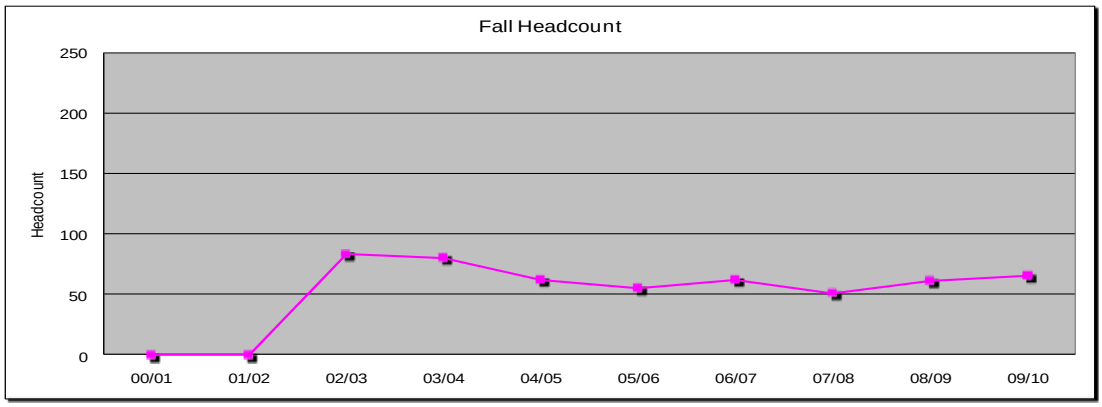
STUDENT DEVELOPMENT
BOARD RULE 400.0100.00
ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW – TEN-YEAR TRENDS, KEY INDICATORS
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING: MARCH 25, 2010

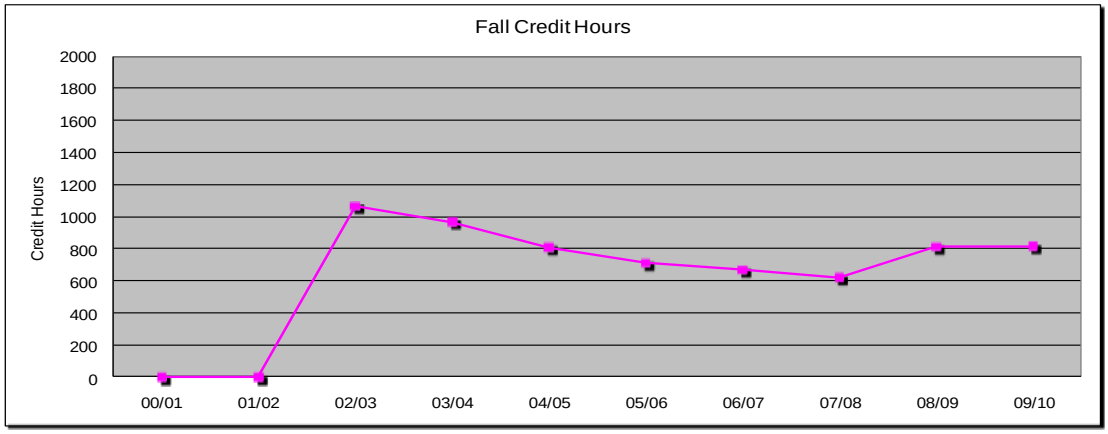
This report focuses on ten-year trends in academic programs and provides an overview of the program review charts included in the report. The trend charts show fall quarter headcounts, credit hours, and full-time equivalents (FTEs) over a period of ten years. Charts are arranged alphabetically by majors and are presented in groups of three for each major. The purpose of the charts is to show enrollments within majors and to allow for a more detailed examination of trends within programs. Examination of trends within programs facilitates a longer range view of what is happening in programs and provides formative feedback that can be used to proactively measure and set targets for improvement related to the viability of programs. Ten-year trends are especially useful for predicting future enrollment patterns.

Headcount charts:



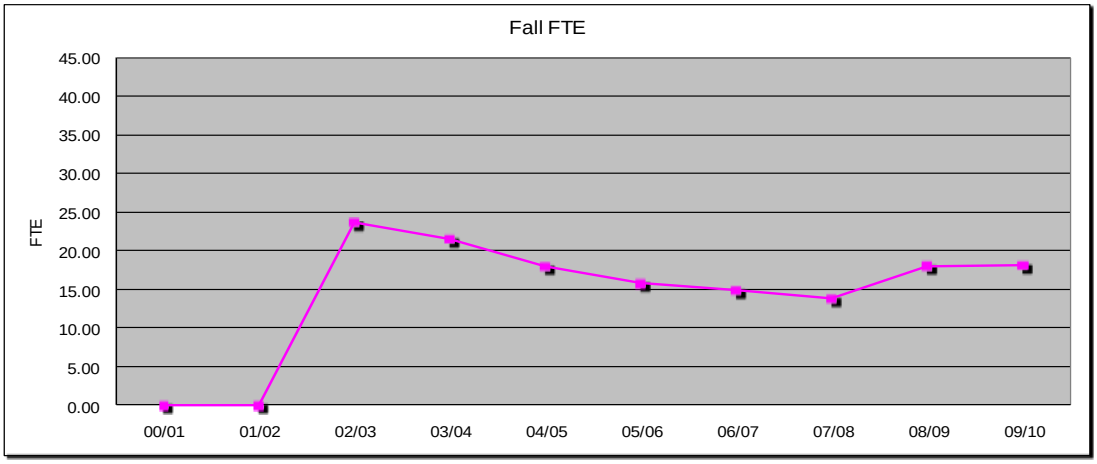
The fall headcount charts show the unduplicated number of students enrolled in a program during fall quarter. The number of students is measured on the vertical axis which is scaled from zero to 250. Years are marked on the horizontal axis.

Credit hour charts:



Fall credit hours are shown on similar charts with years marked across the horizontal axis. When measuring the number of credit hours of enrollment, the scale on the vertical axis runs from the zero point to 2,000 credit hours.

Full-time equivalency (FTE):



FTE charts in this report display the number of FTEs of enrollment for fall quarters over a ten-year period. Trend lines in the FTE charts look very similar to the trend lines for credit hour charts throughout this report. That is because the FTE is a standardized unit of measurement. In the case of Belmont's current quarter system, one FTE is equal to 15 credit hours of enrollment.

Ten-year trends on headcounts, credit hours, and FTEs are key indicators of program review. Other key indicators of program review are described in the program review model and include: students' success in capstone courses and feedback from employer survey results. The program review model states benchmarks in three categories. Program results are measured against the benchmarks annually. Tracking sheets are maintained to document programs' outcomes. The benchmarks for 2009 Program Review cycle are: *Enrollment* decline no greater than 25% from fall to fall annually; *Persistence* rates of students in programs must be at 55 percent or greater from fall to fall annually; and the *Graduation* rate for the program equals a minimum of eight students per year.

Analysis:

The actual ten-year trend charts for each program area are attached.

Program chairs review ten-year trend data and charts as an integral part of the program review process. The program review process is initiated annually when data are gathered and charts are developed by the office of institutional research. Data are arranged into program areas which can include one major area of study, as in the case of Criminal Justice, or four areas, as is the case in the Business program which encompasses: Accounting; Business Administration and Leadership; Office Administration; and Small Business Administration and Entrepreneurship. The Student Learning Team is responsible for oversight of the faculty-driven program review processes.

Data from the ten-year trend charts is used by the Student Learning Team to guide decision-making throughout the program review process and the academic year. Trends data are used in a number of ways to improve programs. In some instances where trends indicate declining enrollment, program chairs might identify the need to update course offerings. In cases where trends show steadily increasing enrollments, the chairs may consider adding additional course sections to the schedule, or requesting classrooms with more seating capacity.

While declining enrollments are more cause for concern than enrollments that remain steady, the reason for decline is not always obvious. The changing demographics of Belmont's student population could affect enrollments in that the students pursuing degrees in some areas may have different scheduling needs from students who enrolled in the program five to ten years ago. For example, there is an evening program in nursing that accommodates the needs of students who cannot attend classes during the day. In addition to changes in student demographics, other factors that can affect enrollments in programs are the job market and economic conditions and fulfilling the workforce need for skilled employees in specific areas. Quarterly enrollment reports have shown increased enrollment at the college in times when there has been a higher rate of unemployment and difficult economic conditions. Some students see these times as an opportunity to retrain for when the job market recovers and economic conditions improve.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

The Tool and Machining Program is being studied to assess community needs in this area. The ten-year trend for this program is disappointing and has not improved for a number of years. As is the case with all programs, feasibility of continuing programs with low enrollments must be weighed against costs and needs.

In the Information Services (IS) area, four concentrations will be reduced to two concentrations. A new program showing promise in the Information Technology area is Cyber Security. Although no trend data is available at this time, interest and enrollment in the program has been positive. Additional marketing, advising, and community partnership strategies will be pursued to support enrollment growth in this promising new program.

The Help Desk program will be discontinued due to low enrollment over the past two years and upon the advice of the advisory board for the Information Technology programs. Two courses in the program will be offered as electives for those students who may be interested in sharpening their communication skills for work as help desk specialists.

The Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning program (INH) and the Welding program have shown an appreciable increase in enrollment for 2009. The needs of the INH program for additional equipment and supplies as well as faculty will be studied to promote a quality educational experience. The Welding program has procured new equipment over the last academic year to provide modern welding facilities for students. Additional work is needed in the welding labs to promote a more aesthetic learning environment.

The health professions including Medical Assisting, Practical Nursing and Associate Degree Nursing continue to sustain robust enrollment trends. More equipment and supplies including patient simulators will be purchased to provide state of the art instruction for these students. New facilities are a current priority.

Two other programs showing growth over the past four years are Industrial Electronics and Civil Engineering. These programs are being upgraded with new equipment including surveying machines. Hydraulic training equipment was purchased for the Industrial Electronics program.