

Highlights of Fall 2014

- In fall 2014, colleges enrolled 171,008 state-supported students generating 125,196 FTES. This was a 1 percent decline in headcount and a 3 percent decline in FTES compared to fall 2013. The decline was marked for both academic transfer and professional-technical courses.
- With the decline this quarter, it is estimated that the system will be 900 FTES below the Legislative enrollment target for 2014-15.
- Community and technical colleges enrolled 164,934 FTES (all funds), decreasing by 1,549 FTES compared to the previous fall quarter.
- Contract-funded FTES increased by 6 percent to 34,133 from fall 2013 to fall 2014. At 16,873, Running Start enrollments accounted for nearly half of these FTES. International Contract enrollments generated 8,557 FTES, or close to a quarter of the total.
- Student-funded FTES increased by 200, or 4 percent, to 5,604.
- The total community and technical colleges' student body population (all funds) was 231,377 with most of those students — 171,008 — enrolled in state-supported courses. The students served are diverse: 28 percent are parents; 43 percent work and 27 percent are unemployed; the median age of students is older than traditional college students at 26 years of age; approximately half attend part-time (49 percent taking less than 12 credits); 56 percent of students are female; and 42 percent identify as students of color (compared to 27 percent of the state population who identify as people of color).
- Worker Retraining state-supported enrollments for community and technical colleges and private career schools produced 5,665 FTES in fall 2014, a decline of 22 percent from the previous fall quarter. This is the largest one year decline that the system has had in the post-recession period. The decline is most evident for older students, 40-59 years old. This decline is likely due to a combination of students returning to work and students leaving school because they have exhausted unemployment benefits.
- Students enrolled in professional-technical programs, the largest mission area, declined from 79,422 students in fall 2013 to 78,447 students in fall 2014. This decrease is primarily due to the decline in Worker Retraining students.
- Students enrolled for academic purposes declined by 2 percent to 65,438. Factors affecting this decline include modest growth in traditional college-age population (19 to 24 years) which affects academic transfer enrollments. However, it is positive to note that more high school students are participating in Running Start, and the number of former Running Start students who return after high school is beginning to increase.
- Colleges enrolled 17,258 FTES in Basic Education for Adults courses, a 1 percent increase from fall 2013.
- Colleges enrolled 2,163 I-BEST FTES (all funds), a 6 percent increase from fall 2013.
- Opportunity Grants, a financial aid program begun in Academic Year 2006-07, served 2,637 students or 2,528 FTES in fall 2014.
- Community and technical colleges enrolled 37,353 FTES in eLearning courses (all funds) in fall 2014. eLearning FTES increased by 1,932 FTES or nearly 6 percent. Most eLearning (79 percent) was state-supported.
- In fall 2014, 7,107 full-time equivalent faculty (FTE-F) taught students in state-supported courses, a 1 percent increase from fall 2013. This overall increase in FTE-F was due to a 3 percent increase in full-time teaching faculty FTE; part-time teaching faculty FTE declined by 1 percent. The number of classified and administrative staff both increased by three percent; the number of professional-technical staff had the largest increase, up 8 percent from fall 2013.

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Introduction

The Report

The *Fall Enrollment and Staffing Report 2014* provides a snapshot of enrollments in community and technical colleges during fall quarter 2014. 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 College in 1934, Wenatchee Valley College in 1939, and Everett Community College 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 re-designated 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 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. 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. The 2010 Legislature removed the pilot status; and in 2012 the Legislature gave the State Board authority to approve community and technical college applied baccalaureate degree programs.

Washington Community and Technical Colleges

