Belmont Technical College supports the University System of Ohio's (USO) transfer and articulation system by providing students with opportunities to earn transfer degrees and transfer credits and by accepting transfer credits from students who transfer into the College. The goal of the USO's articulation and transfer system is to ensure that students can transfer coursework from one institution to another without having to duplicate that coursework. Transfer degrees and articulation agreements between institutions facilitate the transfer process for students. The Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees have been designed to allow students to complete the first two years of a Bachelor's degree at Belmont and then to transfer to a four-year institution. In addition, students completing degrees other than these *transfer degrees* also are encouraged to continue with their educations and to pursue four-year degrees.

The College helps students prepare for transfer by making them aware of articulation agreements, general equivalency guides, and memorandums of understanding between Belmont and other higher education institutions. The College currently has 14 articulation agreements, 13 general equivalency guides, and two Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with higher education institutions in Ohio, Indiana, and West Virginia. In addition, the College has ten MOUs with secondary institutions for Dual Enrollment, 12 Tech Prep agreements with secondary institutions, and one MOU for adult education with the Belmont-Harrison Career Center. The Transfer and Articulation Coordinator at Belmont encourages Ohio's four-year institutions to visit Belmont, invites campus representatives to interact with Belmont students, and provides information about transfer programs available to Belmont students.

The USO tracks transfers within Ohio through the Higher Education Information (HEI) system. Tracking transfers at the individual student level within the State is not available from the HEI system at this time. At some future point in time, these data may become available to institutions. In the meantime, Belmont is making an effort to learn about students' plans to transfer, which students transfer to other institutions, and how successful students are at their transfer institution through informal self-reports from students and other institutions. This monitoring report brings together data from the records office in the Student Services department at Belmont, the graduation survey, and the Student Tracker, a subscription resource of the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC).

Data

Belmont graduates and current and former students who are considering transferring to another institution or applying for a job may request official copies of their transcripts from the records office. (Students can print unofficial copies of transcripts through the student information system; however these transcripts are *unofficial* and are labeled as such.) When students transfer to other institutions, they are normally required to provide an official transcript in order to have their completed coursework considered for transfer credit. The records office has been tracking the number of requests for official transcripts. The records office asks students how they plan to use the transcript and documents the name of the institution the students give at the time of the request.

The first table, *Student transcript requests, 2009,* summarizes requests to the records office for official transcripts. The data in this chart are organized by the degree

status of the requester; students with 15 or more credit hours are in the first column, and degree and certificate recipients are reported in the second column. Requests are categorized by institutions where students reported they would be sending the official transcript. The total number of transcripts is shown by institutions to which students reported they would be sending the transcript. Institutions for which fewer than 15 requests were reported are summarized and reported as "Other institutions – fewer than 15 requests." Students may have requested more than one transcript. Thus, values in the chart reflect the number of requests, and not the number of students making requests.

Table 1, *Student transcript requests, 2009*

Intended institution for transcript	Requests from students with 15+ credit hours	Requests from Graduates
Given to student - institution not specified	464	373
West Virginia Northern CC	58	29
Ohio University Eastern Campus	26	41
Youngstown State University	25	2
West Liberty University	24	14
Wheeling Jesuit University	20	23
University of Phoenix	0	19
Ohio University Athens	0	19
Barnsville High school	18	0
Franklin University	17	28
Ohio University Zanesville Campus	15	11
Other institutions - fewer than 15 requests	223	106
Total in category	890	665

Another source of data about where Belmont students intend to continue their education comes from the post-graduation survey that is administered following graduation. On March 29, 2010, students who completed certificates and degrees in September 2009 were surveyed about job placements and continuing education plans. The survey was sent to 81 graduates. Responses to the survey were received from 25 graduates (31 percent) by May 5, 2010. Table 2, *September 2009 graduates' continuing education plans*, summarizes the data that was gathered by staff members in Student Services.

The data in this table show that of the 25 graduates who responded to the survey, 19 reported they intended to continue their education. There were 11 students reporting that they intended to pursue a Bachelor's degree. The institutions where these graduates planned to enroll are listed in order by frequency. Thirty-six percent (n=4) of the students planned to work toward a Bachelor's degree at Ohio University.

Table 2, *September 2009 graduates' continuing education plans*

Bachelor's degree	11
Ohio University - 4	
Ohio State University - 1	
Chamberlain College of Nursing - 1	
Devry - 1	
Institution not specified - 4	
Another associate's degree or certificate	5
Taking selected classes	3
No plans to continue	6
Total responses	25

The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) gathers data on student enrollment and degrees awarded. NSC developed the *student tracker* to verify transferring students' degrees for four-year institutions. NSC also offers tracking reports of student enrollments and degrees through a subscription service to two and four-year institutions. The data in Table 3, Subsequent *degrees awarded between 12/1998 and 3/2010* is based upon a cohort of students who received degrees from Belmont after December 15, 1998 and before March 31, 2010. The table summarizes the degrees awarded by other two-year and four-year institutions between December 1998 and March 2010.

The tracking process for two-year institutions is carried out by matching names, birthdates, and degree histories of Belmont graduates' records with information submitted by institutions where Belmont's graduates have continued their educations. This table indicates that 109 Belmont graduates received degrees from other two-year institutions between December 1998 and March 2010. During the same time period, 548 degrees were awarded by four-year institutions to Belmont graduates.

Table 3, *Subsequent degrees awarded between 12/1998 and 3/2010*

Four-year institutions

Ohio University	190
Wheeling Jesuit University	69
West Virginia University	39
Ohio State University	25
Youngstown State University	21
Franklin University	17
University of Akron	11
University of Phoenix	8
West Liberty University	7
Other 4-year institutions	161
Total	548

Chart 1, *Subsequent enrollment instances between 12/1998 and 3/2010* displays Belmont students' transfers to other institutions by the states where the greatest percentage of graduates have enrolled. When NSC provides data on *enrollment instances* the numbers are duplicated. This means that if a Belmont graduate enrolled more than once in another two or four-year institution, that individual would be represented in the data by more than one enrollment instance. The same data are displayed in Table 4, *Subsequent enrollment instances between 12/1998 and 3/2010.*

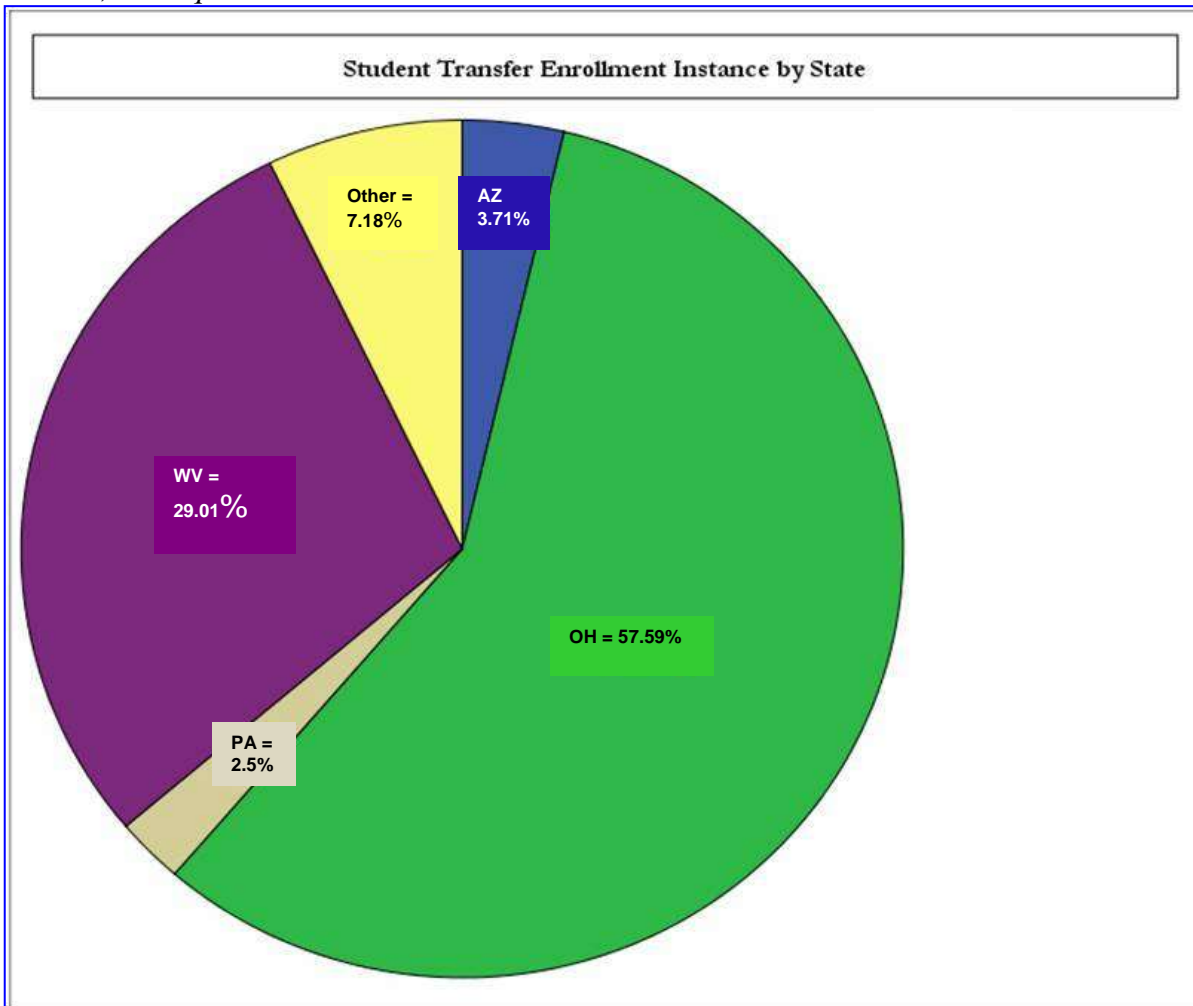Chart 1, *Subsequent enrollment instances between 12/1998 and 3/2010*

Student Transfer Enrollment Instance by State

Other =
7.18%

AZ
3.71%

WV =
29.01%

OH = 57.59%

PA =
2.5%

Table 4, *Subsequent enrollment instances between 12/1998 and 3/2010*

State	Percent Enrollment instances
Arizona	3.71%
Ohio	57.59%
Pennsylvania	2.50%
West Virginia	29.01%
Other states with less than 2 percent	7.18%
Total	99.99%

Analysis

Belmont has articulation agreements, general equivalency guides, and MOUs with higher education institutions and tech prep agreements and MOUs with pre-college institutions. The College encourages and supports students' plans to achieve their educational goals at this institution by completing certificate and degree programs and at other institutions by preparing students to transfer. Articulation and transfer arrangements

provide direction for students and advisors when they plan transfers and outline necessary requirements for transferring credits from one institution to another. The numbers of students who make use of these opportunities cannot be fully tracked at this time. The College is working to develop a more systematic approach to tracking students' transfers through the HEI system, college records, and the National Student Clearinghouse.

The number of transcript requests in 2009 from students and graduates as shown in Table 1 suggests that Belmont students and graduates are taking advantage of the transferability of credits, certificates, and degrees from the college. While more than half of the students requesting transcripts did not specify where they intended to send the transcript, more than ten percent of graduate-requested transcripts (71) were reported to be for one of three Ohio University campuses. A high school is included in the listing for students with 15 more credit hours. This suggests that some students making requests may have been dual enrollment students. In more than 50 percent of the instances of requests from students with 15 or more credits and from graduates, the institution to which the student would provide the transcript was not specified. This percentage reveals that usefulness of transcript request data possibly could be enhanced by making a greater effort to learn where students and graduates intend or plan to continue their educations.

Data in Table 2 from the graduation survey suggest that the institution where the greatest numbers of students intend to pursue their educations is Ohio University. These data are consistent with data in the first table showing that when graduates requested transcripts, they most often reported they intended to send the transcript to one of Ohio University's campuses.

Student tracker data from NSC complements the data available from college records. The NSC data shows the number of subsequent degrees earned by former Belmont students and the number of times former Belmont students have enrolled in other institutions. In addition, NSC data shows enrollments and degrees earned at institutions outside Ohio. These pieces of information are useful in understanding the articulation and transfer patterns of former students. Usefulness of the data this year was diminished somewhat by inconsistencies in the reports the College received from NSC. When the data analyst for NSC was contacted by telephone to explain the discrepancies, an analyst explained that matching student records relies upon the judgment of analysts and inconsistencies between reports are an inherent part of the process.

Analysis of data from the three sources included in this report reveals that Belmont students are continuing their educations to some extent. Individual student progress in other institutions and patterns of student enrollments and progress are less clear. Belmont students and graduates requesting transcripts most often plan to continue their educations in Ohio. The single institution that students state they plan to attend is one of the Ohio University locations. On the one hand this may be the result of strong recruiting by Ohio University in this area, and on the other hand, the proximity of Ohio University's Eastern Campus might affect where students plan to attend in the future. Taking a broader range view with the NSC data suggests that geographic locations of institutions appear to be a factor in students' continuing education plans. The NSC data is consistent with Belmont's data in that Ohio institutions have awarded at least 48 percent of the subsequent four-year degrees and 48 percent of subsequent two-year degrees earned by former Belmont students.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Belmont's processes for educating students about articulation and transfer opportunities seem to be successful when those processes are assessed by transcript requests and graduation survey results. Integrating a reliable tracking process into the education process at Belmont might yield more useful data in the future. How such a tracking process could be implemented has not yet been determined. Graduates are informed on the graduation survey that their responses are confidential. This is a way of encouraging students to respond to the survey. In order to track students more efficiently, that confidentiality would need to be waived.

NSC data provides an opportunity to document that more than 29 percent of former Belmont students' subsequent enrollments have been in West Virginia institutions. Data reflecting this are important as the College works to achieve performance metrics which focus on transfers to institutions within Ohio.

This report brings together data from the Records Office, Career Services, the Articulation and Transfer Coordinator's records of systematic processes, Academic Affairs, Institutional Research, the Ohio Board of Regents, and the National Student Clearinghouse. The efforts to gather, analyze, and report data from multiple sources have come from across the College in order to present the most inclusive and accurate picture of articulation and transfer processes. Targets for improvement have been identified that support articulation and transfer within the University System of Ohio.

1. Continue to work with the USO and HEI staff and administrators to create a tracking system.
2. Follow-up on student tracker data for individual institutions to which BTC students transfer to determine the success of BTC students.