

## Technical Notes

### Data sources

The OCC Office of Institutional Research analyzed and compiled all of the information presented in the OCC Atlas. The data source used is clearly detailed for each table of information. The majority of data was compiled using Orange Coast College's Management Information Systems (MIS) data that is reported to the State Chancellor's Office (via the Coast Community College District Office). A brief description of the primary MIS data files used are detailed below:

- **Student Basic:** The majority of demographic data was compiled from the MIS Student Basic data (such as ethnicity, gender, citizenship, educational goal, etc.). Much of this data is taken directly from the college application and is considered as self-reported data from the student.
- **Student Enrollment:** All enrollment data such as course, grade, drop date and units earned are recorded in the MIS Student Enrollment file. Student outcomes for success and retention rates were derived from this data. This is the same data that the State Chancellor's Office uses to calculate OCC's performance on multiple *Partnership for Excellence* indicators.
- **Program Awards:** Information is given on students who were awarded an Associate of Arts degree or Certificate of Achievement in a one-year period (July 1 – June 30) for summer, fall and spring semesters. This is the same data that the State Chancellor's Office uses to derive number of degrees and certificates awarded for *Partnership for Excellence*. Certificates under 18 units are not reported to the State and are not included in figures reported from this data.
- **Course Basic and Section:** Semester specific information is given on courses and sections offered. Information on each course/section such as transferability, time offered, maximum/ minimum units of credit, etc.

### Data Compilation

The majority of data in the OCC Atlas was manipulated and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, SPSS Inc). The output was then transferred into Excel 2003 to create the tables and charts. The tables and charts were then exported to Word 2003, at which point data interpretation was added.

### Interpreting Data Tables & Graphs

As noted above, an interpretation is presented with each data table and graph. Such interpretations are not meant to be inclusive, but rather highlight interesting points or trends occurring in the data. In most cases, data is presented from Fall 1996 through Fall 2006 (fall semesters only). This is intended to give the reader a "snapshot" of what is occurring. This data cannot and should not be generalized to what is occurring during Spring or Summer semesters. *The "Data by Academic Year" section provides limited data on an academic year basis.* The data is presented in terms of numbers and percentages. **NOTE:** Percentages are generally easier to interpret, however, there are instances when utilizing raw numbers better serves one's purposes. Both are detailed for the reader's use. *The reader needs to take caution when interpreting and using the information contained in the OCC Atlas. The data presented is purely descriptive. It shows what is occurring and does not explain why it is occurring.*

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***Atlas  
2007-2008***

