

Chipola	Volume XIV, No. 6	June, 2006
FACTS	<i>An Accountability and Institutional Effectiveness Factsheet</i>	

QEP Development Team Studies Graduation and Retention Data

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Development Team has worked since early May to focus on the college's most critical problems, research possible solutions, and identify best practices across the nation.

The team has done the following in analyzing the problems to be addressed by the QEP:

- collected and analyzed over 20 sets of new institutional data;
- reviewed at least 100 pieces of research for authoritative opinion;
- identified best practices of exemplary institutions;
- surveyed and interviewed faculty and students; and
- considered Chipola's past experiences and available resources.

College-Ready Students Are Much More Likely to Graduate than College-Prep Students

ABOVE RIGHT: A major finding has been that college-ready students are more than twice as likely to graduate than students who enter underprepared (taking one or more college-prep courses). For example, only 4% of the underprepared (college-prep) students entering in fall 2004 graduated within the "traditional two years," compared to 18.87% of the college-ready. Over 48% of the college-ready students graduated in five years, compared to about 24% of the college-prep students.

BELOW RIGHT: A survey of 275 enrolled students who had completed between 30 and 50 semester hours revealed the major stress factors among students who were persisting in programs. Students who end up dropping/stopping out are assumed to be struggling even more.

Graduation Rates – Comparison of College Prep and Non-College Prep

Completing AA, AS, or Certificate in Five Years

Entering Fall Cohort (first-time-in-college)	Underprepared (one or more College Prep classes)	College-Ready (not in College Prep)	All Students
2001 (graduating in 5 years)	23.9%	48.11%	41.97%
2002 (graduating in 4 years)	25.47%	42.14%	38.97%
2003 (graduating in 3 years)	10.65%	30.99%	25.64%
2004 (graduating in traditional 2 years)	4%	18.87%	15.31%

Source: Data Center (# remgrads) State Program Review Results, *Chipola Facts*, Oct. 2005

Student Survey Results – Identification of Major Stress Factors

Students with 30-50 semester hours

1. Inadequate test-taking skills.....	65%
2. Difficulty of course work.....	58%
3. Inadequate study techniques.....	58%
4. Not enough money to go to school.....	45%
5. Home responsibilities.....	41%
6. Lack of computer skills.....	36%
7. Attempted to work too many hours.....	36%
8. Personal or family illness.....	22%
9. Dissatisfied with non-teaching staff.....	7%
10. Dissatisfied with teaching staff.....	3%

Source: Current Student Survey Results , 2004

Impact of Dual Enrollment on Retention and Graduation Rates

Recent data also show the positive impact of the college's Dual Enrollment program. Chipola successfully transitions the brightest and best students into Chipola from 16 rural high schools. These students have high GPAs and ACT scores—and usually graduate from high school with from 12 to 30 semester hours of college credit. **Over 63% of these academically “prepared” students who entered in 2002 had graduated by fall 2005 and transferred to 4-year colleges and universities**, many with plans to enter professional schools in medicine, engineering, law, pharmacy, computer science, and business/accounting. Only 5% of these students were still enrolled at Chipola in three years.

However, there are high attrition rates among students who enter academically underprepared, compared to much lower attrition among students with dual-enrollment credit. **Only 33% of the 2002 cohort who took no dual enrollment and no college prep courses had graduated by fall 2005**, and over 56% had left the college. **Only 22% remained.** The most alarming data surrounded students who **earned no dual-enrollment credit and took one or more college-prep courses** in reading, writing, or math. Only 16% had graduated by fall 2005, only 14% were still enrolled, and **69% had left the college without completing a degree or certificate.**

Total Attrition in Three Years (2002 Entering Cohort)			
Student Groups	Graduated by Fall 2005	Still Enrolled Fall 2005	Attrition by Fall 2005 (transfer/ withdrew/ drop out)
Dual Enrollment (NOT College Prep)	63%	5%	33%
College-Ready (Not Dual Enrollment; Not College Prep)	33%	11%	56%
Academically Under-prepared (not Dual Enrollment; at least one College Prep)	16%	14%	69%
Source: QEP Research Reports , “Graduation and Attrition Summaries,” Feb. 2006			

Other Studies in Academic Departments

Grade distributions of 168 students in three entry-level college-credit math classes by entering ACT score were also studied. Students entering math classes made an average of 19.5 (on the math portion) of the ACT, but those who had not taken the core academic courses in high school had an average ACT of 16.7 in math. **At least 48% of the students who entered college-prep/remedial math and advanced to college level coursework could not advance** beyond the entry-level course because they did not make a C or better. Only two-thirds of all students could advance.

Analysis of Grade Distributions – Entering College-Level Courses in College Algebra, Intermediate Algebra, and Math for Liberal Arts Majors			
Grade	Entering ACT 16-18 67 students *	Entering ACT 19+ 101 students	All 168 students
A	10%	30%	22%
B	21%	24%	23%
C	21%	25%	23%
D, F,W (cannot advance)	48%	21%	32%
Source: Grade distribution study, Math Dept. Work Papers, *Students have completed one remedial course			

Broader Implications of Student Retention and the Future

- Students are **likely to continue to drop/stop out** if they do not receive sufficient academic support to help them succeed in their classes;
- Providing **academic support alone will not solve the problem** if students cannot adjust to the college setting enough to become fully engaged in learning;
- **Students will lead lives that are forever diminished** without the benefits of a college degree or certificate;
- The **college will continue to lose revenue** because students do not remain continuously enrolled;
- The **college will fall further behind** in its ability to address the postsecondary educational needs of its district and meet the training needs of local employers.

Chipola Facts is a monthly accountability and institutional effectiveness factsheet published jointly by the Chipola College Offices of Development and Planning and Information Systems/Technology. Its purpose is to facilitate good decision-making by publishing college-related data at regular intervals throughout the school year. For more information contact Gail Hartzog at (850)718-2342, Chipola College, 3094 Indian Circle, Marianna, FL 32446, hartzog@chipola.edu.