

DATA ELEMENTS

A QUARTERLY REPORT ON INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Calhoun's Success with the Perkins Grant

This year, Calhoun will receive almost \$417,000 in Perkins Funds! Do you know why we receive these funds? Do you know how the money is spent? Read on...

What is the Carl D. Perkins Act?

The Perkins Act makes federal funds available to state agencies, the majority of which are education agencies, to enhance vocational education. Vocational education is defined as "organized education programs offering sequences of courses directly related to preparing individuals for paid or unpaid employment in current or emerging occupations requiring other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree."

How does Calhoun receive funds?

All states receive funds in the form of State Basic Grants allocated according to a formula based on the states' populations in certain age groups and their per capita income. The State of Alabama then distributes funds to community colleges based on enrollment in vocational fields of study. This data is reported to the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education annually in the fall, and funds are distributed.

How are the funds spent?

The legislation of the Carl D. Perkins Act tightly restricts the use of Perkins funds to ensure they benefit vocational education programs of study. Randy Cox, Calhoun's Perkins facilitator, ensures that funds allocated to Calhoun are spent according to restrictions defined in the legislation. Divisions and departments can request Perkins funds by completing a Resource Request Form.

Is Calhoun held accountable for Perkins expenditures?

You bet! In the fall of each academic year, Calhoun submits a Perkins report to the Department of Postsecondary Education.

Belinda Lane in the Grants Administration office has primary responsibility for submitting the Perkins Report. This report contains data on Calhoun's career/technical students, such as enrollment figures, demographics, numbers of graduates, job placement, etc. This data is used to determine whether Calhoun is meeting its Perkins goals. For the 2003-2004 academic year, there were five major objectives containing 34 specific measures used to determine whether Perkins goals had been met. Of the 34 measures, Calhoun met or exceeded the target in eleven categories and improved over last year's performance in 21 measures. Only two measures revealed areas of concern—both related to improving student tracking procedures to determine students' employment when they leave Calhoun.

What can faculty do to help?

First, faculty in career/technical fields should be congratulated for the College's meeting, exceeding, and improving in so many of the Perkins measures. Good job!

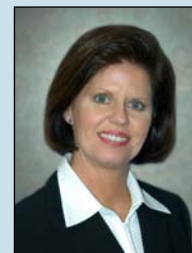
Second, faculty can continue to support Perkins funding by allowing Perkins surveys to be distributed in their classrooms and assisting Randy Cox and Belinda Lane in tracking graduates and program completers to determine job placement.

Finally, faculty can continue to use their advisory boards to advise them on spending Perkins funds to ensure their programs of study stay current.

What can Calhoun expect in the future?

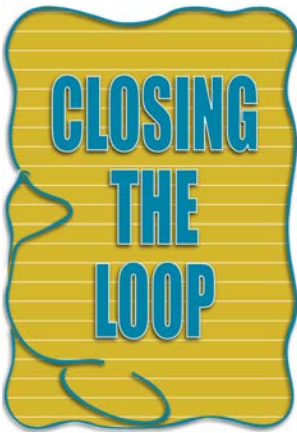
Although Perkins funds are not guaranteed annually, Calhoun has never failed to receive a portion of the funds allocated. According to Randy Cox, this is due, in part, to the faculty's willingness to participate in the collection of Perkins-related data. Good job, faculty!

FROM THE EDITOR



Dena Stephenson

WELCOME TO THE FIRST ISSUE OF *DATA ELEMENTS*! THIS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER PROVIDES A FORUM FOR SHARING INFORMATION THAT IS RESEARCH AND DATA BASED. IN THIS PUBLICATION, YOU'LL DISCOVER THE RESULTS OF RESEARCH AND STUDIES THAT ARE CONDUCTED BY INDIVIDUALS, DEPARTMENTS, AND DIVISIONS AT CALHOUN AS WELL AS APPLICABLE STUDIES CONDUCTED EXTERNALLY. THOUGH THE RESEARCH SHARED IN THIS PUBLICATION MAY HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED FOR A SPECIFIC PURPOSE, MANY OF US ARE INTERESTED IN AND MAY BENEFIT FROM THE RESULTS. THIS PUBLICATION PROVIDES AN AVENUE FOR EDUCATORS TO DO WHAT WE DO BEST—SHARE AND LEARN FROM INFORMATION. ENJOY!



THIS SEGMENT DESCRIBES INSTANCES WHEN INDIVIDUALS, DEPARTMENTS, OR DIVISIONS USED DATA TO MAKE DECISIONS THAT IMPROVED THEIR AREAS. EACH ITEM DETAILS HOW AN ISSUE OR PROBLEM WAS IDENTIFIED (THE PROBLEM), WHAT METHODS WERE USED TO ADDRESS IT (THE STUDY), AND HOW THE RESULTS WERE USED TO IMPROVE (THE SOLUTION). IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT AN ITEM, PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH. THIS ISSUE FOCUSES ON STUDENT SERVICES.

The Problem

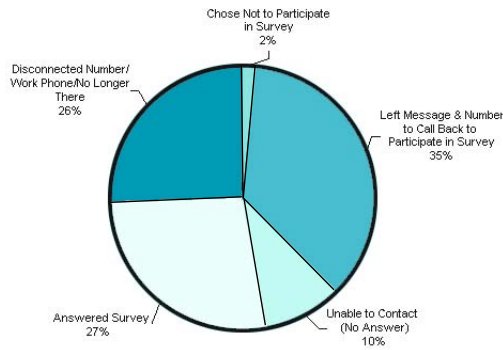
In studying enrollment trends, Calhoun's Planning Council determined there was a fairly large number of potential students who applied for admission to Calhoun, but did not subsequently enroll. Dr. Kermit Carter, Dean for Student Services, was asked to follow up on these potential students to determine why they chose not to enroll.

The Study

Dr. Carter and Dr. Wayne Tosh, Registrar, identified 1,701 students who applied for admission in the summer of '04, but did not enroll for the fall '04 semester. A random sample of 189 students was selected for follow-up. A phone survey consisting of five questions was administered in October 2004. The results of that survey follow:

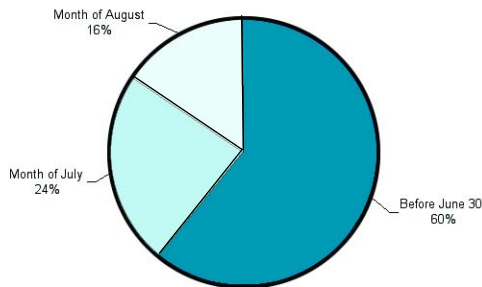
Of the 189 students contacted, the following results were reported:

PHONE SURVEY RESULTS

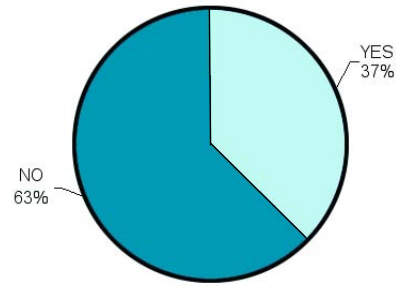


Of the 51 students successfully contacted, the following results were reported:

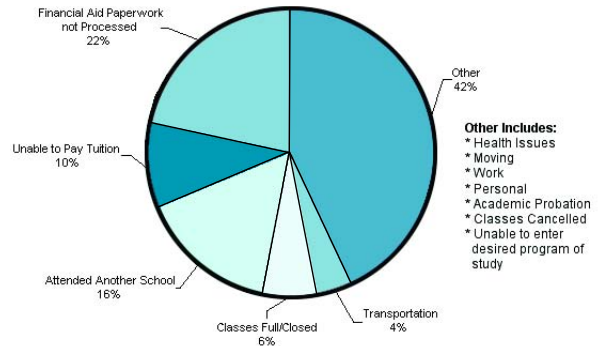
APPLIED FOR ADMISSION



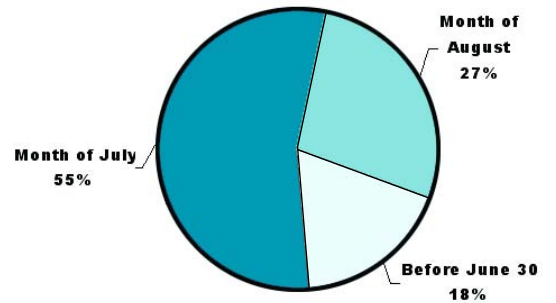
REGISTERED FOR CLASSES



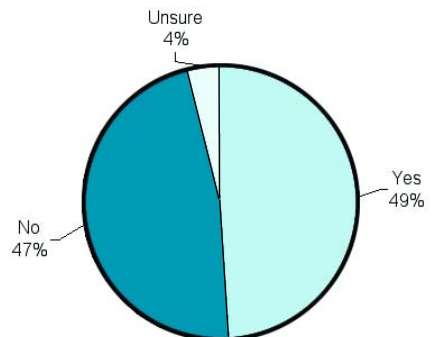
REASONS FOR NOT ATTENDING



DATES APPLIED FOR FINANCIAL AID



PLAN TO ATTEND IN SPRING 2005



The Solution

Dr. Carter presented the results of the survey to Planning Council at its December 14, 2004, meeting. The Council focused on the following two areas of concern:

First, the Council determined that students need to be prompted to apply for financial aid earlier to allow plenty of time for processing their applications and receiving their awards. Some ideas, such as ensuring financial aid application is encouraged in all public relations announcements related to registration, were discussed.

Second, Dr. Carter presented a specific plan to incorporate the results of the survey into the College's current Enrollment Management Plan. Recruitment, Financial Aid, Admissions, and Orientation are four areas identified in the enrollment management plan that will address concerns identified in the phone survey. Currently, committees are developing strategies for addressing these concerns. Watch for follow-up in future editions of *Data Elements*.



ABOUT COMMUNITY COLLEGES . . .

- THERE ARE OVER 1173 COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN THE UNITED STATES
- THERE ARE OVER 10 MILLION COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES
- 35% OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS SAY THEY BEGAN THEIR STUDIES AT ANOTHER COLLEGE
- 45% ARE THE FIRST IN THEIR FAMILIES TO ATTEND COLLEGE
- 84% NEVER PARTICIPATE IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
- 53% SAY THEY WANT TO TRANSFER TO A FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY
- 45% PREDICT FINANCIAL BURDENS WILL LEAD THEM TO DROP OUT
- 60% WORK MORE THAN 20 HOURS PER WEEK

SOURCE:
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

SURVEY ISSUES TO ADDRESS IN ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Recruitment

- Develop a recruitment matrix and schedule that defines planned recruiting contacts
- Identify a system for following up on the outcomes or referring leads from recruitment events
- Determine what type of material and what avenues are most effective in reaching target audiences

Financial Aid

- Earlier education of students, parents, and secondary school personnel regarding availability of financial aid
- Conduct financial aid workshops to assist students and parents in the application process
- Produce on-the-spot calculations for student aid packages
- Include financial aid information with admission applications
- Develop online and electronic signature capability
- Encourage early application process for financial aid

Orientation

- Establish and require earlier orientation experiences for first year students

Admissions

- Implementation of online application process for electronic submission of applications
- Implementation of tracking system to maintain communication with potential students from inquiry to enrollment (conversion rate)
- Establish and maintain procedures to ensure data accuracy on student information, i.e. phone numbers, addresses etc.

Advising Component

- Develop and publish a yearly schedule for classes to facilitate planning and advising for both students and advisors
- Provide Orientation programs that assist students in making the transition to and success with college life
- Inform students of the pre-registration/registration/late registration process in addition to ensuring proper placement of select courses for their particular academic improvement plan of study
- Inform students of policies and procedures which are given in the college

To submit information or inquire further, contact

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