ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS WORK GROUP
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In spring 2015, the College convened an "enrollment projections work group". An offshoot of the College's prior strategic enrollment management (SEM) committee, this work group's goal was to determine if the College could more readily use data by which to inform 1) the general fund budget projections enrollment assumptions and 2) credit student recruitment daily operations. To this end, work group participants were:

- Sharon Bellusci, Student Services
- Chris Egertson, Institutional Effectiveness
- Drew Jones, Admission & Records

- Alicia Moore, Student Services
- Ron Paradis, College Relations
- Courtney Whetstine, Admissions & Records

This executive summary identifies recommendations regarding budget planning and recruitment, noting that other data findings are provided in the appendix.

Part 1: Budget Planning

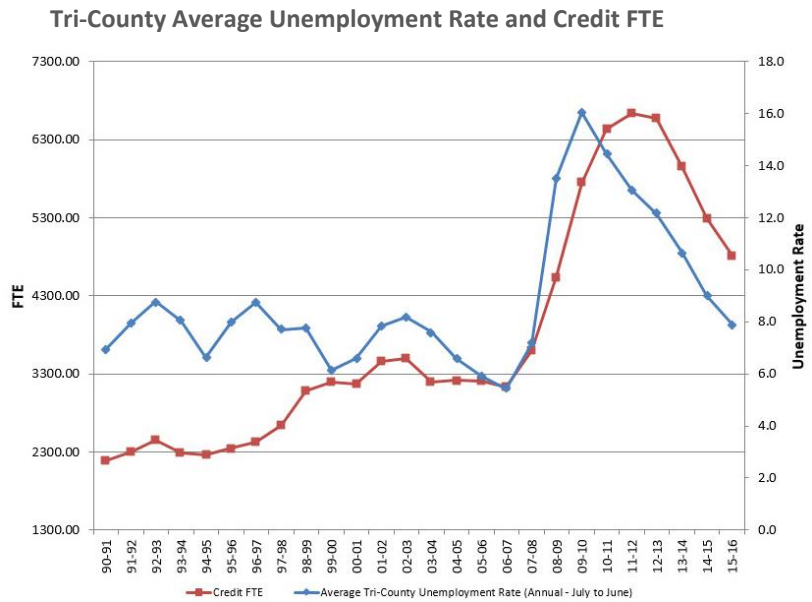**Recommendation 1: Use fall term end of first week headcount to inform end of year budget projections.**

Currently, Fiscal Services updates the budget projection enrollment assumption at the end of each quarter; remaining quarters remain as projected until completion of that term. As such, the current year budget projections are not finalized until the end of the academic year. In attempts to have earlier projections, the work group compared fall term end of week one enrollment numbers to the end of the year to determine if a pattern existed. This comparison revealed that fall term first week enrollment increase/decrease can be used to inform the end of year budget predictions with relative certainty.

Fall Term End of First Week Compared to End of Year

Legend: —— % Change: Fall to Fall 1st wk —— % Change: Year to Year
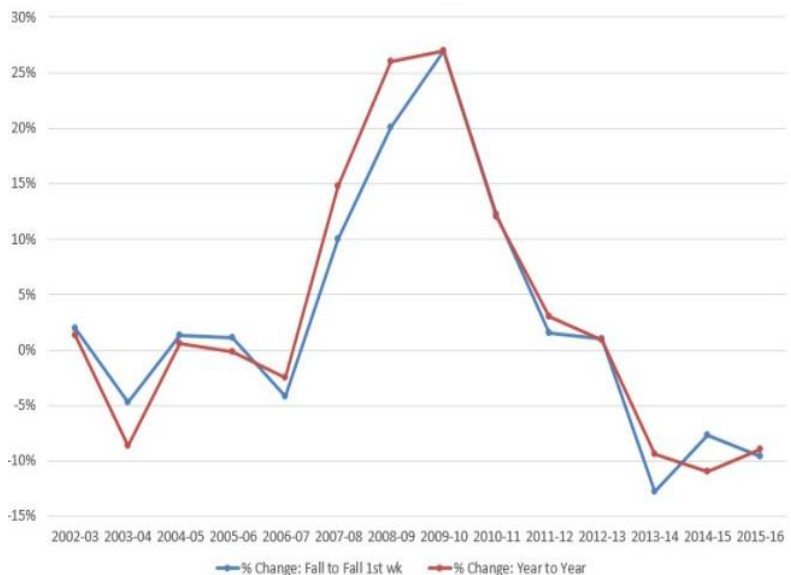
Recommendation 2: Use unemployment rates to inform budget projection future year enrollment assumptions.

Future year enrollment assumptions as used in budget projections are not based on data, but instead are somewhat arbitrarily determined. In attempts to use data to better direct operations, the Enrollment Projections work group reviewed a variety of historical data points to determine if they can be used to inform the College's budget projection future enrollment assumptions. Of the data reviewed, unemployment rates demonstrated the most consistent alignment with enrollment trends.
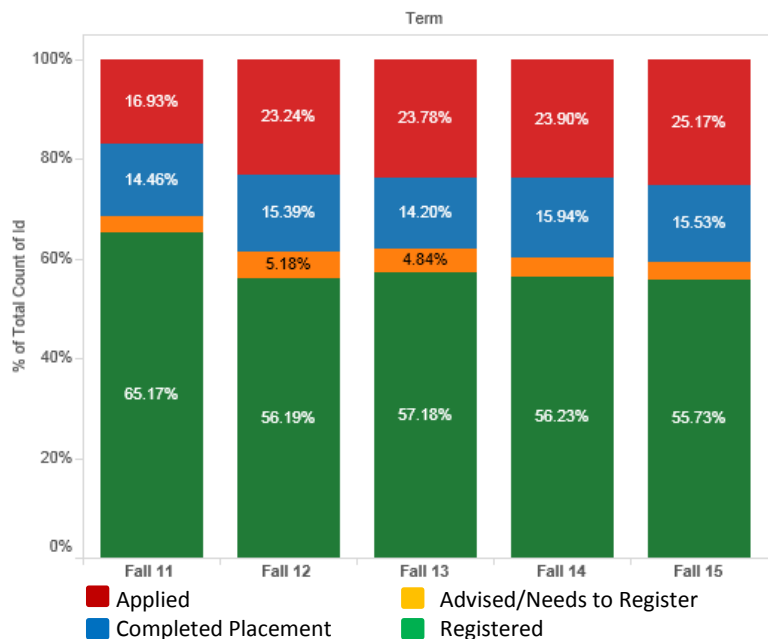
Tri-County Average Unemployment Rate and Credit FTE

Credit FTE — Average Tri-County Unemployment Rate (Annual - July to June)

Part 2: Recruitment Work

The Enrollment Projection Work Group identified 15 key data findings from its work, all of which are listed in the appendix. The group then prioritized three areas in which the College can best focus its goal of increasing credit student enrollment, noting that a fourth recommendation focuses on improving data to better inform future recruitment practices.

Recommendation 1: Increase new fall term student yield rate.

The fall term yield rate (defined as applicant → placement → advise → attend) averages 57% for the last five years, regardless of student type. Therefore, the Work Group recommends maintaining 2014-15 year recruitment work in order to maintain a reasonable volume of recruits, but focusing additional recruitment and communication resources on converting those students who have applied

% Funnel by Term

Term

	Fall 11	Fall 12	Fall 13	Fall 14	Fall 15
Applied	16.93%	23.24%	23.78%	23.90%	25.17%
Completed Placement	14.46%	15.39%	14.20%	15.94%	15.53%
Advised/Needs to Register		5.18%	4.84%		
Registered	65.17%	56.19%	57.18%	56.23%	55.73%

■ Applied ■ Advised/Needs to Register
■ Completed Placement ■ Registered

and/or completed placement to registered students.

Recommendation 2: Increase communication and outreach to early applicants.

New, first-time fall applicants are now applying earlier in the one-year application window (November – April) than historical trends (February – March). However, once a student applies to COCC, they do not receive regular communication from the College until promotion of new student advising begins in May. Similar to recommendation 1, the work group recommends focusing resources on strengthening communication and offering events which

Applications by Month

continue to recruit this population prior to the advising and registration messaging.
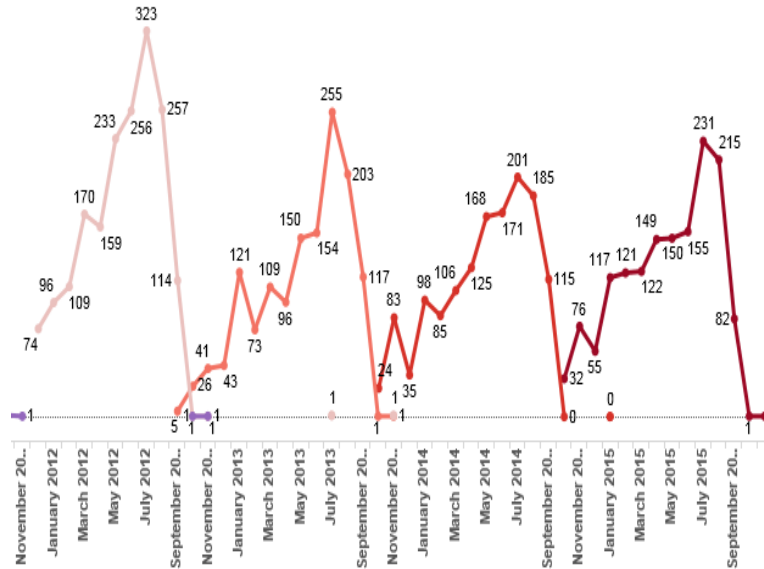
Recommendation 3: Increase yield rates of border state high school students.

Several years ago, COCC refocused some of its recruitment efforts to targeted border state areas. Since then, the Washington and Idaho student enrollees has remained relatively consistent. California students, however, have nearly quadrupled, from 13 students in 2011-12 to 50 students in 2015-16. Given that it takes several years for a community college to establish itself outside of its district, as well as that the majority of housing students are border state students, the Enrollment Projection Work Group recommends a continued focus on border states. To do so successfully will require a more robust communication and recruitment plan targeted to this population.

Note: In 2014-15, the College created an Assistant Director of Admissions & Records for Recruitment and Outreach whose primary purpose was to increase our emphasis on non-traditional recruiting strategies, develop target communications, and create a formalized, data-driven recruitment plan. Due to the need to emphasize student housing, her work shifted to more traditional recruiting activities (e.g., high school visits) in 2015-16. Recommendations one, two and three will require returning this position to its original intent.

Recommendation 4: Convene a work group to review Banner's "student type" field.

The work group identified challenges with how the College uses the "student type" field in Banner (e.g., new first time, transfer, dually admitted, etc.). This field is used to control when a

student can access registration and is a key field for informing institutional and state reports. Over the years, however, use of student types has expanded to influence other Banner functionality and additional types have been added without review of impact on larger processes. While challenges from this affect a multitude of areas, particular to this group's charge was in the inability to determine an in-district yield rate. Therefore, this group recommends convening a work group to address how "student type" is used, noting that a more detail proposal will follow.

APPENDIX: KEY DATA FINDINGS

Enrollment Funnel/Yield Rates (defined as applicant → placement → advise → attend)

1. <u>New Fall Students</u>: On average over the last five years, the yield rate for students who apply for fall quarter is 50 – 59%, regardless of student type.

2. <u>Age</u>: There is a negligible difference in yield rates between traditional and non-traditional students, regardless of student type or first term of enrollment.

Application Patterns, Volume & Characteristics

1. <u>Application Patterns</u>: The application behavior is different from term to term and between student types:

    - New, first-time fall applicants tend to apply earlier in the one-year application window (November – April).
    - Returning and transfer fall applicants tend to apply later in the application window (July and August).
    - Winter and Spring: Winter and spring applicants tend to apply two months prior to start of the term, regardless of age or student type.

2. <u>Volume</u>: Between 2011 – 12 and 2015 -16, students apply for admission in more consistent numbers for fall term whereas winter and spring term saw significant declines.

3. <u>Characteristics</u>: Returning after an absence and transfer students represent a greater percentage of the applicant pool than first-time students.

High School Graduate Yield Rates (defined as applicant → placement → advise → attend)

1. <u>In-District</u>: Overall Central Oregon recent high school graduate yield rates average 60% during the last five years, noting that this excludes Advanced Diploma, Expanded Options, and concurrent students.

2. <u>Bend-LaPine School District</u>: Yield rates of recent Bend-LaPine district high school graduates averaged 78% during the last five fall terms. This calculation excludes Advanced Diploma, Expanded Options, and concurrent students.

3. <u>Non-Bend LaPine School Districts</u>: Yield rates from non-Bend LaPine District high schools cannot be determined due to variations in high school program practice (e.g., Advanced Diploma, Expanded Options).

4. Border State Yield Rate: Yield *rates* of recent high school graduates from California, Washington, and Idaho average 45-50% over the last five years.

5. Border State Yield Numbers: Yield *numbers* from California applicants have nearly quadrupled in the last five years, while Washington and Idaho have remained relatively consistent.

Competitor Institutions

1. Data indicates that COCC does not have a competitor institution. Students who apply to COCC and then enroll elsewhere are not attending any particular institution(s) in significant numbers.

2. Of fall 2012 applicants who did not enroll, 8% (130 students) attended winter 2013 and 23% (360 students) enroll at some point in the following three years.