



West Chester University
OF PENNSYLVANIA

Office of Institutional Research

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First Campus E-Newsletter

June 2006

The purpose of the **Institutional Research** (IR) Newsletter is to share with the campus community national and regional trends that may have an impact on higher education and WCU. The IR Newsletter will also provide institutional statistics and notify the campus community of new IR reports/web pages.

Comments and suggestions should be sent to Dr. Mary Lou D'Allegro, mdallegro@wcupa.edu

Retention/Graduation: National Survey...Tool Box Revisited

The US Department of Education examined two large longitudinal studies, HS & Beyond-1980 & 1988, of 10th and 12th grade transcripts (stratified national sample). The purpose was to examine the factors previously observed as significant that affected graduation rates. High school access to a **college preparatory** curriculum is key to post-secondary success. Also investigated were college enrollment patterns. Among the **academic behaviors** that were deemed significant in predicting graduation success include:

- completing at least 20 credits in the first year of college,
- taking college courses in the summer,
- multiple withdrawals from same course (negative effect),
- attending part-time (negative effect), and
- completing at least one high school mathematics course higher than Algebra II.

These factors have implications for academic advising, scheduling, and enrollment management.

Reference: Adelman, C. (2006). The Toolbox Revisited. Washington DC: Department of Education.
Can be found at: <http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/toolboxrevisit/index.html>

Carnegie Classification Changes

After several years of debate, post-secondary institutions will no longer be classified just by their degree offerings (WCU is a Masters I Public institution). Five major categories will determine an institution's Carnegie classification. These five categories are: (a) **undergraduate degree** offerings, (b) **graduate degree** offerings, (c) **proportion of undergraduate students**, (d) **proportion of full-time and resident undergraduate** students, and (e) **residential** setting.

The new classifications will have a tremendous effect on institutions including US News & World Report Rankings, IPEDS Peer Sets, CSRDE (see next article as one example), and other external reports.



CSRDE, STEM, and Alphabet Soup

No other sector is as well equipped with acronyms as higher education. Within this realm, the Office of Institutional Research just submitted to the Consortium of Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE), the **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics** (STEM) retention and graduation information. As part of this project, WCU submitted retention and graduation information for first time freshmen who started in CSRDE selected majors in the following departments: Computer Science, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. Note, this does not necessarily include all programs in these departments.

For the spring 2006 submission, there is good and bad news for WCU. The good news is that more new freshman are enrolling in STEM majors. In fall 2006, **181 new students** enrolled in CSRDE selected majors in the following departments: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Physics, or Mathematics.

The not so good news is that the six-year graduation rate for the 1999 STEM cohort posted a decrease from the 1998 STEM cohort. Of those students who started in STEM majors in fall 1999, only **54.5%** graduated in any major in six years. The six-year graduation rate in any major for the 1998 STEM cohort was **59.5%**.

Also for the 1999 cohort, Asian students had the highest STEM six-year graduation rate, 66.7% (vs. 56.1% for Caucasians). Women still outpace men regarding six-year graduation rates (60.0% for females vs. 46.6% for males).



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Summer I Enrollment

As of May 30, 2006 Summer I enrollment as compared to Summer 1, 2005:

	Enrollment		Difference	
	2005 Summer 1st (5/21/05)	2006 Summer 1st (5/31/06)	Count	Percent
Undergraduate	2,643	2,606	-37	-1.40%
Graduate	740	652	-88	-11.89%
Total	3,383	3,258	-125	-3.69%
Estimated Credit Hours:			Difference	
	2005 Summer 1st (5/21/06)	2006 Summer 1st (5/31/06)	Count	Percent
Undergraduate	12,216	11,864	-352	-2.97%
Graduate	2,716	2,351	-365	-15.53%
Total	14,932.00	14,215.00	-717	-5.04%

Spring 2006 Graduation

Approximately 1,300 students applied for spring 2006 graduation. About 1,000 (994) Bachelor degree applications were conferred. Final spring graduation numbers will be available by **July 3, 2006**.

PASSHE Accountability Measures FACTOID!

In fall 2005, WCU posted the highest second-year retention rate of all PASSHE schools. WCU also had the best results in 2005 of the 14 PASSHE institutions for the following categories:

- Number of PA community college transfers,
- Number of African-American graduates in four-years,
- Number of African-American graduates in six-years,
- One-year percent increase in endowment, and
- Number of female professional employees.

Accountability Measure results and PASSHE institution comparisons for 2006 should be available **August 9, 2006**.