



INSIGHT

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ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

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OWC GRADS EXCEL IN THE SUS

Once again, AA graduates from OWC out perform native students across the Florida State University System. State data reports, which track the performance of 1,148 OWC 2003-04 graduates in the SUS, show their composite upper division GPA to be 3.13, while that of native students was only 3.05. Although the percentage of OWC students with GPA's below 2.0 was greater than that of native students (5.6% and 2.1% respectively), the percentage of OWC students (62.7%) with GPA's above 3.0 exceeded that of native students (57.7%) by a wider margin.

OWC graduates were especially successful in the field of education, where their composite upper division GPA of 3.60 was significantly better than the native GPA of 3.16, as well as in criminal justice (3.11 vs. 2.78) and mathematics (3.20 vs. 3.03).

For the 2003-04 cohort of AA grads, the most popular transfer institutions were UWF, FSU and UCF. Students were successful at all three universities. The three most popular majors for the OWC transfer students were business, education and social science respectively.

NEW REPORT PROFILES COLLEGE PREP STUDENTS

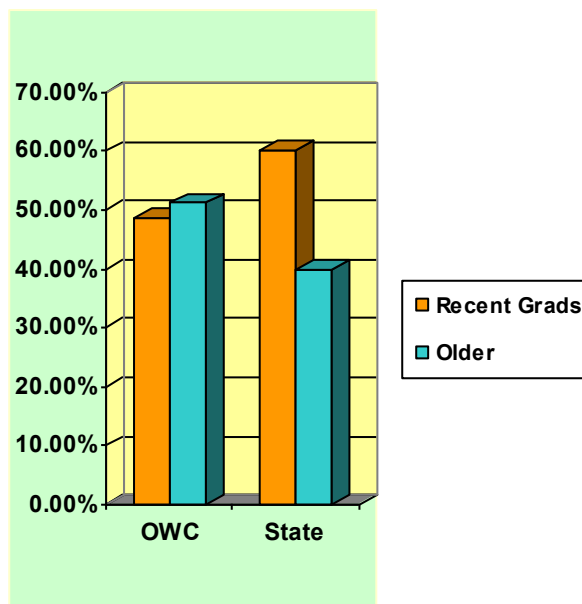
As the state-level concern over remediation continues, the Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Education has issued new data on college prep students across the state. Traditional accountability measures focusing on college prep students are based upon a cohort of first-time-in-college (FTIC) students, most of whom are recent high school graduates. This cohort ignores a significant population of prep students - the older, non-traditional, returning students.

While the new reports do not yet include performance data on additional categories of prep students, they do provide FTE and cost comparisons by student category. As indicated in Chart 1.0, the proportion of prep enrollment generated by older students at OWC (51.2%) is much greater than it is state-wide (39.9%).

The profile varies some across the Panhandle region. Gulf Coast Community College is very similar to OWC, while both Chipola College and Pensacola Junior College indicate a much lower proportion of prep FTE generated by older students. Expenditure figures indicate that the cost of both direct instruction and support costs for older prep students is about the same as it is for recent high school graduates.



Chart 1.0
Percentage of 2004-05 College Prep FTE by Student Category



FAST FACTS



College prep FTE as a percentage of all college credit FTE for 2004-05 = 7.7%, while statewide it is 11%.

According to the latest State High School Feedback Report, the OWC Collegiate High School is the only school in the two-county area to have 100% success rate on college placement examinations.

According to the latest State High School Feedback Report, 52.7% of Okaloosa and Walton County 2004 high school graduates went on to college. Of those who go on to college, 68.8% attend community college.

Chart 2.0
Success Rates (%) for
Fall 2004 DL Students

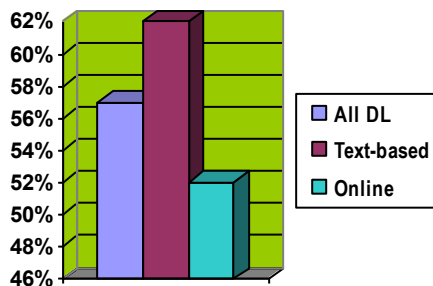
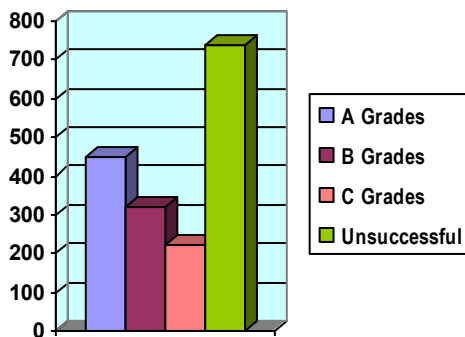


Chart 3.0
Number of Fall 2004 DL Students
in Each Grade Category



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DL ORIENTATION AND STUDENT SUCCESS

Updated research on the relationship between attendance at distance learning orientation sessions and success in the distance learning class shows a small positive relationship between attendance and success. This relationship is slightly stronger for students in online classes. Data collected for distance learning students registered for the fall 2004 term indicated that 88.7% of the cohort students either attended the regularly scheduled orientation session or arranged an alternate orientation time with the instructor. When success is defined as earning a grade of A, B, or C in the course, fall 2004 students in text-based DL courses exhibited a 62% success rate; students in online distance learning classes achieved a substantially lower 52% success rate. Pearson correlation coefficients indicated the following positive relationship between orientation and course success.

All DL formats = very slight positive correlation of 0.139
 Online DL format only = slightly more positive correlation of 0.161
 Text-based DL format only = very slight correlation of 0.114

While this relationship is less pronounced than it was in the early days of distance learning at OWC, it appears orientations may contribute to student success. The recent decline in the relationship may be due to the fact that both students and faculty are now more familiar with the distance learning delivery method. Other factors such as increased teacher-student contact through e-mail and improved course guides may also contribute to a dip in the correlation.

In an effort to refine understanding of the impact of orientation, additional research is in progress. Among the research projects pending are analysis of the relationship between orientation and course success for *first-time* DL students, performance of college prep students in DL classes, the relationship between the number of DL courses taken and course success, and a comparison of success rates in DL and traditional format courses. An eventual goal is to develop profiles of the successful DL student and of the at-risk DL student, which will help in student advising. In the meantime, the positive correlation between orientation and success suggests the orientation requirement is still a valid one.

For additional information on the research methodology used for this study, please contact Dr. Anne Southard.

WEB SIGHTINGS

> **CROSSTALK**, Published by The National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education, Winter 2006 edition, features *The Plagiarism Plague* and *Colleges at a Crossroad*, along with access to back issues of the publication
<http://www.highereducation.org/crosstalk/index.shtml>

> *Assessing Diversity Attitudes in First-Year Students*, in *Diversity Digest*, Volume 9, Number 2, 2005
<http://www.diversityweb.org/Digest/vol9no2/gonsalves.cfm>

> **Community College Research Center** features the latest news on major issues affecting community colleges in the United States
<http://cerc.tc.columbia.edu/>



BRIGHT IDEAS

If you have a newsletter suggestion or a research idea, please contact us at: <IR@owc.edu> or 729-5363