Demographic enrollment statistics that describe Belmont Technical College's student population are useful for understanding the academic needs and goals of students in the three-county service area. Demographic characteristics provide data that is used to inform decisions about services to offer to students and ways to encourage students to pursue and to achieve their academic goals. Demographic profiles of student populations enrolled in public post-secondary institutions are available on the University System of Ohio's (USO) Web site and help students and their families make decisions about which institution is the best match with students' educational goals.

Demographic data for Belmont students are stored in the student information system. College staff members in the records office enter and maintain the data. Information Services department administrators gather the data and submit reports to the Ohio Board of Regents' (OBR) Higher Education Information (HEI) system. Data from the student information system also are used for submission of reports to the Integrated Postsecondary Education System (IPEDS). From these sources, demographic information and profiles are created that describe characteristics of student cohorts, offer ways of understanding what populations institutions serve, and provide one way of measuring an institution's contribution to meeting educational attainment goals.

OBR and the Chancellor of the USO include demographic characteristics of students in the accountability metrics. An example of one such metric for assessing institutional success calls for a count of the number of undergraduates who are 25 years-old and over and are enrolled at each institution. The Chancellor's rationale explains that students 25 years-old and older are important to the economic and educational future of Ohio because these students represent an untapped pool of learners. Further, students who have established roots in the state's communities are more likely to remain in the state following completion of post-secondary education.

The demographic profile of Belmont students compiled for this report includes data on counties of residence, age range of students, and percentages of students entering Belmont in the fall who are under the age of 21 years-old and have earned college credit while in high school. The demographic statistics for the 2010/2011 academic year are based upon Belmont's fall quarter 2010 enrollment data.
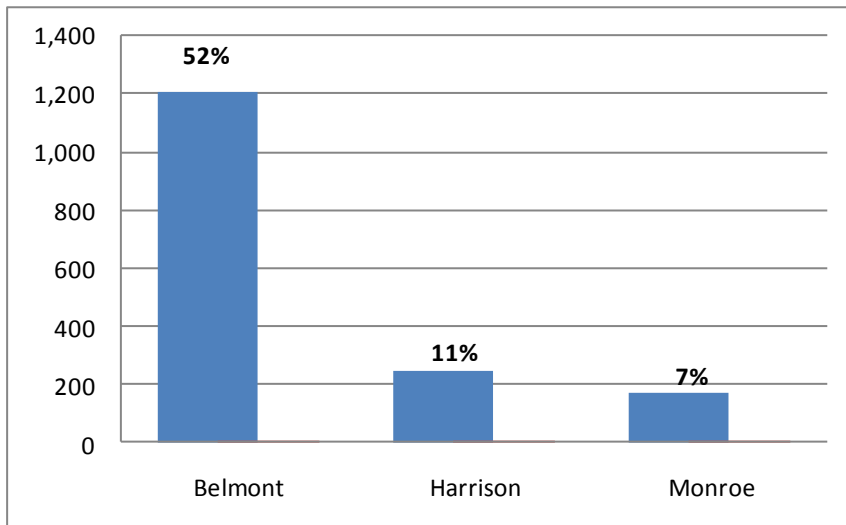
Data

This report presents student demographic enrollment statistics displayed in a summary table, *Student demographic characteristics, fall 2009 and fall 2010*. Following the table are two figures showing data for demographic characteristics analyzed in the report. These statistics describe the fall quarter 2010 enrollment of 2,309 students and reflect the distribution of student characteristics during the seventh week of the quarter.

Table 1, *Student demographic characteristics, fall 2009 and fall 2010*

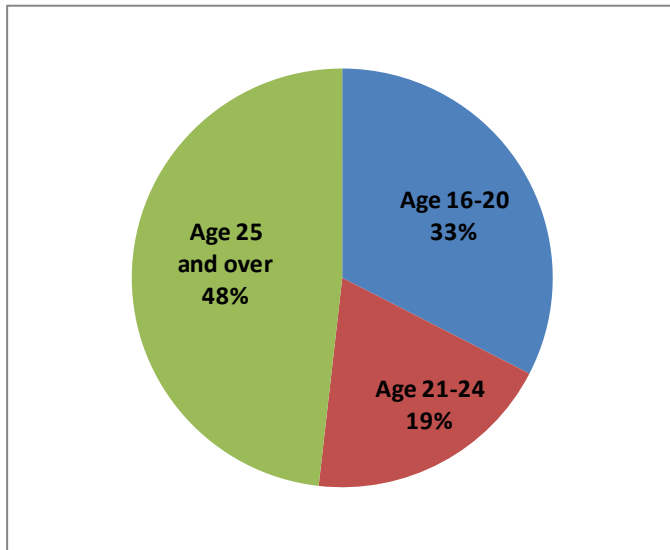|			Fall 2009/2010		Fall 2010/2011		Difference 2009 to 2010	% change
			Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Student enrollment			2,198	100%	2,309	100%	111	5%
	Enrollment by county							
		Belmont	1,194	54%	1,204	52%	10	0.8%
		Harrison	200	9%	247	11%	47	23.5%
		Monroe	162	7%	171	7%	9	5.6%
	Enrollment by age							
		16-20 years	757	34%	751	33%	-6	-0.8%
		21-24 years	418	19%	445	19%	27	6.4%
		25 and over	1,023	47%	1,113	48%	90	8.8%
First-time freshmen under 21 years old			259		274		15	5.79%
	Entering with college credit		25	10%	14	5.1%		

Table 1, *Student demographic characteristics, fall 2009 and fall 2010* summarizes data on three dimensions: county of residence, age of students, and numbers of students under the age of 21 years entering from high school with college credit earned during high school. Figure 1, *Enrollment by county of residence, fall 2010* shows that more than 50% of students attending the college reside in Belmont County. Students residing in the three counties that comprise Belmont's service area represent 70% of students enrolled overall.

Figure 1, *Enrollment by county of residence, fall 2010*

Percentages of students categorized by age groups are displayed in Figure 2, *Enrollment by age, fall 2010*. When enrollment is broken out by age groups, the greatest percentage, 48%, of Belmont students are those 25 years-old and over. There are 1,113 students over the age of 25 attending Belmont this fall. There are 751 students who are under the age of 21years. These students represent 33% of overall enrollment.

Figure 2, *Enrollment by age, fall 2010*

Analysis:

        Comparing demographic statistics for the fall 2010 population of students with the population of students in 2009 as in Table 1, *Student demographic characteristics, fall 2009 and fall 2010* shows there has been a 5% increase in student enrollment overall. As the number of students has increased from 2,171 in 2009 to 2,309 in 2010, the percentage of students from Harrison County has increased by 23.5%. The increase is a positive sign of the college's efforts to bring higher education to students who access their education from Harrison and Monroe counties.

        Students age 25 and over increased from 1,023 students in 2009 to 1,113 in fall quarter 2010/2011. The increase is a sign that the economy is still struggling in the Ohio Valley and that the college's targeted efforts and strategies to recruit, retrain, and retain this age group are having a positive effect.

        The number of students under the age of 21 years who enrolled at the college decreased from 757 in 2009 to 751 in 2010. While this difference is relatively small, the difference in the number of students under the age of 21years who earned college credits while in high school and then enrolled as freshmen at Belmont decreased from 25 in 2009 to 14 in 2010. While dual enrollment opportunities for high school students have been expanded in order to encourage high school students to earn college credits while in high school, the number of high school students taking advantage of dual enrollment opportunities does not seem to be translating into a greater number of freshman students enrolling at Belmont with college credits earned while in high school.

        Processes for tracking academic progress of dual enrollment students are complicated to institutionalize and involve coordination between offices and departments across the college. The disappointing number of students entering with college credit in fall 2010 suggests that college administrators, staff, and faculty members may need to focus more deliberately on dual enrollment students. The number of first-time freshman under 21 years old has increased slightly from 259 to 274. This represents a 5.79% increase in this demographic category.

Conclusions/Recommendations:

Goals of Belmont's strategic plan are aligned with the USO and Chancellor's strategic plan and goals. In the face of a declining high school population, Belmont must focus on reaching potential students who are 25 years-old and older in order to increase enrollments and completions. An analysis of enrollment data indicates that the College is making progress. The combination of the "Yes You Can" program and the enrollment plan for the returning adult student is supporting this goal. Programs such as the Laid-Off Worker Information sessions organized through the Admissions Office and the for-credit training of coal mining students administered by Workforce Development and Community Education have encouraged participants to enroll in programs that are aimed at meeting the needs of non-traditional, as well as traditional students.

The data show substantial growth in enrollment of students from Harrison and Monroe counties. This is a positive indicator that efforts to increase access to college in our service district are working. Since a memorandum of understanding with Monroe County Commissioners and Belmont Technical College in 2009, the number of class offerings haves increased at Swiss Hills and the GMN Broadband Center. As an example, Swiss Hills has 23 classes running this fall quarter compared to 21 last year. The college expects the trend to continue with further increases in class offerings.

North Center continued its recent growth by setting a new headcount record of 202 in Fall 2010/2011. North Center has 53 classes scheduled compared to 43 last year. Numbers for Fall 2010/2011 show the greatest increase of students were in the categories of continuing and first-time students which may have been driven by the continued slump in the local economy. However, other factors may have played a part in increasing enrollments. Improvements at the North center include greater staff/student interactions, better class and instructor scheduling, increased community involvement, and installation of new computers in all labs.

To maximize student capacity at Belmont Technical College it will be necessary to strategically plan growth and consider providing additional online courses, offering college courses at local high schools for the Dual Enrollment program, and increasing evening, Friday, and weekend courses. In addition, Belmont's Enrollment Management Committee must examine the students' pathways from inquiry to graduation and alumni.