strategies aimed at making the college accessible to all students and focuses on achievement of academic goals for all students.

There are action plans in the Strategic Plan that address the college's vision of embracing "a culture of continuous knowledge acquisition, integrity, openness, caring and respect for all." Those plans and recommendations are discussed in the November monitoring report, "Demographic Enrollment Statistics," and the December report, "Placement Data and Rates by Program Area."