

GCC At-a-Glance

Spring 2009: Growth & Retention

Comparing Spring 2008 to Spring 2009

Credit enrollment at GCC in spring 2009 is up 5.5% compared to spring 2008. Total, unduplicated credit enrollment increased from 2,112 to 2,229, an increase of 117 students. The total credits increased 3.5%, or 666 credits, from spring 2008, to 19,967. The total full-time equivalent enrollment¹ increased by 55.5 to 1663.9 FTE for spring 2009.

Changes in the programs offered by GCC between spring 2008 and 2009 make it difficult to definitively link this growth to any one program, but the continued growth of the Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency program (in its second semester and now the largest certificate program at the College) and the popularity of the Liberal Arts/Health Science option have contributed to the growth in enrollments. High school dual enrollments are also up 31 from one year ago reflecting the new Early Transitions Programs at Greenfield High School and Turners Falls High School.

Demographically, the most notable area of growth is in men. There are 89 more men enrolled at GCC in spring 2009 than in spring 2008. Males account for 76% of the increased enrollment from one year ago. 35% of the increase in male enrollment is accounted for by the Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency program.

The majority (69%) of the additional men enrolled as part-time students. However, the proportion of full-time to part-time status for all men remained about the same.

Table 1: Enrollment Status for Male Students, Spring 2008 & 2009

		Year		Total
		2008	2009	
Part-Time	Count	423	485	908
	% within YEAR	55%	56%	55%
Full-Time	Count	352	379	731
	% within YEAR	45 %	44%	45%
Total	Count	775	864	1639
	% within YEAR	100%	100%	100%

There has not been a notable change in the age profile of the male enrollment from spring 2008 to spring 2009. The average age for males remained unchanged at approximately 26 years.

¹ Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment is based on 12 credit hours.

Non-returning Students, Fall 2008 to Spring 2009

733 students enrolled at GCC in fall 2008 did not re-enroll in spring 2009. This represents 32% of the total fall enrollment; this is comparable to the 31% attrition between fall 2007 and spring 2008.

January Graduation:

GCC now offers a January graduation period. In January 2009, 46 students graduated. 43 of these graduates were enrolled in fall 2008. January graduates account for 6% of non-returning students from fall 2008 to spring 2009. It is unknown how many non-returning students from fall 2007 to spring 2008 have completed their degree requirements and are waiting for June commencement so a year-to-year comparison is not possible at this time.

Transfer data for non-returning students from fall 2008 to spring 2009 is not available at this time.

Attrition by Major:

Table 3 presents the attrition rate for programs with 25 or more enrollments in fall 2008. As a point of reference, the overall attrition rate for fall 2008 to spring 2009 is 32%.

Table 2: Fall to Spring Attrition Rates for Programs with 25 or More Fall Enrollments

Major	Fall to Spring Attrition
Non-matriculated	65%
Computer Information Systems	38%
Management	33%
Liberal Arts/General	32%
Art/Fine Art	32%
Liberal Arts/Music	30%
Liberal Arts/Health Science	27%
Practical Nursing	26%
Engineering Science	26%
Art/Media Arts	25%
Criminal Justice	25%
Accounting	24%
Liberal Arts/Human Services	24%
Business Admin. Transfer	24%
Special Enrollment (HS Dual)	24%
Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency	23%
Early Childhood Education	23%
Criminal Justice Compact	21%
Paramedic	9%
Nursing	5%

Attrition by Demographic & Student Type:

There are few notable differences in the demographics of students that persisted and left GCC between fall 2008 and spring 2009. The attrition rate of students does not appear to have been patterned by either race or gender. There was, however, a modest difference in the retention rates of traditional aged students and older learners. The retention rate for traditional age students (24 years and younger) was nearly 4% higher than for older learners.

Table 3: Fall to Spring Attrition by Age Category

		Age Indicator		Total
		24 & Younger	25 & Older	
Retention	Count	907	678	1585
	% within Age Group	70%	66%	68%
Attrition	Count	386	343	729
	% within Age Group	30%	33%	32%
Total	Count	1293	1021	2314
	% within Age Group	100%	100%	100%

Full-time students were also more likely to be retained from fall 2008 to fall 2009 than part-time students. The attrition rate for part-time students (less than 12 credits attempted in fall 2008) is 18% higher than for full-time students.

Table 4: Fall to Spring Attrition by Enrollment Status in Fall 2008

		Enrollment Status F08		Total
		Full-Time	Part-Time	
Retention	Count	696	889	1585
	% within StatusF08	80%	62%	68%
Attrition	Count	177	556	733
	% within StatusF08	20%	38%	32%
Total	Count	873	1445	2318
	% within StatusF08	100%	100%	100%

New and continuing students from fall 2008 were retained at a similar rate. Within new students types, readmitted students were the most likely to persist in spring 2009 (78% vs. 70% for first-time, first-year and transfer students). Non-matriculated, new students were the least likely new student group to be retained (45%) from fall 2008 to spring 2009.