

Florida Colleges Remain Top Producers of Associates Degrees

The 2009 edition of *Community College Week's* Top 100 Associate Degree Producers revealed that colleges in The Florida College System (FCS) continue as leaders in the total number of degrees conferred per institution. In addition, Florida colleges lead in the number of degrees granted to African Americans and Hispanics, and degrees granted in several health and science related programs.

Associate degrees awarded by Florida colleges include the Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science degrees. During 2007-08, 49,354 associate degrees were conferred in The Florida College System.¹

Exhibit 1 shows the rankings for the 2008 report (academic year 2006-07) and 2009 report (academic year 2007-08).² A total of 16 colleges from the FCS were listed in the 2009 edition of the Top 100 report, an increase of one from 2008. The State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota (formerly Manatee Community College) joined the top 100 in 2009. Eight Florida colleges were ranked in the top 25 in both the 2008 and 2009 reports. Miami Dade, Broward, and Valencia ranked among the top five in the nation for associate degree producers, with Miami Dade College ranking second in the nation, while Broward College ranked third (up from 13 in 2007) and Valencia Community College ranked fifth. Miami Dade has consistently ranked number one over the last four years and was the only school in the nation to come close to this year's first-ranked University of Phoenix in associate degree conferrals.³

¹ Florida Department of Education, 2009 Fact Book, <http://www.fldoe.org/arm/cctcmis/pubs/factbook/default.asp>.

² For the purposes of consistency and simplicity, the years referenced in the text and in the tables refer to the year the report was published, even though the data come from the prior academic year.

³ This is the first year that *Community College Week* listed the University of Phoenix in the Top 100 Associate Degree Producers for All Disciplines.

EXHIBIT 1

TOP PRODUCERS OF TOTAL ASSOCIATE DEGREES	
2008	2009
Miami Dade College - 1	Miami Dade College - 2
Valencia Community College - 4	Broward College - 3
Santa Fe College - 6	Valencia Community College - 5
Florida State College at Jacksonville - 7	Florida State College at Jacksonville - 7
St. Petersburg College - 11	St. Petersburg College - 10
Broward College - 13	Santa Fe College - 12
Palm Beach Community College - 18	Palm Beach Community College - 15
Tallahassee Community College - 21	Tallahassee Community College - 24
Hillsborough Community College - 30	Hillsborough Community College - 27
Brevard Community College - 33	Brevard Community College - 31
Daytona State College - 61	Daytona State College - 64
Indian River State College - 78	Pensacola Junior College - 67
Seminole Community College - 80	Indian River State College - 68
Pensacola Junior College - 85	Seminole Community College - 83
Edison State College - 90	State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota - 91
	Edison State College - 96

SOURCE: COMMUNITY COLLEGE WEEK

Exhibit 2 shows nine Florida colleges in the top 100 producers of associate degrees for African Americans in both 2008 and 2009. Six of the nine colleges were among the top 20. These same colleges have consistently ranked in the top 20 in the nation for this category since 2005.

EXHIBIT 2

TOP PRODUCERS OF TOTAL ASSOCIATE DEGREES FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS	
2008	2009
Miami Dade College - 1	Miami Dade College - 1
Broward College - 7	Broward College - 3
Florida State College at Jacksonville- 11	Florida State College at Jacksonville - 13
Tallahassee Community College - 12	Valencia Community College - 16
Palm Beach Community College - 19	Palm Beach Community College - 18
Valencia Community College - 20	Tallahassee Community College - 20
Hillsborough Community College - 44	Hillsborough Community College - 37
St. Petersburg College - 64	St. Petersburg College - 59
Santa Fe College - 66	Santa Fe College - 82

SOURCE: COMMUNITY COLLEGE WEEK

Exhibit 3 shows six Florida colleges among the top 100 producers of associate degrees conferred to Hispanics. Miami Dade College ranked first in the nation for both 2008 and 2009. Broward College moved up in rank from 14 in 2008 to 5 in 2009 while Palm Beach Community College rose in rank from 45 in 2008 to 31 in 2009. Each of these colleges also made the list of top producers for African Americans in Exhibit 2.

EXHIBIT 3

TOP PRODUCERS OF TOTAL ASSOCIATE DEGREES FOR HISPANICS	
2008	2009
Miami Dade College - 1	Miami Dade College - 1
Valencia Community College - 7	Valencia Community College - 4
Broward College - 14	Broward College - 5
Hillsborough Community College - 39	Hillsborough Community College - 36
Palm Beach Community College - 45	Palm Beach Community College - 31
Santa Fe College - 62	Santa Fe College - 63

SOURCE: COMMUNITY COLLEGE WEEK

Exhibit 4 shows Florida colleges ranked in the top 100 for degree production for all minority groups. This ranking combines African Americans and Hispanics with other minority groups. The last time this list was calculated was the 2005 edition. Nine colleges from the FCS that were ranked in the top 100 in 2005 were also on the 2009 list, illustrating the consistent roles that these colleges have in providing a postsecondary education to minority populations.

EXHIBIT 4

TOP PRODUCERS OF TOTAL ASSOCIATE DEGREES FOR ALL MINORITY GROUPS	
2005	2009
Miami Dade College - 1	Miami Dade College - 1
Broward College - 2	Broward College - 2
Valencia Community College - 4	Valencia Community College - 6
Florida State College at Jacksonville - 27	Palm Beach Community College - 20
Palm Beach Community College - 35	Florida State College at Jacksonville - 27
Hillsborough Community College - 40	Hillsborough Community College - 36
Tallahassee Community College - 46	Tallahassee Community College - 44
Santa Fe College - 67	Santa Fe College - 63
St. Petersburg College - 84	St. Petersburg College - 90

SOURCE: COMMUNITY COLLEGE WEEK

The 2009 rankings included breakdowns by academic discipline. In one category, Liberal Arts and Science, General Students, and Humanities, Florida colleges overwhelmingly top the rankings. Exhibit 5 shows that 15 Florida institutions ranked in the top 50. Moreover, the top 10 positions are all colleges from the FCS. The remaining colleges from the FCS are clustered close together, ranking from 27 to 36.

The reason for these high rankings lies in the state's strong "2+2" articulation system. Florida's statewide articulation agreement is among the most comprehensive articulation agreements in the nation.⁴ The agreement guarantees students who graduate with an AA degree from The Florida College System admission to one of the eleven state universities, though not necessarily admission to the student's first choice. In 2007, 76 percent of FCS associate degree graduates who applied were admitted to the State University System (SUS), compared to the 57 percent admission rate of students who started at a university.⁵ The agreement also guarantees that at least 60 credit hours will transfer so that students will be admitted to the upper division as juniors. All of this creates a strong incentive for students to complete their AA prior to seeking admission to the SUS, which in turn helps explain why Florida produces such high numbers of degrees in this area.

EXHIBIT 5

TOP PRODUCERS: LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES, GENERAL STUDENTS, AND HUMANITIES	
College	2008
Miami Dade College	1
Broward College	2
Valencia Community College	3
Florida State College at Jacksonville	4
Santa Fe College	5
Palm Beach Community College	6
Tallahassee Community College	7
St. Petersburg College	8
Brevard Community College	9
Hillsborough Community College	10
Indian River State College	27
Seminole Community College	28
Pensacola Junior College	29
Daytona State College	31
State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota	36

SOURCE: COMMUNITY COLLEGE WEEK

⁴ The statewide articulation agreement was established in 1971 and codified in Section 1007.23, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 6A-10.024, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)/Board of Governors (BOG) Articulation Regulation from "Statewide Postsecondary Articulation Manual" by the Florida Department of Education Office of K-20 Articulation at <http://www.fldoe.org/articulation/pdf/statewide-postsecondary-articulation-manual.pdf>.

⁵ See Zoom Edition 2009-01, "Statewide Articulation Agreement – Effective and Comprehensive" at <http://www.fldoe.org/cc/OSAS/Evaluations/pdf/Zoom2009-01.pdf>. Admission to limited access degree programs is based on meeting competitive entrance requirements.

Many health and medical fields have chronic shortages of trained workers. The U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 7 of the 20 fastest-growing occupations are health care related.⁶ Oftentimes, two-year certificate programs or associate degrees are the minimum standard for credentials for certain occupations such as dental hygienist and radiology technologist.⁷ Moreover, according to the American Association of Colleges and Nursing (AACN), the current nursing shortage is expected to intensify as baby boomers age and the need for health care grows.⁸ For Florida, the baseline nursing shortage for 2008 was projected to be 15,435; this shortage is expected to grow to over 59,000 by 2020.⁹ Exhibit 6 shows that FCS institutions are helping offset these shortages with 10 colleges among the top 50 in producing nursing associate degrees and 9 Florida colleges are among the top 50 in producing associate degrees in health professions and related clinical sciences.

EXHIBIT 6

	NURSING	HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND RELATED CLINICAL SCIENCES
College	2009 Rank	2009 Rank
Miami Dade College	2	4
Broward College	3	6
Florida State College at Jacksonville	5	13
St. Petersburg College	8	12
Valencia Community College	9	20
Hillsborough Community College	19	29
Edison State College	29	47
Palm Beach Community College	30	42
Pensacola Junior College	36	41
State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota	44	

SOURCE: COMMUNITY COLLEGE WEEK

The results from *Community College Week's* 2009 edition of the Top Producers report underscore the consistent performance for The Florida College System in producing associate degree graduates. Colleges in the FCS have been unsurpassed in conferring degrees to liberal arts and sciences, general students, and humanities students, which is further affirmation of the effectiveness of the state's "2+2" articulation system. Further, FCS colleges have been providing a steady pipeline of graduates in the nursing and health profession fields. Other disciplinary areas such as agriculture, communication technologies, engineering-related technologies, family and consumer sciences and science technologies are peppered with FCS institutions that continue to generate graduates who contribute to the state's economic development and workforce.

⁶ United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, <http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs035.htm>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Fact Sheet, April 2009, <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/media/FactSheets/NursingShortage.htm>.

⁹ Florida Center for Nursing, "Forecasting Supply, Demand, and Shortage of RNs and LPNs in Florida, 2007-2020," www.FLCenterForNursing.org.

For more information please contact:

Dr. Kathyrine Scheuch, Research Analyst

Kathyrine.Scheuch@fldoe.org

(850) 245-9456

Dr. John Hughes, Associate Vice Chancellor for Evaluation

John.Hughes@fldoe.org

(850) 245-9482



Florida Department of Education

Florida Department of Education
Dr. Eric J. Smith, Commissioner
The Florida College System
Dr. Willis N. Holcombe, Chancellor
Dr. Judith Bilsky, Executive Vice Chancellor

Phone: (850) 245-0407
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1314
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400
www.fldoe.org/CC/