

Highlights of Fall 2012

- In fall 2012, colleges enrolled 180,499 state-supported students generating 132,560 FTES, a 5 percent decline in headcount and a 3 percent decline in FTES from fall 2011. The decline was marked for both academic transfer and professional-technical courses.
- Even with the decline this quarter, it is estimated that most colleges will remain over-enrolled during the 2012-13 academic year, producing 148,000 state-supported FTES, 6 percent above the legislative enrollment target.
- The colleges enrolled 169,020 FTES (all funds), decreasing by 2,416 FTES compared to the previous fall.
- Contract-funded FTES increased by 6 percent to 31,586. Running Start enrollments accounted for nearly half of this increase, at 13,912 FTES. International Contract enrollments accounted for the other half of the increase, generating 5,579 FTES.
- Student-funded FTES have increased by 374 FTES (or 8 percent) to 4,874 as some colleges continue to shift state-supported courses to self-support to keep sections open or start new programs.
- The total student body (all funds) was 238,276 students enrolled in the community and technical colleges with most of those students – 180,499 – enrolled in state-supported courses. The students served are diverse: 29 percent are parents; 42 percent work while 29 percent are unemployed (same as in 2011; 1 percent higher than 2010); the median age of students is older than traditional college students at 26 years of age; approximately half attend part-time (51 percent taking less than 12 credits); 57 percent of students are female; and students are more racially and ethnically diverse than Washington State – 39 percent are students of color (state – 23 percent people of color).
- Worker Retraining state-supported enrollments for CTCs and Private Career Schools produced 8,288 FTES in fall 2012, a decline of 16 percent when compared to the previous fall quarter. Worker Retraining enrollments rose just after the recession. Declines this fall may be harbingers for a slowly recovering economy, although demand for Worker Retraining is still above pre-recession levels. Another influence may be that some workers have exhausted unemployment benefits causing them to leave the program early or not be able to start.
- Students enrolled in professional-technical programs, the largest mission area, also declined from fall 2011 to 81,599 students. As noted this decrease is due in large part to Worker Retraining reductions, but also included fewer professional-technical students as a whole.
- Students enrolled for academic purposes declined by 4% to 69,914 students. This decline may be due in part to fewer high school graduates; however, the decline in transfer students outpaces the decline in high school graduates indicating it is being more broadly influenced than just this.
- Colleges instructed 17,241 basic skills course FTES. This compared to 17,192 course FTES in fall 2011. The 49 FTE increase was modest, but important, because it ended the year-to-year declines in basic skills courses that had occurred with the budget cuts. Still, basic skills FTE instruction is below its peak in fall 2008.
- I-BEST FTES (All Funds) continue to decline for the second consecutive fall quarter. Colleges enrolled 1278 FTES, a decrease of 89 FTES from fall 2011.
- Opportunity Grants, a financial aid program that started in Academic Year 2006-07, served 2,980 students, or 2,759 FTES in fall 2012. The capacity to serve Opportunity Grant students has decreased as the program funding has remained at the 2007 level, while tuition has increased 50% over that same span of time.
- The colleges enrolled 33,126 FTES in all funding sources via eLearning courses in fall 2012. eLearning increased by 1,442 FTES or 5 percent. Most eLearning (81%) is state-supported.
- In fall 2012, 6,846 full-time equivalent faculty (FTE-F) taught students in state-supported courses. Total FTE-F in state-supported courses decreased by 1.3 percent in fall 2012. Classified staff also decreased while administrative and professional-technical staff increased.

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Introduction

The Report

The *Fall Enrollment and Staffing Report 2012* provides a snapshot of enrollments in community and technical colleges during fall quarter 2011. The report addresses the questions most commonly raised regarding the community and technical colleges in Washington.

The primary source of information for this document is the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' (SBCTC) data warehouse, which is derived from the common management information systems used by all community and technical colleges in the state.

Data on outcomes, facilities, and staffing are reported annually in the companion report, the [Academic Year Report](#).

The Academic Year and Fall Quarter (Fall Enrollment and Staffing) reports are available online at http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/d_index.aspx.

The Washington Community and Technical College System

Washington's Community and Technical College Act of 1991 provides for a state system of community and technical colleges separate from both the public secondary schools and four-year institutions. The act requires that the colleges "offer an open door to every citizen, regardless of his or her academic background or experiences, at a cost normally within his or her economic means." ([RCW 28B.50.020\(1\)](#))

Each college district is required to "offer thoroughly comprehensive educational, training and service programs to meet the needs of both the communities and students served by combining, with equal emphasis, high standards of excellence in academic transfer courses; realistic and practical courses in occupational education, both graded and ungraded; community services of an educational, cultural and recreational nature; and adult education." ([RCW 28B.50.020\(2\)](#)) Technical colleges are exempted from the requirement to offer academic transfer courses. Each college is governed by a board of five trustees appointed to five-year terms by the Governor with the consent of the Senate.

Washington's first junior college was started in 1915 in Everett when 42 students began a one-year college program on the top floor of Everett High School. It was closed in 1923 for lack of students. Centralia College, the state's oldest continuously operating community college, opened in 1925. It was followed by Skagit Valley College in 1926, Yakima Valley College in 1928, and Grays Harbor College in 1930. Between 1933 and 1941 four additional community colleges began operation in Washington: Clark College in 1933, Lower Columbia in 1934, Wenatchee Valley in 1939, and Everett in 1941, all locally administered and locally funded. Combined enrollment was approximately 1,000.

Meanwhile, in 1930 the Seattle School District opened Edison Vocational School, the first true public vocational school in the state. The Spokane School District followed suit in 1939 by establishing the Spokane Trade School. Both schools eventually became community colleges. The oldest existing vocational technical institute, Tacoma's Bates VTI, opened in 1940. Subsequently, VTIs opened in Lakewood (Clover Park), Pasco, Renton, Vancouver, Kirkland (Lake Washington), Olympia, and Bellingham. The VTIs in Pasco, Vancouver, and Olympia eventually became community colleges. The VTIs in Tacoma, Lakewood, Renton, Kirkland, and Bellingham eventually became technical colleges.

Between 1925 and 1941, there were three attempts to provide state support for junior colleges. State support was provided for the first time by the 1941 Legislature. However, that act restricted the number and location of junior colleges, prohibiting their establishment in counties having either a public or private four-year institution. In 1945, junior colleges were made a part of their local school districts and supported through their funding, as was the case with vocational technical institutes until 1991.

In 1961, the restrictions against expansion of community colleges were removed by the Legislature and junior colleges were designated as "community" colleges.

The financing of community colleges was separated from that of local school districts in 1963, and in 1965 the Legislature declared that it intended to establish a separate, independent community college system. Based on the recommendations of the Arthur D. Little Company, the 1967 Legislature adopted the Community College Act of 1967, which was signed on April 3 of that year.

The structure of the community college system remained largely unchanged until 1991 when, as part of the Workforce Training and Education Act, the Legislature amended the Community College Act of 1967 and redesignated it as the Community and Technical College Act of 1991.

The state's five remaining public vocational technical institutes were designated as "technical colleges," removed from the jurisdiction of their local school districts, and merged with the community college system. Each technical college was provided with its own college district and a board of trustees. Each technical college district overlaps the districts of neighboring community colleges. The State Board for Community College Education was renamed the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges by the 1991 act.

The Community and Technical College Act of 1991 also brought the Seattle Vocational Institute (SVI) into the Seattle Community College District. It had been the Washington Institute of Applied Technology since 1987 when it was established by the Legislature in a facility previously occupied by the Seattle Occupational Industrialization Center before it closed. SVI serves economically disadvantaged people in Seattle's Central district, providing job-related training for adults and contract training for local businesses.

In 1994, the Legislature approved the establishment of the 30th college district, Cascadia Community College. The new district began enrolling state-supported students in the fall of 2000.

Pierce College Puyallup became the system's 34th college when the State Board granted it college status as part of the Pierce District in June 1999.

In 2005, the Legislature gave the State Board authority to offer applied baccalaureate programs in a pilot program at selected community and technical colleges. The 2010 Legislature removed the pilot status and gave the State Board authority to approve community and technical college applied baccalaureate degree programs.

In 2009, the Legislature allowed the five technical colleges to offer transfer degrees that prepare students for professional bachelor's degrees in addition to offering technical degrees.

Washington Community and Technical Colleges

