Illinois Valley Community College

Demographics Report

An Overview of the Demographic Profile of the College at the Close of Fall 2009
Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the demographic profile of Illinois Valley Community College as it is at the close of the fall 2009 semester. The data reviewed in this report will examine the following primary questions:

1. Who are our students?
2. From where do our students come?
3. What are our students studying?
4. What are our students’ educational goals?
5. What are we doing to support them in achieving their educational goals?

Enrollments

- Headcount rose by 7% from fall 2008 to fall 2009, while full-time equivalent (FTE) rose by 12%.
- Gender split has remained stable with women accounting for just under 58% of the student body in fall 2009.
- Enrollments among non-traditional age groups are rising after several years of steady decline.
- The racial and ethnic makeup of the student body has not been affected by rising overall enrollments, with White non-Hispanic students continuing to account for nearly 84% of the population.
- Since fall 2006, the College has increased credit hours offered at the main campus from 32,585 to 38,053 (17%) and at our extension sites across the district from 2,605 to 4,098 (57%).
- About one-fourth of credit hours enrolled are during evening hours, which is a slight increase from previous years.
- The largest percentage of students come from non-population centers, while 18% come from LaSalle-Peru, 16% call Ottawa home, and 12% have a Streator address.
- More than half of our students work while taking classes, although this is a drop from previous years.
- A slightly lower percentage of students are enrolling in transfer-oriented programs, although the number of students in these programs continues to rise. This figure represents an anomaly, as the percentage of students indicating they will transfer to a baccalaureate institution has risen over the same period.

Support Services

- A total of 1,159 students made counselor appointments in September and October 2008 preparing for the Spring 2009 semester, compared with 863 appointments during the same months in 2007.
- The newly-developed New Student Orientation program served 451 students during the spring 2009 sessions.
- Some 170 students have been referred to the Early Alert System since it was begun in spring 2006. The greatest numbers of referrals are by math and English faculty.
- From spring 2008 to spring 2009, utilization of the tutoring center rose from 514 to 582. Over that same period, fall utilization rose from 526 to 958 students.
On April 24, 1924 the LaSalle-Peru Board of Education approved a resolution establishing LaSalle-Peru-Oglesby Junior College. In the fall of that year, the College’s seven faculty and two administrators welcomed the 32 students as the first class. Eighty-five years later, Illinois Valley Community College enrolled 4,529 students in the fall 2009 semester and served those students with 92 full-time faculty, 137 part-time faculty, 214 full and part-time staff, and 63 part-time student workers.

From its humble roots sharing space with the LaSalle-Peru Township High School, the College has grown on its 425-acre campus overlooking the Illinois River Valley since its relocation in 1968. The College serves a population of just over 147,000 spread across all or parts of eight counties and a 2,000-square-mile district. The district encompasses 16 high school districts and parts of 5 other high school districts.

IVCC’s comprehensive offerings include Associate in Arts (A.A.), Associate in Science (A.S.), Associate in Engineering Science (A.E.S.), Associate of Arts in Teaching (A.A.T.), and Associate in General Studies degrees; 24 career programs leading to Associate in Applied Science degrees; 43 certificate programs that prepare students for employment in two years or less; Adult Basic Education (A.B.E.) and General Education Development (G.E.D.) programs;
English as a Second Language (E.S.L.) and Citizenship programs; contract training and workforce development training; professional and personal continuing education opportunities; and youth enrichment programs.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the demographic profile of the College at the close of the fall 2009 semester. The demographic profile is a snapshot in time. The data fluctuate across semesters and as each individual semester progresses. It is important, therefore, to look at data gathered at the same approximate point in any two given semesters if comparisons are to be made or trend lines to be established.

The data reviewed in this report will examine the following primary questions:

1. Who are our students?
2. From where do our students come?
3. What are our students studying?
4. What are our students’ educational goals?
5. What are we doing to support them in achieving their educational goals?

To answer these questions, we will look at such basic demographics as enrollments, age, gender, and ethnicity, but we will also need to examine a few measures not previously included in the College’s demographic reports. We will look at developmental course enrollments, adult education enrollments, math credits earned, and student services provided. The intention of this report is twofold. The first intention is to provide an overview of where we are as a college. The second intention is to give the board and the administration some indication of where we are being successful and where there is a need for improvement.

**Enrollments**

Enrollments have been steadily rising since fall 2006, both in terms of headcount and full-time-equivalency (FTE). Headcount is a measure of individuals enrolled in coursework. Under this measure, each person is counted once, regardless of the number of hours in which that individual is enrolled. Full-time-equivalency takes all of the hours enrolled and divides that number by 15, which is considered a full-time credit load. Although enrollments may be measured at any point during an enrollment cycle, such as at the first day of classes, at midterm, or as a final figure at the end of the semester, comparison data are commonly collected at the tenth day of classes. At this point, student-initiated adds and drops are complete and the enrollment figure is considered an accurate measure of students attempting any particular class.
Figure 1 presents fall enrollment trends from 2005 through 2009. As we can see, both headcount and FTE have risen steadily since fall 2006. Fall 2009 saw a shift in the trend between full-time and part-time enrollments, with part-time enrollments dropping slightly.

Figure 1

While overall enrollments have risen, the split between male and female students has remained relatively stable, with women accounting for between 55 and 58 percent of those enrolled at IVCC (see Fig. 2 and Fig. 3).

Figure 2
The College continues to enroll students from across the age spectrum, but the most recent enrollments represent a shift in the pattern. Although the overall breakdown of the student population by age bands remains the same with traditional-aged students (18-20) making up the largest group, followed in chronological order, two interesting trends are evident. First is the steady and remarkable growth among students under 18 years of age. This is primarily due to growth in our dual credit and dual enrollment offerings in collaboration with local high schools. A second trend is the reversal in direction among the three age bands from 31 to 60. In all three cases, enrollments among these age groups were steadily dropping over the previous four years but rose significantly in 2009. Enrollments among 51 to 60-year-olds rose by 14%, among 41 to 50-year-olds rose by 10%, and among 31 to 40-year-olds rose by 5% (see Fig. 4).
The racial and ethnic make-up of the IVCC student body has not experienced a shift as a result of rising enrollments over the past 4 years. White non-Hispanic students continue to account for the overwhelming majority of the student population at 84%. Hispanic students account for 7%, African-American students account for 3%, and Asian-American students account for 1%. Race and ethnicity are self-reported, and approximately 5% of IVCC students in fall 2009 did not indicate race or ethnicity (see Fig. 6). The racial and ethnic make-up of the student body closely mirrors that of the district as a whole as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau (White – 88.4%; Hispanic – 6.2%; African-American – 1.1%; Asian-American - < 1%).
Among the 45,439 credit hours enrolled at 10th day of the fall 2009 semester, the vast majority (77%) were taken on a daytime schedule. This represents a slight reduction from the relatively stable 80-82% daytime credits over the previous four years. Nighttime enrollments have remained relatively steady at between 14% and 16%. Although representing a relatively small percentage of overall offerings, we have experienced increased growth in online enrollments from a steady 4% in 2005 through 2008 to 6% this fall (see Fig. 7).

**Figure 7**

Fall Registered Credits by Time of Day

![Fall Registered Credits by Time of Day](image)

(Note: 10th day data, including Sheridan Correctional Center and Dual Credit)

In response to increased enrollments, the College has increased credit hour offerings. Figure 8 shows the breakdown of credits offered at the Oglesby campus, through extension sites across the district (including dual credit and dual enrollment offerings at local high schools), through a cooperative program with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) and at the Sheridan Correctional Center. Since fall 2006, the College has increased credit hours offered at the main campus from 32,585 to 38,053 (17%) and at our extension sites across the district from 2,605 to 4,098 (57%) (see Fig. 8).

**Figure 8**

Fall Registered Credits by Location

![Fall Registered Credits by Location](image)

(Note: 10th day data)
Figure 9 indicates where IVCC students call home in terms of the population centers in the district. Of course, with a predominantly rural district, many of the College’s students are from smaller communities or the countryside. In fact, 1,437 fall 2009 students resided outside the population centers. This is twice the number coming from the largest contributor, Ottawa. As a percentage of the student population, Ottawa residents account for 16%, Streator 12%, LaSalle 9%, Peru 9%, Mendota, Princeton, Oglesby and Marseilles 5% each, and Spring Valley 4%.

Half of the fall 2009 enrollees reported working while taking classes (full-time, part-time or as a homemaker). This percentage has dropped dramatically over the past five years as the percentage indicating they are unemployed or not indicating an employment status has risen substantially from 29% to 50% (see Fig. 10).
When residents apply to enroll as first-time/full-time students at IVCC, they are asked to identify their intended program of study. First-time enrollees select from transfer-oriented associates degrees, Associate in General Studies, Associate in Applied Science degree programs, certificates, and Adult Education programs. Figure 11 shows trends in the raw numbers of enrollees declaring a first program of study.

*Figure 11*

![Fall Enrollment by 1st Program of Study](image)

(Note: 10th day data, including Sheridan Correctional Center and Dual Credit)

Although we have experienced an increase in the raw numbers of students declaring associate degrees over the last three years, with overall enrollments up substantially during that period, the percentages in both transfer-oriented and AAS degree enrollments have actually fallen from 2005 to 2009. The 1,477 first-time enrollees intending to pursue a transfer degree accounted for 37% of declared programs in fall 2005, but the 1,513 in fall 2009 accounted for only 33%. Along the same lines, 27% of enrollees (1,087) declared their intent to pursue an AAS degree in 2005, while this dropped slightly to 26% (1,164) in 2009 (see Fig. 11).

Enrollees are also asked to indicate their educational goal. Although “future job” remains the most-often indicated goal with raw numbers rising each year from fall 2006 to fall 2009, this goal is losing ground as a percentage of all responses falling from 43% in 2005 to 41% in 2009. Enrolled students indicating their studies were intended to improve current skills also fell from 8% in 2005 to 5% in 2009. Over the same period, the percentage of applicants intending to transfer to a baccalaureate institution for further studies rose from 36% to 39%. This may reflect a worsening employment environment in the district, a situation that would push residents to pursue formal education while turning their sights beyond short-term job opportunities (see Fig. 12).
Support Services

Counseling Center

The IVCC Counseling Center is often a student’s first point of contact with the College and continues to provide guidance and support throughout that student’s academic career. Students may make an appointment to meet with a counselor, and walk-ins are welcomed. During calendar year 2005, the Counseling Center had 3,302 advance appointments and 254 same-day appointments and also served 2,988 walk-ins. By calendar year 2008, the Center had experienced a dramatic shift in the nature of services demanded by students. In that year, the Center had only 2,438 advance appointments while serving 741 same-day and 4,266 walk-ins. In the fall of 2008, the Center decided to discontinue the same-day appointment option and shifted resources to better address the demand for walk-in services.

In preparing for the spring 2009 registration period, student made 1,159 appointments with counseling staff in September and October of 2008, compared with 863 appointments during the same months in 2007. During the spring registration period (11/08-1/09), students made 1,746 appointments with counselors. During that same timeframe one year earlier, 1,371 appointments were made.

The Counseling Center has developed a New Student Orientation that has been recognized as a best practice by other community colleges across the state. The number of students served by any orientation session is limited to mirror the number of counselors available at that time (a maximum of 9). In this way, students and their family members are not asked to wait to see a counselor. The orientation sessions include a tour and brief information.
sessions, which are coupled with online orientation resources. During the spring 2009 orientation period (for fall enrollment), the Counseling Center met with 451 new students.

Early Alert System

IVCC recently instituted an Early Alert System (EAS), through which faculty can refer a student to the Counseling Center and the Retention Specialist for assistance. Since its inception in the spring 2006, 170 students have been referred through EAS. The majority of students are being referred by their instructors in math and English courses. The five most-often cited reasons for referral are poor attendance, failure to complete work, low test or quiz grades, failure to understand student responsibilities, and failure to seek help. The EAS has been implemented through fits and starts since 2006. With full implementation now complete, we should be able to track the impact of the system on retention for future reports.

Tutoring and Writing Center

The Tutoring and Writing Center provides assistance to students on an open access basis. Figures 13 and 14 demonstrate the rising demand for the services provided by the center. Although the numbers fluctuate across the semesters, total utilization of the Center has shot up dramatically since 2004 when the Writing Center was established. From spring 2008 to spring 2009, utilization of the tutoring center rose from 514 to 582. Over that same period, fall utilization rose from 526 to 958 students.
**Figure 13**

Tutor and Writing Center - Spring

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**Figure 14**

Tutor and Writing Center - Fall

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Closing thoughts

The purpose of this report is to provide a snapshot of demographic points and trends. I have purposely avoided analysis of the data, as this would go beyond the scope of this report. However, in closing I would like to point out a few areas that I believe will merit heightened attention as the College plans for coming years.

As the local economy suffered through the ongoing recession, enrollments have risen dramatically. Although we can anticipate a decline in enrollments in the wake of a recovery, employment always lags other economic indicators and it is likely the magnitude of the recession will cause a realignment of local businesses and industries. A critical task for the College is to respond appropriately to this realignment.

A slightly lower percentage of students are enrolling in transfer-oriented programs while the percentage of students indicating they will transfer to a baccalaureate institution has risen over the same period. This suggests students are not finding value in the associate degrees as a ladder to the baccalaureate. We know that many students transfer without completing a degree with us. We must reassess the value of degree completion as a measure of success and seek to align our efforts with the best interests of the student.

Student services are being overwhelmed as higher enrollments are being coupled with a higher demand for intensive student support, such as counseling and tutoring. The College must be prepared to provide support to these areas in terms of facilities, staffing, and materials as these services are critical to student success.