

Students and Enrollments in Workforce Development and Continuing Education

A substantial portion of the Montgomery College mission is to “enrich our community” and to meet “economic and workforce development needs.” The Workforce Development and Continuing Education (WDCE) unit of the College offers several thousand courses a year to individuals, businesses, and organizations in its efforts to enrich our community and meet those economic and workforce development needs.

WDCE course offerings encompass a wide range of topics and purposes and are generally shorter in length than the traditional three hours a week for 15 weeks credit-bearing courses. As a result, courses are on a continuous pattern of start and stop, so capturing a snapshot of WDCE enrollment at a point in time is difficult. The following reports offer a brief description of the students and a summary of the volume, type, and location of course offerings for the last three fiscal years (FY 2003 - FY 2005).

In each of the previous two fiscal years, WDCE compiled more than 25,000 student enrollments in more than 2,600 individual course sections. In FY 2005, however, the number of student enrollments increased 55% to 39,662 and the number of individual course sections rose 25% to 3,417. The increase was, in part, fueled by a new grant funded for Adult Basic Education (ABE), GED, and Adult ESOL programs that WDCE assumed from MCPS.

More than 7,000 students in FY 2005 took more than one course. Counting each student only once, regardless of the number of courses he or she took, there were nearly 15,000 unduplicated students in fiscal year 2003 (14,980), more than that number in 2004 (15,368), and 24,138 in 2005 (a 57% increase over the previous year) .

WDCE students are older (with a median age of 37 for 2005) than the College’s typical credit students (median age 22 for 2005).

During a fiscal year, a large number of students take both traditional credit courses and Workforce Development and Continuing Education courses. Since 2002, that number has continued to increase. This past year, there was a 13% increase (to 1,552 students).