

THE RESOURCE

A COMMUNICATION FROM INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH & EFFECTIVENESS & CENTRAL OHIO TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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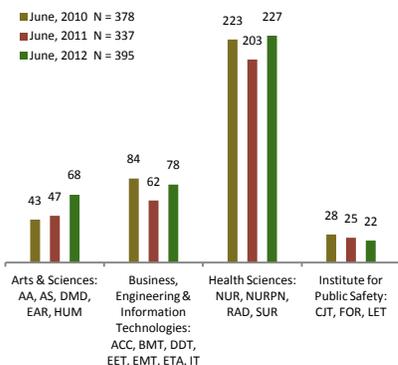
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COTC... In the Know

The June 2012 graduating class earned 395 total degrees or certificates and represented 19 different academic technologies. Compared to the June 2011 total of 337 graduates, and June 2010 total of 378, June 2012 saw an increase of 17.2% and 4.5%, respectively. The following graphic displays the number of graduates by academic division as compared to the previous two spring term commencements.

Number of Degrees and Certificates
Awarded by Academic Division



Source: June 2010, 2011 & 2012 Graduation Statistics Summary

FEATURED INITIATIVES

Qualitative Research Initiative: Focus Group Training with Dr. Kenneth P. Gonzalez

Kenneth P. Gonzalez, Ph. D., Data Coach at Achieving the Dream, Inc. and Associate Professor of Education at the University of San Diego, recently joined a group of faculty & staff to demonstrate best practices in using focus groups to enhance qualitative research practices at Central Ohio Technical College.

The hands-on training took place from April 30th to May 2nd, 2012, and included conducting 11 focus groups aimed at understanding barriers to first year student success at COTC. In addition to identifying common barriers, student participants were asked about the steps they took to overcome each challenge, knowledge and advice they would share with someone experiencing the same challenge, and changes they would make to help students overcome this challenge if they were President of COTC.

At the core of the initiative is the opportunity to provide students with a structured format to share feedback about their experiences, attitudes and assumptions. Dr. Gonzalez provided a framework that may be utilized in many areas of the institution, with the goal of continuous quality improvement. The information collected during the first year student barriers sessions is currently being analyzed by the faculty & staff focus group facilitators, and more information will be available in the coming months.

COTC Involved with National Higher Education Benchmarking Institute

Each spring, members from the Office of Business & Finance, Accounting, Human Resources, Workforce Development, and Institutional Research & Effectiveness collect information to submit to the National Higher Education Benchmarking Institute for inclusion in two major research initiatives developed specifically for community colleges: *The National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP)* and *The Kansas Study*.

The studies were developed to provide community colleges with benchmarking tools in response to the increasing demand for institutional effectiveness and accountability from federal, state, and accrediting agencies. The recent submission focused primarily on autumn 2010 data, and summary reports are expected to return to COTC during the coming autumn term. While both studies are administered by the Benchmarking Institute, they have uniquely different uses. Information on each study is provided below.

The *NCCBP* was first administered in 2004 in a national effort to create a standard process for benchmark reporting. Two hundred and eighty community colleges, including COTC, participated in the 2011 benchmarking project.



Benchmark areas include student outcomes, institutional effectiveness, community and workforce development, and many others. Participating institutions receive summaries based on national and regional figures, customizable peer comparisons, and best practices.

The Kansas Study provides an in depth benchmarking tool for community colleges related to instructional costs and productivity. In 2011, 69 community colleges participated in the study, including COTC. Eastern Gateway Community College and Southern State community College, also located in Ohio, participated in 2011.



Data is submitted to the Higher Education Benchmarking Institute based on direct expenditures for instruction, number of faculty, and student credit hours for 15 academic disciplines. Participants, in return, receive summaries of national figures, results by academic discipline, and access to customizable peer groups. For more information, please contact the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness at cotcire@cotc.edu.

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