Student Access, Retention, & Success: 
*Data Insights*

Quarterly Meeting of the Tennessee Board of Regents

March 2021
At TCATs, enrollment declined **2%** from fall 2019 to fall 2020. That’s about 350 fewer students.

**Dual enrollment**
- Declined **3%** from 2019 to 2020.
- That’s 143 fewer students.

**New student enrollment**
- Declined **6%** from 2019 to 2020.
- That’s 238 fewer students.

**Adult enrollment**
- Declined **2%** from 2019 to 2020.
- That’s 102 fewer students.

*Count is per student per institution, so students in multiple programs are counted once. Dual Enrollment is defined as students identified as a secondary student, regardless of training level. Adult students are defined as students age 25 or older, including students in preparatory and supplemental programs. This excludes lineworkers at TCAT Murfreesboro. New student enrollment only includes preparatory students, excluding TCAT Chattanooga.*
Enrollment at community colleges declined **10%** from fall 2019 to fall 2020. That’s about 8,780 fewer students. However, enrollment increased slightly from the beginning to the end of the semester.

- **Dual enrollment** declined **8%** from 2019 to 2020. That’s 1,275 fewer students.
- **First-time, full-time freshmen** declined **17%** from 2019 to 2020. That’s 3,100 fewer students.
- **Adult enrollment** declined **12%** from 2019 to 2020. That’s 2,850 fewer students.

*End-of-term enrollment data. Adult students are defined as students age 25 or older.*
Enrollment in Fall 2020

Many community colleges saw pronounced drops in enrollment among Black students and low-income students. These declines have sharpened our focus on the open access mission of the system.

- Black & African American male enrollment declined **21%** from 2019 to 2020. That’s 1,000 fewer students.
- First time, full-time Black male enrollment declined **33%** from 2019 to 2020. That’s 400 fewer students.
- First time, full-time low-income enrollment declined **28%** from 2019 to 2020. That’s 3,000 fewer students.
Course outcomes declined slightly in fall 2020. Further research on online coursetaking may help guide efforts to improve these success rates.

*Success also includes a passing grade in pass/fail courses. Data includes all courses at all community colleges for the past three fall terms.
Enrollment in Spring 2021
TCAT Enrollment

In Spring 2021:

• As of March 16, 2021, 9,818 non-dual enrollment students are registered, three percent less than the same day prior year.

• As of March 16, 2021, TCAT attendance for non-dual enrollment students is 9,497, four percent less than the same day prior year.

• The distribution of enrollment by program does not appear to have changed significantly when comparing spring 2021 to spring 2020.

*TCAT registration and attendance data for same day prior year if as of March 17, 2020. Since TCAT – Chattanooga is not in the central Banner system, the above data does not include Chattanooga. Attendance and registration will continue to grow throughout the term, so these figures are preliminary.
Enrollment in Spring 2021

Community college enrollment is typically lower in spring terms than in fall terms. But the decline from fall to spring was more significant in 2021.

Fall and Spring Enrollment at Community Colleges

- **2018-19**: Fall 89,078; Spring 78,136 (Fell 12%)
- **2019-20**: Fall 88,946; Spring 77,212 (Fell 13%)
- **2020-21**: Fall 80,166; Spring 65,894 (Fell 18%)

*Preliminary spring 2021 enrollment is based on census (14th day) enrollment data. Prior years are reported with official end-of-term data. Historically, the end-of-term headcount is 1%-2% higher than census. Census may not reflect enrollments in courses that begin after the 14th day.*
At community colleges, enrollment in spring 2021 is 15% lower than in spring 2020. This represents about 11,000 fewer students.

- **Dual enrollment** declined 12% from spring 2020 to spring 2021. That’s 1,700 fewer students.
- **First-time college students starting in the spring** declined 26% from spring 2020 to spring 2021. That’s 369 fewer students.
- **Adult enrollment** declined 13% from spring 2020 to spring 2021. That’s 3,000 fewer students.

*Preliminary spring 2021 enrollment is based on census (14th day) enrollment data. Prior years are reported with official end-of-term data. Historically, the end-of-term headcount is 1-2% higher than census. Census FTE may not reflect enrollments in courses that begin after the 14th day. Adult students are defined as students age 25 or older.*
Many community colleges saw declines in enrollment among Black students and Hispanic students.

Enrollment by Black & African American students declined 21% from spring 2020 to 2021. That’s 2,475 fewer students.

Black male enrollment declined 27% from spring 2020 to 2021. That’s 1,090 fewer students.

Hispanic enrollment declined 12% from spring 2020 to 2021. That’s 600 fewer students.
Fall-to-spring retention rates fell in 2021. Of the students who began in fall 2020, only 70% returned in spring 2021.

Fall-to-spring retention rates measure how many students from the fall freshman class returned in the spring.

Fall-to-spring retention declined this year, from 77% in 2019-20 to 70% in 2020-21.

These declines were steepest for Hispanic students and Black students. Among Black male students, fall-to-spring retention declined from 70% to 59%.
Student Success in 2020
In fall 2020, students set a record for the number of credentials earned in a single fall term.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Community Colleges</th>
<th>TCATs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3,092</td>
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<tr>
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</table>
Graduation rates have continued to increase for each cohort of first-time students at community colleges.

*The cumulative graduation rate reflects the cumulative number of students in a first-time, full-time freshman cohort who earned a technical certificate or degree from any TBR community in each semester, beginning with the student’s first semester of enrollment as a first-time, full-time freshman.*
Twenty percent of students from the 2018 cohort have already graduated—representing the highest graduation rate after 2.5 years ever.

The percent of students who graduated within 2.5 years of enrollment has doubled over the past decade.

Due to increases in cohort sizes and graduation rates, 3,860 students from the 2018 cohort graduated within 2.5 years of their first enrollment, compared to only 2,011 students from 2014.
In fall 2020, community college enrollment declined 10%, and TCAT enrollment declined 2% over the previous fall.

Course success rates in fall 2020 declined slightly. Further research may help guide efforts to improve success rates.

Community college enrollment declined 15% from spring 2020 to 2021. Fall-to-spring retention declined as well, especially for Black and Hispanic students.

Students from the 2018 cohort set a new graduation rate record in 2020. Twenty percent of students graduated within 2.5 years—more than ever before.