



NEWS RELEASE

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Enrollment in Maine's Community Colleges Soars

Degree seeking enrollment up 12.7%; Total headcount up 11.8%

SOUTH PORTLAND, ME — Enrollment in Maine's community colleges has grown 84 percent—to 13,817 degree seeking students—since the community colleges were established seven years ago.

In reporting preliminary 2009 enrollment numbers, MCCS President John Fitzsimmons noted that degree seeking enrollment is up by 1,553 students over last fall and nearly 6,300 students since the seven institutions made the transition from technical to community colleges in 2003. The number of students entering directly from high school has also continued to grow, up 87% in seven years and 10% this year alone (to 2,337).

According to Fitzsimmons, the enrollment growth is due to a number of factors: job losses and job insecurity have caused many people to turn to higher education to gain new skills; few jobs exist for high school graduates who lack marketable skills; and the community colleges offer both the lowest tuition in the state and academic programs that are tied directly to the Maine economy.

"These are difficult economic times for Maine people," Fitzsimmons noted in announcing the enrollment surge. "I am enormously proud of the way our colleges have responded. More than ever, Maine people need access to higher education in order to realize a brighter future for themselves and their families. Faced with significant budget cuts, our colleges could have simply maintained the status quo. Instead, we made a commitment to serve as many students as possible and found a way to open our doors even wider."

Enrollment Highlights

All seven of the community colleges are reporting dramatic growth in the number of students enrolled in degree programs, with increases ranging from 9 percent at Southern Maine Community College in South Portland to 36.5 percent at York County Community College in Wells.

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Student headcount, which includes both degree and non-degree seeking students, is also up dramatically to 16,550. In all, headcount is up 11.8% system-wide over last year and 63.4% over the past seven years. All seven of the colleges are reporting headcount growth of at least 8.4% with the majority experiencing double-digit growth. (See tables below for information on all colleges.)

The enrollment numbers announced today are preliminary, but are not expected to change significantly by the official census date of October 15th.

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Fall '09 enrollment growth by college

Degree-seeking enrollment

	Fall 09	1-year growth
MCCS	13,817	12.7%
CMCC	2,239	11%
EMCC	1,773	10.3%
KVCC	1,661	11.1%
NMCC	956	21.6%
SMCC	5704	9%
WCCC	388	21.3%
YCCC	1,096	36.5%

Total headcount*

	Fall 09	1-year growth
MCCS	16,550	11.8%
CMCC	2,709	8.4%
EMCC	2,149	9.4%
KVCC	2,474	12.3%
NMCC	1,062	10.7%
SMCC	6,270	10.5%
WCCC	460	9.8%
YCCC	1,426	32%

*Degree and non-degree enrollment

Additional charts detailing year-to date and seven-year growth are available at <http://www.mccs.me.edu/press/pr/mccsenrollmentcharts2009.pdf>