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Higher Learning Commission Self-Study Continues

It's no secret that Ouachita Technical College is in the midst of a self-study for the reaffirmation of its accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission. Virtually all full-time employees and many part-time employees participate on one of five study committees.

These committees have been collecting and analyzing evidence related to one of the five Criteria for Accreditation for more than a year. Each will document their findings in a report to be submitted to the Steering Committee on February 26.

Results produced by this evaluation process will culminate in a Self-Study Report that documents how OTC meets the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation and that identifies institutional strengths and areas of needed improvement.

The Self-Study Report will be submitted to the Commission and to the peer evaluation team

in July, approximately eight weeks prior to their September 20-22 visit. The four-member visiting team will use its time on campus to verify the findings in the Self-Study Report and to guide its own evaluation. While on campus, the team will meet with a variety of college stakeholders.

After the visit, the evaluation team will present its findings to the college; their findings will be reviewed by a Readers Panel. Recommendations from these two groups will be forwarded to an Institutional Action Council for final action; the HLC Board of Trustees will validate this action by February 2011.

This is the college's fourth comprehensive HLC visit. OTC's first affiliation with the HLC was as a Candidate for Accreditation granted in February 1994. In February 1996, the college received a five-year initial accreditation; in February 2001, OTC's accreditation was reaffirmed for ten years.

Ouachita Tech Establishes New Enrollment Records

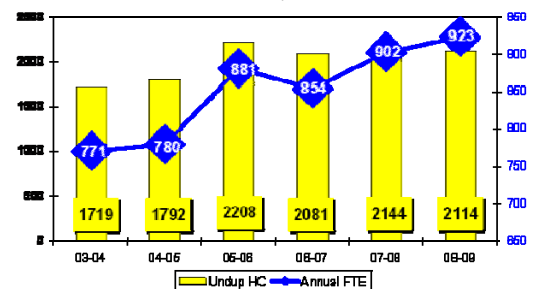
Ouachita Technical College has set new enrollment records. New highs have been established for fall enrollments, fall student semester credit hours, and 2008-2009 academic year student semester credit hours.

Although only a slight increase, the fall 2009 enrollment of 1,610 students is OTC's highest ever. Fall 2008 enrollment was 1,600 students, the previous largest.

Fall 2009 student semester credit hours (SSCH) also establish a new high. While the headcount increase is less than 1 percent, the SSCH increase is 6.3 percent. Fall 2009 SSCH is 13,268, a full-time equivalent (FTE) of 885. The previous high was fall 2008's SSCH of 12,476, an FTE of 832.

Unduplicated headcount for the 2008-2009 academic year was 2,114 students enrolled in 27,687 SSCH, an annualized FTE of 923. This is a new record for SSCH and is a 2.31 percent increase over the previous high set in 2007-2008. The chart below documents previous academic year unduplicated enrollments and annualized FTE (SSCH/30).

Annualized Unduplicated Headcount and Full-time Equivalent Hours



"If you want to be successful, put your effort into controlling the sail, not the wind."

—Unknown



College Receives Feedback on its Achieving the Dream Efforts

In July 2009, Ouachita Tech received an evaluation of its first "implementation" year in Achieving the Dream. Carol A. Lincoln, Senior Program Director for MDC, the managing partner for Achieving the Dream, delineated the strengths and challenges related to the college's chosen priorities.

The following were identified strengths.

1. **Committed Leadership:** (A) The commitment shown by the president, administrators, faculty, and staff to student success and closing the achievement gaps; (B) An increased focus on student success.
2. **Use of Evidence to Improve Policies, Programs, and Services:** The use of disaggregated, longitudinal data in institutional decision-making.
3. **Broad Engagement:** (A) The involvement of a broad spectrum of stakeholders in decision making; (B) Professional development for faculty and staff.
4. **Systematic Institutional Improvement:** (A) The growing culture of evidence at your institution; (B) The increased capacity of the institutional research office.

Challenges were as follows.

1. **Use of Evidence to Improve Policies, Programs, and Services:** (A) Continue to strengthen the institution's institutional research capacity so it can be responsive to requests for information and generate useful information for institutional decision-making; (B) Assures that adequate IT systems are in place to allow for user-friendly retrieval and analysis of data; (C) Increase sample size of interventions to accurately assess results.
2. **Broad Engagement:** (A) Further strengthen plans for sustained community, staff, student, and faculty engagement; (B)

Further involve faculty and student services staff on committees concerned with student success; (C) Continue to encourage dialogue among different areas and stakeholders at the institution and in the greater community.

3. **Systematic Institutional Improvement:** (A) Continue to strengthen plans to scale up and/or institutionalize successful interventions; (B) Further reallocate institutional funds to continue student success interventions that are shown to be successful.

Ouachita Tech is one of four Arkansas institutions selected for Round Four of Achieving the Dream, a national initiative to help more community college students succeed—particularly students of color and low-income students. This \$450,000 grant program is funded nationally by the Lumina Foundation and its partners and in Arkansas by the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation.

The three priorities that OTC is addressing through Achieving the Dream are as follows:

- Increased success in Intermediate Algebra;
- Increased success of all students while narrowing the gap between African-American and all students;
- Increased African-American success in Basic Composition.

More information on the college's efforts are on the website at www.otcweb.edu. Click on "Campus Information" at the top and then the Achieving the Dream logo at the bottom, left-hand corner.



2009 Benchmarking Results Provide Valuable Outcome Data

The National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), coordinated by Johnson County Community College in Kansas, is an important component of OTC's Institutional and Academic Assessment Plan. Ouachita Tech and other subscribing two-year colleges report data in defined areas; peer data are then made available to participants.

The 2009 NCCBP results, presented below, compares OTC with 12 peer institutions and with an aggregated percentage of all 210 participating colleges.

The college has participated in NCCBP since 2006. All results and peer college demographics are available on the Intranet.



Then & Now

Number of text messages sent:
December 2003—
2.1 billion
December 2008—
110.4 billion

Factory sales of cell phones:
1999—30,667
2009—90,698

U.S. High School Graduates:
1999—1.15 million
2008—989,000

U.S. average life expectancy:
1999—76.7
2007—77.9

OTC Headcount Enrollment:
Fall 1999—210
Fall 2009—1610

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Yahoo News, OTC Student Information System

Summary Chart--2009 National Community College Benchmark Project Report						
Outcome Area	Peer Average	OTC Average	OTC's Peer Ranking N Reporting	OTC Rank	Aggregate (N=210) NCCBP %tile Rank	Quartile
Completion in Three Years						
Full-time, first-time in Fall 2005	21%	21%	12	5	60%	2
Part-time, first-time in Fall 2005	10%	12%	12	4	78%	1
Transfer in Three Years						
Full-time, first-time in Fall 2005	21%	22%	9	3	73%	2
Part-time, first-time in Fall 2005	14%	21%	7	1	88%	1
Persistence						
Full- and part-time from F07 to Sp08	70%	70%	10	5	61%	2
Full- and part-time from F07 to F08	46%	39%	12	11	13%	4
Novotitz Student Satisfaction						
<i>Fall 2007 - Scale is 1-7</i>						
Overall Satisfaction	5.61	5.92	5	1	98%	1
Education Met Expectations	4.83	5.02	5	1	97%	1
Would Enroll Here Again	5.86	6.29	5	1	98%	1
CCSE Benchmarks - Spring 2007						
Student-Faculty Interaction	51.1	53	10	4	76%	1
Student Effort	51.1	57.4	10	1	98%	1
Active & Collaborative Learning	49.8	49.3	10	8	45%	3
Academic Challenge	48.9	50.7	10	4	67%	2
College-Level Course Retention & Success-F07						
Retention Rate (Grades A-F/Enrollment)	90%	88%	12	10	42%	3
Success Rate (Grades A-C/Enrollment)	76%	79%	12	4	79%	1
Completer Success Rate (Grades A-C/all but W)	84%	90%	12	1	93%	1
Developmental Course Retention & Success-F07						
Math Retention Rate	84%	84%	12	6	47%	3
Writing Retention Rate	90%	89%	10	7	60%	2
Reading Retention Rate	90%	88%	10	8	45%	3
Math Success Rate	53%	42%	12	12	5%	4
Writing Success Rate	67%	76%	10	2	92%	1
Reading Success Rate	69%	59%	10	9	25%	4
Math Completer Success Rate	64%	50%	12	12	3%	4
Writing Completer Success Rate	74%	86%	10	2	89%	1
Reading Completer Success Rate	77%	67%	10	8	21%	4
Success in First College-Level Course-F06 to F07						
Math Retention Rate (Col Alg/Int Alg Grades A-C)	82%	91%	12	2	79%	1
Writing Retention Rate (Comp I/Basic Comp A-C)	87%	96%	10	3	92%	1
Math Enrollee Success Rate (Int Alg A-C/Col Alg)	58%	69%	12	5	67%	2
Writing Enrollee Success Rate (Basic Comp A-C/Comp I)	68%	84%	10	2	95%	1
Math Completer Success Rate (Col Alg A-C/Col Alg but W)	71%	76%	3	3	41%	3
Writing Completer Success Rate (Comp I A-C/Comp I but W)	77%	88%	10	3	82%	1
Retention & Success in Core Academic Areas-F07						
Comp I Retention Rate (Completers/Enrolled)	90%	89%	12	8	62%	2
Comp II Retention Rate	84%	83%	11	4	75%	2
College Algebra Retention Rate	80%	83%	10	3	59%	2
Comp I Enrollee Success Rate (Grades A-C/Enrolled)	74%	80%	12	3	92%	1
Comp II Enrollee Success Rate	67%	68%	11	4	54%	2
College Algebra Enrollee Success Rate	62%	69%	10	2	84%	1
Comp I Completer Success Rate (Grades A-C/Completers)	81%	89%	12	1	93%	1
Comp II Completer Success Rate	79%	77%	11	7	25%	4
College Algebra Completer Success Rate	76%	83%	10	3	82%	1
All Credit Grades-F07						
Percent A and B Grades	56%	58%	12	5	68%	2
Percent Withdrawals	10%	12%	12	3	56%	2
Percent Completers	90%	88%	12	10	43%	3
Percent Completers Successful	83%	87%	12	1	84%	1
Minority Participation Rates-F07						
Percent of Minority Students	21%	14%	12	8	40%	3
Percent of Minority Employees	11%	10%	12	6	48%	3
Percent of Public HS Graduates Enrolled at Institution	22%	6%	10	10	8%	4
Market Penetration Rate (AY 2007-08 HC/SA Population)						
Credit Students	3%	1%	11	11	11%	4
Non-Credit Students						
Workforce Development-FY 2008						
Duplicated Headcount	4,630	761	9	8	8%	4
Total Costs	\$602,959	\$51,630	9	9	5%	4
Total Revenue	\$614,416	\$90,960	9	6	5%	4
Net Revenue	\$11,187	\$39,330	9	5	48%	3
Net Revenue as Percent of Total	-68%	43%	9	2	85%	1
Average Credit Section Size - F07	17	15	12	9	9%	4
Credit Course Student/Faculty Ratio-F07	18	15	12	10	18%	4
Instructional Faculty Load (F08 Sections with 6+ students)						
Percent Sections by Full-time Faculty	61%	60%	12	7	66%	2
Percent Section by Part-time Faculty	39%	40%	12	6	33%	3
Percent Credit Hours by Full-time Faculty	64%	64%	12	6	75%	2
Percent Credit Hours by Part-time Faculty	36%	36%	12	7	25%	4
Distance Learning-F07						
DL Percent of Credit Hours	20%	14%	11	3	76%	1
DL Percent of Sections	12%	17%	11	4	86%	1
Percent A and B Grades	51%	51%	10	7	52%	2
Completer Success Rate (Grades A-C/all but W)	76%	83%	10	1	82%	1
Percent of Completers (All but W/Enrolled)	85%	82%	10	8	39%	3
Percent of Withdrawals (W/Total)	15%	18%	10	3	60%	2
Student/Student Services Ratio (F07 enrollment/Prof SS Staff)						
Career Services						
Testing & Assessment Services	3183	1558	8	7	21%	4
Financial Aid	1284	779	10	7	15%	4
Counseling & Advising	1070	779	10	5	55%	2
Recruitment, Admissions, Registration	823	445	11	7	12%	4
Student Activities						
Employee Retirements & Departures-AY 2007-08						
Retirement Rate	21%	0%	9	9	18%	4
Departures Rate	8%	4%	10	8	39%	3
Employee Grievances & Harassment Actions (AY 2007-08)						
Grievance Rate						
Harassment Rate	0%	0%	12	1	57%	2
Cost Per Credit Hour & FTE Student (FY 2008)						
Cost Per Credit Hour	\$161	\$177	12	4	80%	1
Cost per FTE Student	\$4,841	\$5,296	12	4	80%	1
Dev/Training Expenditures per FTE Employee (FY 2007)						
	\$687	\$194	9	7	31%	3



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*Direct questions or comments
concerning this newsletter to
jprince@otcweb.edu.*

College Name Change Process is Underway

Upon a recommendation made by the Board of Trustees during a planning retreat, a committee has been collecting, communicating, receiving feedback, and narrowing a list of possible new names for the college. The committee is being chaired by Dr. Martin Eggenesperger, Vice President of Instruction, and includes Representative Mike Burris, OTC Board Chair Judge John Cole, students, faculty, staff, and community citizens. The Committee will present two names to the Board of Trustees for their name decision. The change will be official once approved by the Arkansas Legisla-

2008-09 Institutional Progress/Report Card Delineates Outcomes

To measure performance, the Strategic Plan's priorities are linked to Key Performance Indicators (KPI). Results of 2008-09 KPIs have been documented in the 2008-09 Institutional Effectiveness Report Card that is available on the Institutional Research portion of the Intranet.

The Assessment Committee has reviewed these data. Their complete analysis and findings are published on pages 58-60 of the report; a [sample](#) of their recommendations follow.

- 2008 NCCBP data indicate the need to raise fall-to-fall persistence rates, therefore, scholarships for second-year students are recommended;
- The Achieving the Dream Grant has had a positive impact on the college;
- Although the college's Market Penetra-

tion Rate is below that of its peers, increased off-campus offerings in other service area counties must be cost effective;

- OTC has a positive economic impact on the community;
- OTC should be cautious that tuition increases do not out-pace neighboring peers;
- OTC should "think outside the box" regarding professional development and establish a systematic way to share relevant information;
- The *Budget Request* portion of Annual Assessment Plan Reports and the *Needed Resources* portion of Division/Department Annual Action Plans should be required and reviewed in the development of the annual budget.

