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Introduction

Enhancing educational quality and increasing student success are two of KPC's most important institutional goals. Although not identical, the two enjoy a symbiotic relationship. Achieve one, and the other is strengthened as well.

Enrollment management is a framework for planning, implementing, and assessing an array of strategies that can be used to achieve those goals. UAA has been operating within such a framework for a number of years, based in large part on the principles of Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) as described by Michael Dolence, Don Hossler, and others. Within KPC, Liz Downing, former Student Services coordinator at the Kachemak Bay Campus, was a forceful advocate for implementation of Enrollment Management, while the Kenai River Campus has been developing their enrollment management process for the past two years.

Briefly, strategic enrollment management is an integrated planning and operational environment in which a university takes coordinated steps to identify and achieve its desired enrollment profile. It relies heavily on research, assessment to guide planning, and implementation; it has deep roots in academic programs, and it seeks to integrate all campus activities within an overriding image and framework. A key strategy is identification of targeted learner populations for focused recruitment and retention emphasis.

The 2007-2008 KPC Enrollment Management plan is organized into two sections that correspond to Performance Measures defined by President Hamilton in the University of Alaska's Performance-Based Budgeting Process (see attachments):

- **Part 1, Enrollment**, addresses the performance measure titled "Student Credit Hours and Headcount."
- **Part 2, Retention**, addresses the performance measure titled "Retention Rates for Freshmen."

Each section includes three elements:

- 1) A brief review and analysis of historical trends;
- 2) Yearly targets necessary to achieve the University of Alaska's goals for FY06-09; and
- 3) An outline of the strategies KPC is employing to achieve those targets and goals.

Assessment and revision are very important parts of the enrollment management framework, and revisions are made as often as necessary in order to keep the overall plan focused on the targets and goals. This document, therefore, reflects a living plan, always open for re-assessment of priorities, strategies, and results in response to changing circumstances.

The goals of educational quality and student success are fundamental to KPC's mission. They will not change. The strategies, however, are necessarily fluid, dynamic, and responsive. They build upon themselves and each other, each year raising the bar a little higher in the interests of being an efficient, effective, and responsive university for the 21st century.

PART 1 ENROLLMENT

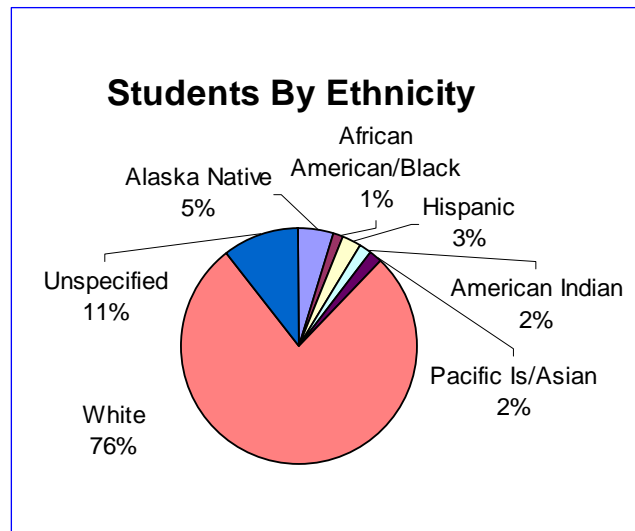
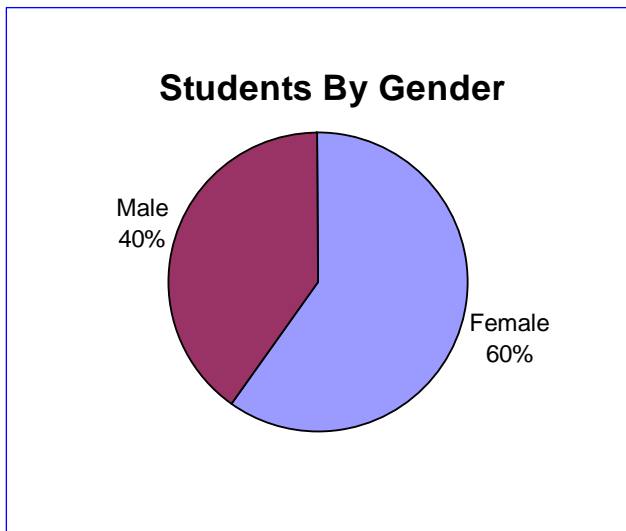
Performance Measure:	<i>Student Credit Hours & Headcount</i>
Strategic Goals:	<i>Student Success/Educational Quality</i>
Measurable Outcome:	<i>UA--Increase enrollment 16% by FY 2009</i>
Metric:	<i>Number of Student Credit Hours attempted</i>

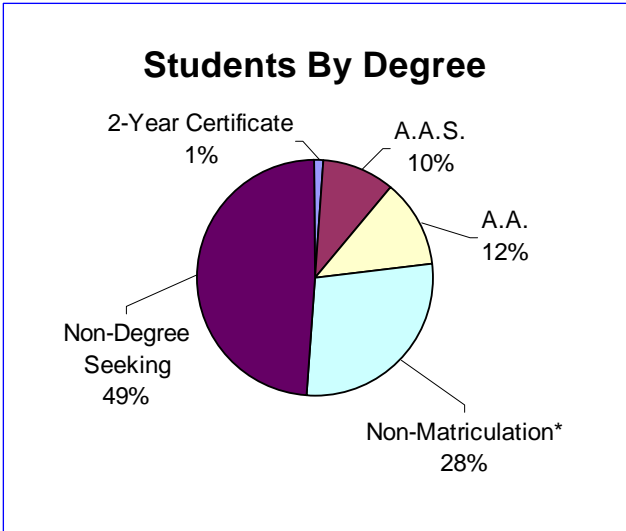
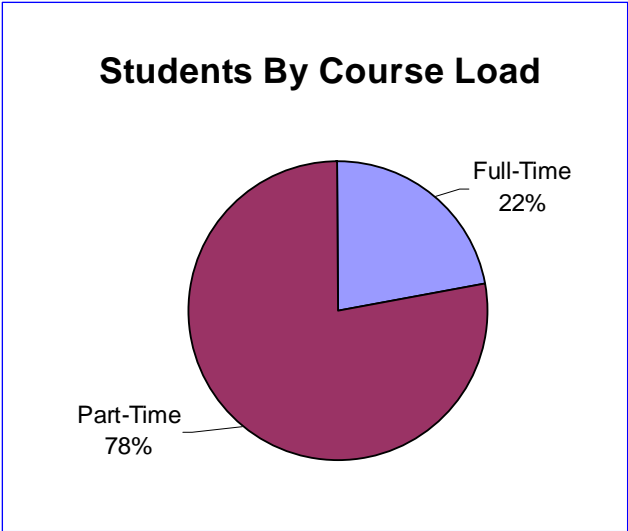
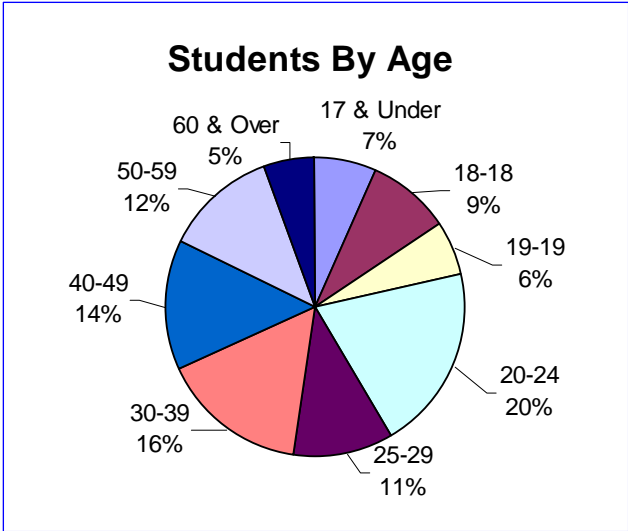
KENAI PENINSULA COLLEGE STUDENT PROFILE

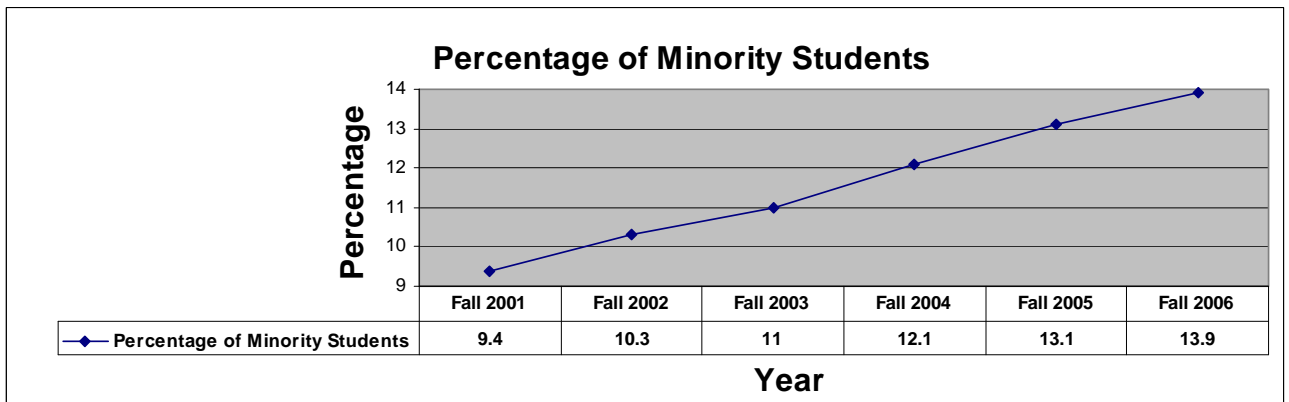
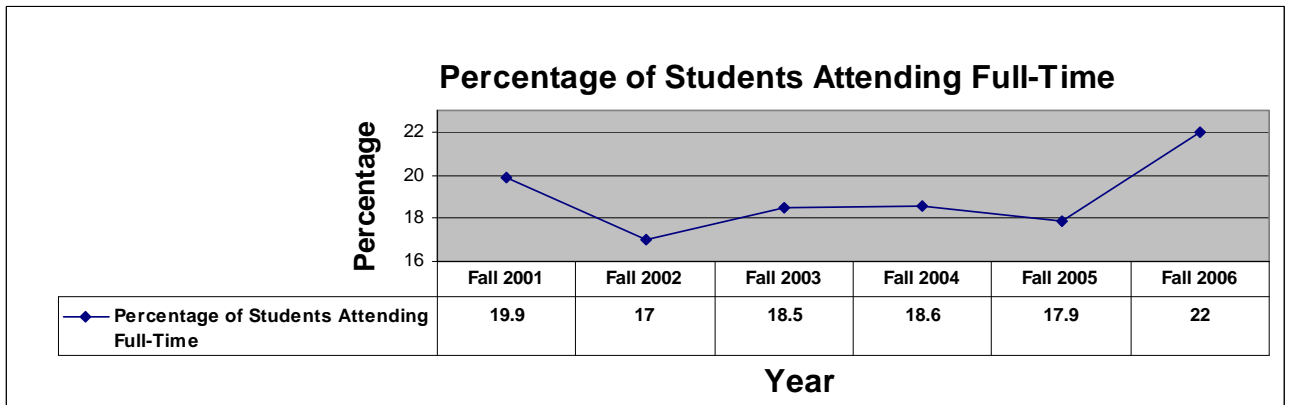
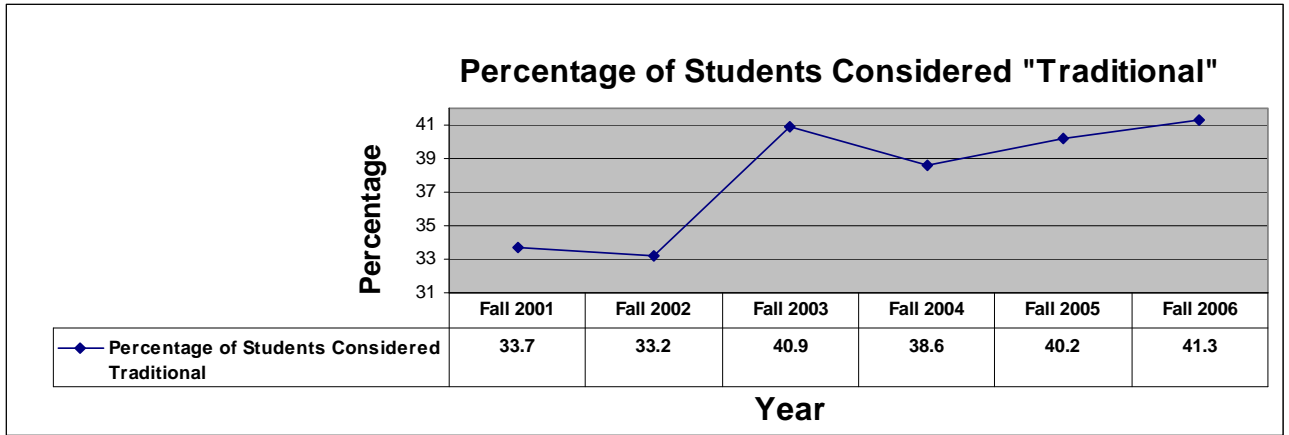
Over the last several years, the student body at Kenai Peninsula College has been undergoing a significant demographic shift. Increasing tuition costs coupled with pressure generated by an essentially stagnant local economy have resulted in a significant decrease in KPC's non-traditional, part-time student population, which was historically the dominant element in the make up of the student body.

Simultaneously, with the arrival of new, high demand degree programs and an increased emphasis on recruiting from the local population of high school students, KPC has seen a significant increase in the number of traditional age, full-time students. The overall effect of these two trends has been to reduce the mean and median age of the KPC's students and to increase the average student's credit load.

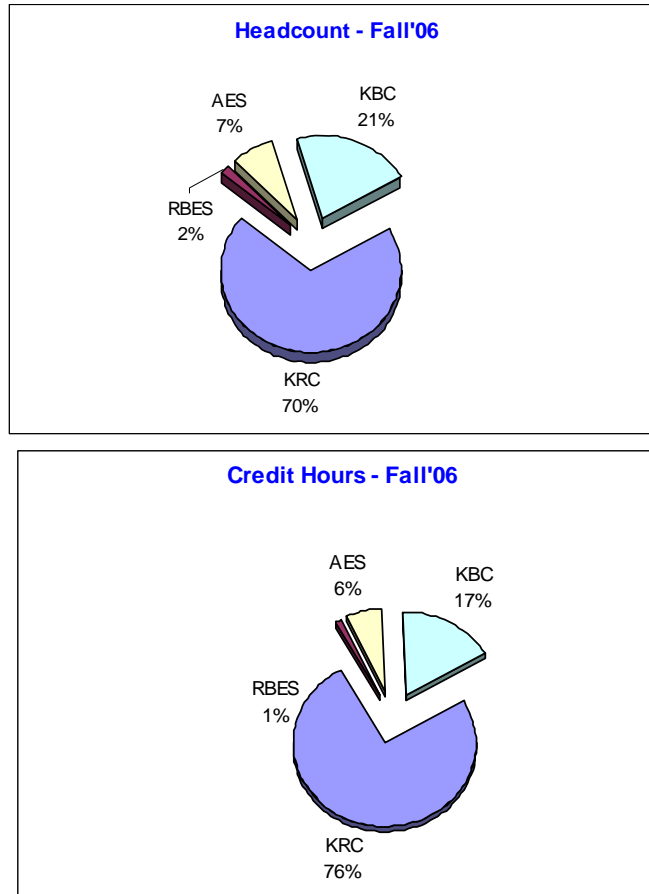
The actual demographics of the students who attended KPC in the fall of 2006 were:







Trends in Semester Credit Hour Production and Headcount



The Kenai River Campus accounts for roughly 70% of KPC's headcount and roughly 75% of total credit hour production; therefore, overall trends for KRC closely resemble overall trends for KPC.

Due to the increase in tuition and higher commuting costs, we are losing what used to be the core student body at KPC, non-traditional age students from 30-50. These students typically take 3-7 credits and are not usually eligible for financial aid. To address this, KPC has developed a new scholarship program, the Tuition Assistance Grant, designed to assist the non-traditional, part-time student, in hopes of arresting the decline KPC has experienced in that student category. First awards will take place in Fall, 2007.

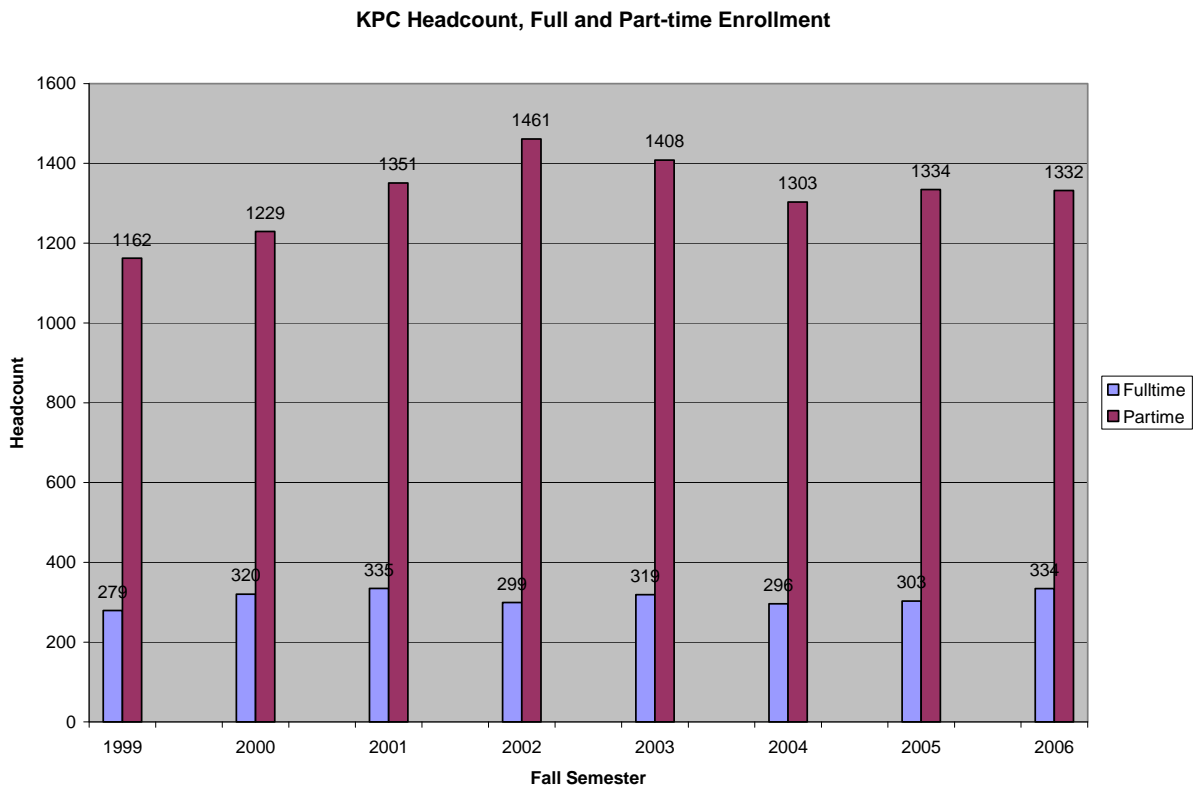
Increased recruiting efforts and closer ties to the local high schools are helping us see less decrease in this metric. We are seeing an increasing number of students who have gone

Outside or to an MAU and then come to KPC due to our more personal atmosphere, smaller class sizes and quality of life issues. We advertise these advantages.

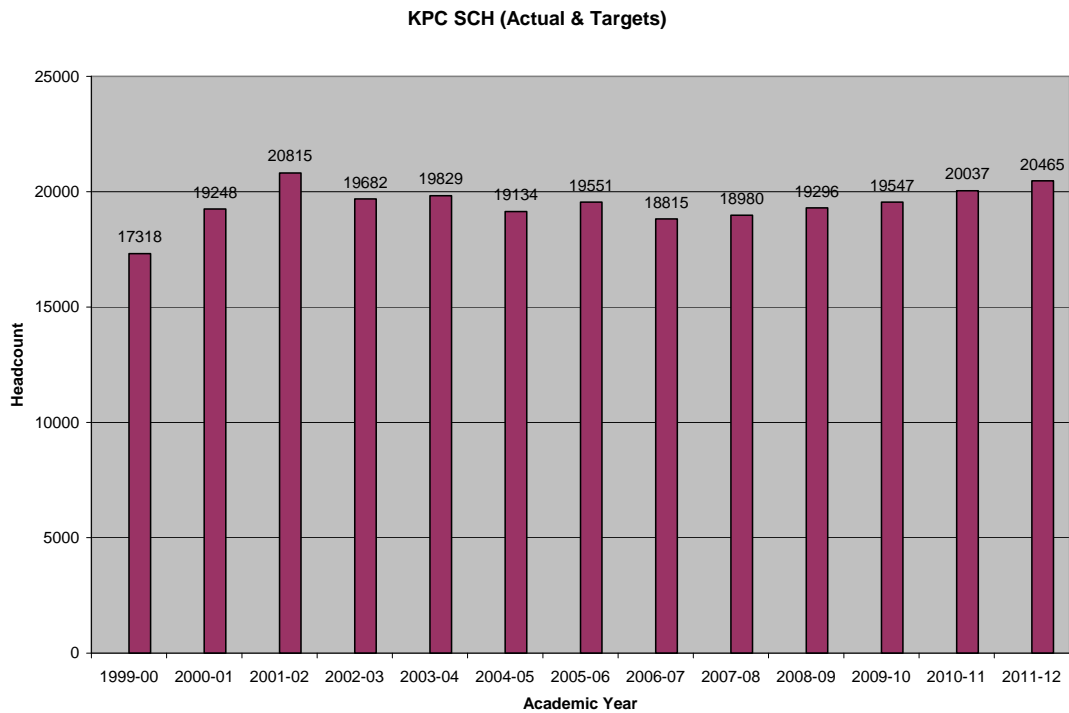
We will continue to market heavily our KPC EZ Payment Plan. The plan spreads out tuition payments over the course of the semester and makes it easier for students to pay for tuition. Since Spring 2004, program participation has increased 26%. From Fall 05 to Fall 06, participation dropped by 9%, but still remains well above that of earlier semesters:

- 182 students-Spring 04 (end of semester total)
- 206 students-Fall 04 (end of semester total)—awareness campaign began 8/04
- 240 students-Spring 05 (end of semester total)
- 284 students-Fall 05 (end of semester total)
- 267 students-Spring 06 (end of semester total)
- 258 students-Fall 06 (end of semester total)
- 229 students-Spring 07 (end of semester total)

This plan is paying dividends considering we have served 1,666 students over seven semesters with the majority being FT traditional age students.



Source: OPRA, Fall semester closing, Kenai Peninsula College



Source: Revised Performance Based Budgeting Projections, March, 2007.

Based on borough demographic trends and steadily rising tuition costs, KPC had projected declines in SCH of approximately 3% per year for FY 05 through FY 08. The actual decline in FY 05 was only 1.4%, while FY 06 actually showed a 2.7% increase. This deviation from the projected decline is attributed to two factors. First, KPC established two new degree programs, an Associates in Digital Arts and an Associates in Paramedical Technology. Both of these programs are unique in Alaska and have brought in students and credit hours which KPC would not otherwise have attracted. Second, in FY06, KPC assumed the Occupational Safety and Health program, which resulted in a one-time gain of Headcount and Student Credit Hours. These events have served to temporarily mitigate the longer-term negative trends. It is expected that Anchorage Extension Site enrollments will continue to grow making up for expected decreases at the Kenai River and Kachemak Bay Campuses.

Institutional Factors Influencing SCH and HC

KPC faculty, staff and students, KPC Council and Peninsula residents, report that the tuition increases over the past four years have had a definite negative impact on the SCH and HC metrics. While such comments are anecdotal, they occur often enough to put considerable faith in this as having the largest impact on every KPC metric. It is strongly believed the 10% increase that went into effect in fall 2006, continues to put pressure on these metrics at KPC. While \$120/credit is a good value for students attending an MAU, this cost is close to the highest in the nation for 2-year community colleges¹. The 7% increase approved for Fall 2007, bringing tuition to \$128/credit will only exacerbate this trend.

¹ Refer to Tuition White paper, April 1, 2005, Gary J. Turner, for detailed analysis of tuition costs and comparisons.

KPC's Mining and petroleum Training Service metrics and production will continue to increase as the Alaska resource industry grows and if we are able to fill two new training coordinator positions to handle an ever increasing workload. MAPTS turns away training opportunities because they are not staffed to handle the instructional or administrative load. If the Northern Dynasty Mine, gas pipeline, or ANWR projects receive approval, MAPTS will need even more trainers and staff to satisfy the great increase in demand for their services.

A concern that is arising is that as distance delivery proliferates we are seeing more and more students who live in our region taking MAU distance delivered courses and courses offered by other postsecondary institutions. In AY 06, 410 Kenai Peninsula Borough residents took 1,139 semester credit hours through distance courses from an UA institution other than KPC. This is an increase of 123% in headcount and 107% in semester credit hours when compared to AY 2002.

The proclivity of students taking an increased number of distance courses is leading to decreases in SCH and HC for KPC and other community campuses. As this practice increases, we are not receiving any revenue to provide student services, such as advising, library, and computer lab access, to these non-KPC students. The community campuses could be on the road to merely being facilitators of education rather than providers.

Environmental Factors Influencing SCH and HC

The price of gas has influenced the number of credits students are taking. They tell us that instead of driving to campus twice a week to take six or nine credits they can only come once a week and take 3-6 credits. Considering that many of our students drive in excess of 70 miles roundtrip to reach one of our campuses, this factor is definitely impacting this metric.

The issue of the Board of Regents changing the residency policy from one to two years is also a factor that is affecting this metric. Many potential students are telling us that this is what is keeping them from enrolling—they cannot afford to pay non-resident tuition for two years. Yes, financial aid is available, but many of KPC's students can only take six credits or so a semester since they are also working full time. This typically makes them ineligible for financial aid, so they fall through the financial aid cracks. Another major factor in this is that once we “lose” these students for two years it is likely we have lost them forever due to various life factors or loss of interest in pursuing a degree. KPC is currently engaged in a pilot study to determine the overall impact of waiving the non-resident tuition surcharge. This program will be completed in the summer of 2008.

The F/T faculty/adjunct ratio at KPC is 24/76% while at UAA it is 44/56%. The national average is 40%/60%. A lower F/T faculty ratio negatively impacts SCH and HC in that the college's credibility and quality is not as high with the community as if they were being taught by fulltime professors.

One challenge KPC faces is that course scheduling conflicts occur with the high percentage of adjunct faculty utilized. Courses are not always offered at the optimum time and sequence to meet the programmatic needs of the students.

The facts and figures below are provided as a reference to our regional economy, the region's size, and the challenge of serving a large service area with a small population.

- Kenai Peninsula Borough Service Area—25,000+ square miles (size of Massachusetts & New Jersey combined)
- MatSu Borough-same size
- KPB Population—51,350 (2006); 2.7% **total** increase in last five years; 2005-2006 increased 0.2%
- MatSu Population—65,241 (2002); 49% increase in 10 years; 4.2% increase annually
- Unemployment—8-10% over last five years—Alaska-wide-5.9%
- Household Income-decreased 19% since 1989
- K-12 enrollment—decreased 1-2.5% every year for past six years and projected to continue declining

Borough Population Served

Due to the large size of Kenai Peninsula Borough and the dispersed nature of its population, it is unreasonable to expect all its inhabitants to be able to attend KPC, given that the college has no student housing and a one-way commute can exceed an hour. To determine how well KPC is performing its mission as a community college for Kenai Peninsula Borough, a useful metric is the percentage of the population age 18+ that is attending KPC. Using 1990 and 2000 Census data and excluding those census tracts, which are located far from any KPC campus, the following table was generated.²

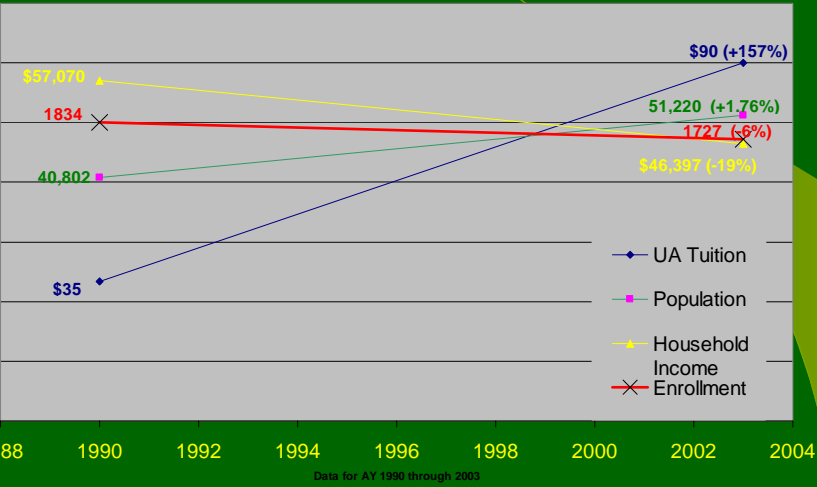
Census Year	Adjusted KPB 18+ Pop.	KPC Fall Enrollment	% Enrolled
1990	23078	1834	7.95%
2000	29863	1549	5.19%

Since the national average for the percentage of 18+ population enrolled at a community college is approximately 2.8%³, KPC is clearly fulfilling its role of supporting its local community and attracting more than double the national average number of students. More recent population estimates are only available for Kenai Peninsula Borough as a whole, but they show population continuing to increase until 2003, a decline of 0.8% from 2003 to 2004, then an increase of 0.6% from 2004 to 2005, and .2% increase from 2005-2006. Taken together, this indicates that it is unlikely that there has been a significant growth in the 18+ population since the 2000 census. KPC's Fall 2006 Enrollment of 18+ students was 1540, indicating that the current percent of the adult borough population enrolled remain approximately 5%.

² These population numbers were generated by combining 2000 Census Tracts # 2 & 4-11. Together, they encompass all of the Kenai Peninsula west of Cooper Landing that is accessible by road.

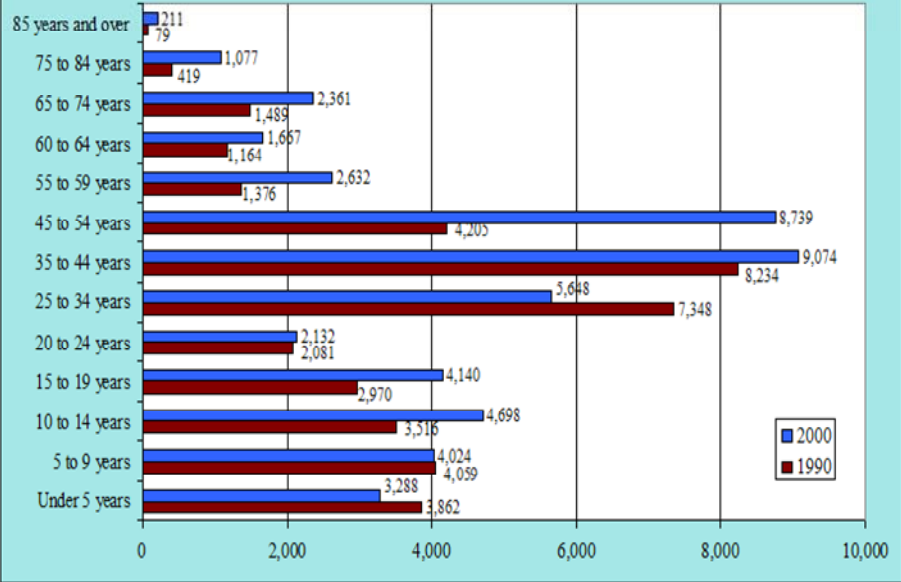
³ Education Testing Service's publication "The American Community College Turns 100: A Look at its Students, Programs and Prospects", page 8.

Kenai Peninsula Borough Population, Household Income, KPC Enrollments & Tuition



*Population is annual rate of growth

KPB Population by Age Group - 1990 v 2000



Sources: US Census Data.

Strategies

The following enrollment strategies are planned for Kenai Peninsula College.

Marketing and Public Relations: The KPC 2007-2010 Academic Plan specifically calls for developing Kenai Peninsula College as a public square, integrated into the cultural, economic, and civic life of the communities it serves. Several of the activities listed below support that goal as well as the goal of increasing enrollment and student credit hours.

- The 18-24 year old age group has increased dramatically at KPC over the past three years due to our focus on this age group. KPC will continue to focus much of its marketing and public relations efforts to target this demographic. Current efforts include a KPC presence at the regional high schools' parent teacher conferences, letters to graduating seniors, presentations in high school and middle school classes and mailing a letter each spring to all current high school juniors in the district, informing them of the Jumpstart opportunities available at KPC.
- KPC has recently entered into an agreement with the central and southern Peninsula newspapers that will significantly increase its visibility among local residents. Eight times per year, the KPC Connection will be inserted into the Peninsula Clarion and the Homer News at no charge to the college. This eight-page insert is providing an excellent venue for KPC to promote its programs and activities to the public. The first KPC Connection was published in this manner in February 2007 and has received a very favorable response.
- The KPC Recruitment Team has identified the re-establishment of the KPC Alumni Association as a high priority. Establishing a vibrant and active Alumni Association should help improve both the visibility and reputation of the College, leading to increased recruitment among traditional and non-traditional students, as well as increased donations.
- KPC has recently been chosen as the venue for several scholarships, including one from the Oil Spill Recovery Institute, which will award \$16,000 per year for two years. KPC will be making a strong effort to publicize these scholarships through multiple venues to help recruit students.
- Implement a new ad campaign that emphasizes the availability of four-year degrees from other UA institutions via classes at KPC. Continue to emphasize the cost differential between KPC and colleges from lower 48 universities.
- KRC will soon publish a Request for Information in Alaska newspapers asking for interested developers and corporations to notify KPC if they would be interested in building student housing at KRC. If there is sufficient interest, an RFP for housing proposals will be developed and released in Spring 2008 with housing construction possibly being started in Summer 2008. There would be no cost to KPC as all construction, operation and maintenance of such a facility would be borne by the

developer. One local developer has already indicated he will submit a proposal and two Anchorage developers have also expressed interest.

- KBC is working with area contractors and others who have expressed interest in developing student housing in Homer.

Recruitment: The student body at KPC displays a gender disparity similar to that of UAA as a whole. Only 40% of KPC students are males, which is even less than the national average of 43%. As part of its increased efforts to recruit among the 18-24 year old age group, KPC has worked to market its programs to male students more effectively. Some success has already been noted, as KPC's male students percentage has improved from 37% in 2005 to the current 40%.

In 2006 and early 2007, KPC accomplished many of the other action items set forth in its FY06 Enrollment Management Plan, including:

- A KPC representative attended a Parent-Teacher Conference at every local high school at least once per school year.
- Began regular visits from KPC counselors to local middle schools, with six schools visited.
- Expanding KPC's state-wide recruitment effort with a recruiting trip to Juneau in November, 2006.
- Initiated direct mail contact with all local high school seniors, informing them of the Jumpstart program, in April of 2007.
- Developed a new scholarship program, the Tuition Assistance Grant, designed to assist the non-traditional, part-time student, in hopes of arresting the decline KPC has experienced in that student category. First awards will take place in Fall, 2007.

In the fall of 2006, KPC re-established its Recruitment Team. This group, with representatives from all campuses and sites, faculty, staff, and students, has been working hard to evaluate the college's current recruiting strategies and suggest new ones. Their efforts have already resulted in KPC establishing a MySpace presence, as well as other efforts to contact current high school students via the media they routinely use. The team meets monthly and submits an annual report to the College Director. In its 2007 report to the Director, the Recruitment Team recommended several action items for more effective recruiting. They include:

- Increase the KPC presence in local high schools by beginning to focus on 10th graders, since many students are making their college choices at that time
- Expand recruiter trips to include Fairbanks and Sitka College Fairs
- Explore venues for reaching out to older, non-traditional students, such as local industries, utilities, and government organizations via presentations on what KPC has to offer in the way of programs and tuition assistance.

In 1993, the Program Assessment process identified the need for a full-time advisor position at the Kachemak Bay Campus. The Accreditation 2000 Report also identified this as a critical need. All efforts thus far to secure funding have failed. Recruitment, retention, and student service enhancement efforts have thus been minimal already impacting enrollment for several years. Without this position, KBC will

continue to be unable to positively impact this metric for KPC. KBC presently has a part-time advisor being temporarily funded through the UAA CAPRA grant; however, funding for a full-time advisor is needed.

Utilizing Technology: KPC has continually worked to implement technologic enhancements, in keeping with its goal of deploying modern technology that optimally supports both classroom and distance learning. By the start of the fall 2007 semester, KRC will have 23 Tier I and 1 Tier II Smart Classrooms. KBC will have 4 Tier 1 and 1 Tier II Smart classrooms at its East Campus. KRC has 100% wireless coverage, while KBC has wireless coverage on its east campus.

While continuing to utilize the most effective technologies available to assist in student achievement, KPC plans to implement the following specific actions:

- KRC has submitted a capital request for \$800k to upgrade and reconfigure its library, turning it into a 21st century “digital learning lab” concept while still retaining a collection of books.
- Work to better standardize technology across all KPC campuses
- Install and test additional wireless equipment to increase capacity at KBC
- Create a document detailing all technology services available and distribute to staff and faculty

Distance Education: KPC has increased the number of web-based courses from four being offered in Spring 2006 to fourteen in Spring 2007. The development of the new Elluminate Live course delivery software has been a tremendous boon in this area, since many KPC distance students are limited to dial-up internet connections. The slower data rate of these connections is not a limitation with Elluminate Live. This new technology has also allowed the hiring of part-time faculty members that are based off the Kenai Peninsula that can teach web courses from any location. It is no longer necessary to hire local instructors that may not be able to teach distance classes. This has allowed KPC to greatly increase its web-based course offerings even if current faculty members are unable or unwilling to teach via distance methods. KPC has also worked with the other UAA community campuses to create AK ICE, allowing the various campuses to share seats in their distance delivered course while ensuring proper crediting of the SCH and tuition generated. Finally, KPC received a \$341,000 federal initiative grant in October 2006 to convert a number of MAPTS courses to either web-based or hybrid distance delivery, and to establish an online mining program. Course development is currently in progress.

Future plans for distance education include:

- Convert additional existing course to a distance delivery format. KPC faculty members are presently creating five new distance courses that will be available during the coming academic year. One of these, CHEM 104, will be the only online Chemistry course, other than KPC’s distance delivered CHEM 103, available in the UA system. KPC has created these two courses so as to better serve the Slope workers that are on varying shift schedules; however, the courses are attracting students from across the state that has resulted in KPC needing to offer two sections of CHEM 103 each semester to meet the demand.
- Work in concert with other community campuses to address the issue of providing campus services support to students taking distance classes from the MAUs. KPC currently provides significant services to such students (library, student services, testing) yet receives no credit or tuition revenue

Service Enhancements: Service enhancements have an important place in a well-rounded enrollment management plan. Over the past three years, KRC has worked to streamline the registration process, simplify the scholarship application process, and improve customer service at the Campus Services Help Desk. These efforts have included installation of dedicated computers in the Campus Commons and Campus Services, enabling students who do not have a personal computer easy access to the numerous support functions now resident there. Locating the machines within the Campus Services area also allows staff to easily provide personal assistance to students using on-line services. KBC has two such dedicated computers in Student Enrollment Services. Training on the use of UAOnline has been incorporated into the KRC New Student Orientation. The KRC Student Health Clinic began operation in January 2006. New Student and Enrollment Services facilities combined with process enhancements have improved service to students at the Kachemak Bay Campus

Future KRC plans include:

- Develop an on-line New Student Orientation program
- Explore applying for Student Support Services TRIO program (application due summer or fall of 2008)
- Evaluate expanding Health Clinic services to students enrolled in less than six credits per semester
- Formalize a weekly training program for Student Peer Advisors to improve cross-training and customer service training programs to cultivate a knowledgeable and service-oriented staff

Future KBC plans include:

- KBC re-established their New Student Orientation program last academic year and other modes of informing students of resources and processes to support their education
- Seek health services for students from local health clinic providers.
- Provide year-round student and enrollment services staffing
- Improve website
- Improve tracking of student success and staffing to provide intervention as needed
- Provide support for academic success in English, math, science, etc. classes with development of a staffed Learning Resources Center

Capacity: KPC's main competition comes from outside colleges (which attract students who want to leave Alaska) and from the MAUs, primarily UAA. Given that KPC is currently compelled to charge the same tuition as UAA, while lacking much of the traditional university support structure (student housing, sport teams, degree choices and a wider selection of classes), KPC often finds itself at a severe disadvantage. One means to offset this disadvantage is to emphasize KPC unique programs, such as Digital Arts, Process Technology, Occupational Safety and Health and Paramedic training. Another is to emphasize the excellent teacher-student ratio at KPC (13:1), with the consequent more individualized instruction available.

KPC conducted an AACC/ACT Faces of the Future survey of its students in Fall 2006. This survey generated valuable and previously unavailable data about our current study body, including insights into the motives for attending college, their work level outside the school, and other socio-economic factors which significantly impact student success. This information was a key input to this document, as well as KPC's Academic and Strategic Plans.

Future KRC plans/goals include:

- Fill two vacant tenure track faculty positions and an assistant director for academic affairs position that cannot be filled due to funding shortfalls.
- Contract with a professional development/fundraising consultant to create a plan to increase donations to KPC
- Hire a dedicated Resource Development employee
- KPC conducted the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in the Spring 2007 semester. While we have not yet received the results, we anticipate it will provide us with valuable data to help us identify areas where student engagement can be improved, favorably impacting our retention.

Future KBC plans include:

- The Kachemak Bay Campus has been working with the Anchorage Campus Biology department to establish an emphasis area within UAA's biology degree program for the past year, but the program has not yet come to fruition. We hope it does soon and are eager to offer this program as it will result in increased SCH and HC at KBC and fulfill a tremendous gap in KPC-Kachemak Bay Campus' academic and continuing education offerings within UAA and KPC; however, we await action from CAS so we can offer the degree.
- Consolidate campus at one location (currently, two facilities are one mile apart). This is expected to become a reality as the State Legislature approved the \$2.5 million KPC capital budget request for the acquisition and renovation of Homer City Hall. If the governor approves the appropriation, it is expected that KBC will move into the facility in 2009/10.
- Develop a centralized Learning Resources Center with staff.
- Acquire permanent funding for a Student Advisor and Kenai Peninsula Borough funded core campus support positions.
- Fill one unfunded faculty position and obtain funding for another with the goal of having faculty in the primary GER and academic program areas. This has also become a reality due to the reallocation of funding from UA Statewide that will enable KBC to hire a Humanities faculty member. KBC will request funding in the next fiscal year to fill the remaining needed faculty position.
- Expand library from its current 500 square feet, which will be accomplished when KBC moves into Homer City Hall.

Other Strategies: If KPC is to reach these metric goals, it is strongly believed that building student housing at both campuses would greatly assist in these efforts. Many potential students in KPC's service

area live in towns and villages like Seward, Seldovia, Cooper Landing and across Cook Inlet. These students have three choices when they graduate from high school: 1) Attend a UA MAU since they have housing; 2) Attend a Lower 48 school; 3) Not go to college. The vast majority of these students from these small villages are not ready to go to Anchorage or anywhere else that is so very different and larger than where they live⁴.

If KPC were to construct housing at each campus with 120 beds at KRC and 20-30 beds at KBC, we could potentially realize another 4,200+ credit hours each year. While it is likely this number could be smaller, if we only added another 2,100 hours each year we would increase our SCH by 11% which would well exceed the UA SW SCH goal. This would also add another \$268,800 to our tuition revenue that could be used to increase student services capacity and enable us to apply more resources to retention efforts.

Student housing is also needed for the expected large increase in workforce training needs for the resource industry. KPC needs to be able to house students that will attend the college to get the training they need to go to work on the large potential projects anticipated for Alaska over the next 3-10 years. Student housing is the critical mechanism by which the college can more become an economic development catalyst for our communities. The Homer community has identified student housing as one of its highest priorities and the Kenai Peninsula Borough has included KRC housing on their legislative capital budget priority list for the past two years. Housing would be utilized not only by the general student body, but also to house attendees to campus special events, summer conferences and specialized summer classes, which are currently limited by lack of housing facilities and staff.

⁴ See "Student Housing White Paper," by Gary J. Turner, April 25, 2005, for further justification and rationale to build student housing at KPC campuses.

PART 2 RETENTION

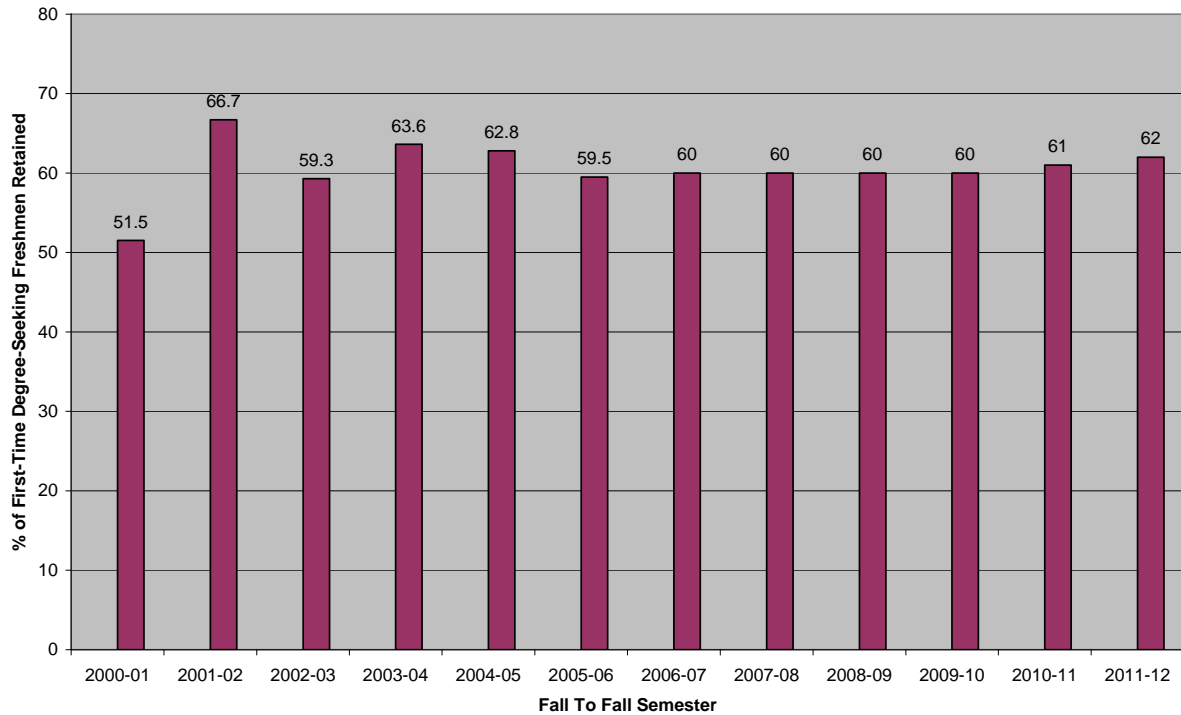
<i>Performance Measure:</i>	<i>Retention Rates for Freshmen</i>
<i>Strategic Goal:</i>	<i>Student Success</i>
<i>Measurable Outcome:</i>	<i>UA - Increase retention rates in degree programs to 69% by FY09.</i>
<i>Metric:</i>	<i>Fall-to-fall retention rates for first time full time cohorts in Bachelor and Associate degree programs.</i>

KENAI PENINSULA COLLEGE

Retention Trends

KPC typically performs well in this metric. With a relatively small cohort size at KPC, retention is subject to significant year-to-year volatility, but overall KPC's performance remains solid. This is attributable to smaller class sizes, which result in increased faculty-student interaction. Additionally, KPC established an award-winning Service Learning program three years ago, that continues to grow each semester and has a very effective student government, both factors which have been shown to increase student engagement, leading to increased retention.

KPC Retention (Actual & Future Targets)



Source: Revised Performance Based Budgeting Projections, March, 2007

Working against these positive forces are the ever-rising cost of tuition and the associated challenge of receiving sufficient financial aid. While these negative forces may not be well reflected in this metric (since it is defined as first-time, full-time degree-seeking freshmen only), they still remain formidable challenges for retaining the vast majority of KPC students

Projections and Targets

The table below lists KPC Retention Rate targets, which are somewhat different from UA statewide goals.

KPC Retention Rates Performance Targets

Baseline FY 04	Actual FY 05	Target FY 06	Target FY 07	Target FY 08	Target FY 09
57.6%	59.5%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60%

*Sources: 2007 REVISED Operational Review: 2B: Performance Measures - NOMINAL PERFORMANCE.
Note: The above retention rates are for first-time full-time Associate students only.*

Strategies

Retention strategies can be organized into three major categories: Academic Support, Student Development, and Educational Quality.

Academic Support Strategies

Due to the impact of continuing tuition increases, KPC has instituted a more aggressive marketing campaign for the various forms of student financial assistance available. Our goal is to ensure that all students are knowledgeable regarding what is available and are encouraged to apply for any aid or scholarship they might be qualified to receive. Hopefully, this effort will help reduce any attrition caused by financial problems.

KPC has revised its Add/Drop Form in an effort to improve the advising services provided to students who are considering withdrawal from a class or from the college, as well as to collect the data necessary to better assess the cause behind the failure to retain students. This new form went into in use throughout the college in the Spring 2006 Semester. The form requires students receiving financial aid to receive a consult with a financial aid coordinator prior to dropping a course, which ensures the student fully understands the impact such a decision will have. The form also encourages students to seek assistance via advisors or counselors prior to withdrawing from the college.

Admissions: Recognizing that a significant percentage of KRC’s so-called “non degree-seeking” population are actually seeking degrees, KPC’s Director of Student Services annually sends a letter to all KPC non-degree seeking student enrolled for 8+ credits, inviting them to come in for advising

with an eye to selecting a degree. In addition, KBC calls students meeting this criteria who attend KBC. The letters and phone calls specifically address the advantages available to degree-seeking students (early registration, financial aid, etc) and typically generates a 10% response rate, resulting in students shifting to degree-seeking status. These efforts to increase the number of degree-seeking students have been showing dividends. In Fall 2004, KPC had 351 degree-seeking students; in Fall 2005, 406 students were degree seeking, and in Fall 2006 there were 498. This 41.8% increase is noteworthy when compared with our 4.3% increase in enrollments over the same period.

KBC also conduct mid-semester “retention checks” by calling many degree-seeking students at KBC to see if they are in need of any support services and to inquire as to how they are doing in their courses.

Future plans include:

- Review students enrolled in high demand “gateway” courses each semester to ensure all have completed the admission process for the appropriate degree
- Continue to investigate additional means to move non-degree seeking students into degree programs
- Explore with UAA ways of further automating the on-line admissions process to reduce the amount of manual intervention required by admissions personnel

Placement and Testing: Placement testing helps ensure that students are adequately prepared for the courses they take, thus increasing the likelihood they will complete those courses successfully. Students who fail to complete their courses are less likely to return the following year, as UAA’s attrition study demonstrated. Placement testing, therefore, has a direct link to retention rates.

With the continual growth of computer-based testing, KRC has hired a part-time IT technician whose sole function is to upgrade and maintain computer-based testing capabilities in the Learning Center.

In June 2007 KPC conducted an upgrade to a new and more powerful platform for its ACCUPLACER placement test. KPC will conduct refresher training for all faculty and staff advisors in August 2007 to strengthen their skills in accessing prerequisites, ACCUPLACER placement scores, AP, ACT, and SAT scores for their students

Future plans include:

- KPC will continue to move away from paper tests toward computer-based exams, including the Nurse Entrance Test, the Graduate Record Exam, and the National Registry Paramedic Computer Based Test.
- Eventually we foresee the need to establish a dedicated testing lab, equipped with computers. As distance education continues to increase and more and more testing becomes computer-based, the need for such a facility will only grow.
- KBC needs to develop space/staffing for a Learning Resource Center that includes a more formal testing program.


Advising: The availability of advising at KBC is severely limited due to the lack of an Advisor. The few full-time faculty are assigned students for general advising purposes, and this collateral responsibility, inhibits students’ access to quality advising. KBC has few faculty and therefore 90%

of the responsibility for advising falls on Student Services, which has only one part-time, temporarily funded Advisor and a 10 mo. (.78 FTE) position responsible for a wide range of duties beyond advising. A year-round FT Advisor position is critically needed.

At KRC, students are also assigned faculty advisors and have the entry point of two counseling/advising professionals. Both Counseling/Advising faculty members are responsible for mental and behavioral health issues as well as advising, and frequently refer students to their assigned faculty member for more in-depth advising, especially in the realm of career goals. Building faculty-student relationships is essential to retention. The participation of the faculty at the Kenai River Campus in advising and New Student Orientations is vital to the support and retention of students.

Performance Enhancement Proposals: Due to budgetary limitations on the employment of faculty and staff, KPC is very dependent upon student employees. Among the most important of these are KRC's Peer Mentors/Advisors, who staff the Campus Services Desk and are usually the first point of contact for any student seeking help. Effectiveness on the part of these student employees is critical for student retention. KRC has successfully implemented an advancement and cross-training program to identify the best and most experienced student peers, and advance them to positions of greater responsibility. As June 2007, six KRC peer advisors have completed the rigorous self-paced cross training program and the required oral examinations to be designated as Senior Peers, earning them an increase in pay.

Future plans include:

 **Supplemental Instruction**

- KRC has commissioned a new, up-to-date training video on FERPA requirements from a local videographer. It should be completed in the fall of 2007 and available to train all KPC Student employees on this important topic.
- The KPC Strategic Plan commits the college to “provide a safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment that attracts a culturally diverse student body”. As part of achieving that goal, the College Leadership Team had decided to schedule regular training sessions for all supervisors of peer advisors and student workers, emphasizing personal attention and good customer service.

Student Development Strategies

New Student Orientation: KRC holds four new student orientation sessions each semester, in addition to two mandatory underage new student orientation sessions; KBC holds one orientation each semester. Every effort is made to encourage new students to attend one of the orientation sessions. In addition to lectures on the services available and good study habits, the orientation includes a complete tour of the campus facilities.

Future plans include:

 **New Student Orientation**

- Develop an on-line New Student Orientation by Fall, 2008. This will allow limited personnel resources to be deployed more effectively and eliminate the “parade of talking heads” approach.

- Continue to expand KPC's Freshman Seminar course, while developing a methodology to identify at-risk students and require them to complete the course early in their college career.
- KRC will offer the one-credit GUID 150 course each semester free of charge to students. The campus will work with the local Food Bank to provide a free lunch for students taking the course.
- KBC will update and provide an online version of its Student Handbook in the fall of 2007.

Career Development, Internship/Employment and Service-Learning: KRC Career Services collaborated with faculty as well as community and business partners to initiate and increase internship, employment, and KPC service-learning opportunities for students. Instrumental in the above accomplishment was winning a 3-year Learn and Serve/Community College National Center for Community Engagement SAFE grant at \$15K/year (FY 04 – FY 06). This grant was extended through FY07 for an additional \$15K.

Future plans include:

- KPC signed a contract in June 2007 with College Central Network, Inc. to begin providing an interactive employment and career services website in the fall. This website will allow students to post resumes and employers to post job openings, while allowing each type of user to search the postings of the other.
- Establishing a program of paid mentors for Faculty members interested in adding a service learning component to their courses
- Continue the program of mini-grants to support faculty members incorporating service learning into their courses
- Hire a part-time professional to assist in coordinating KPC's burgeoning Service Learning Program. This position will be funded through the Kenai Peninsula Borough annual appropriation to KPC of \$530,000.

Student Engagement: Kenai Peninsula College-KRC's Student Union and KBC's Student Association have been very active in providing opportunities for student engagement with campus life. While the lack of resident housing clearly imposes many limitations on KPC when compared to a school such as UAA, the Student Union does manage to host social and entertainment events, as well as service opportunities throughout the school year.

Events and activities in the 2006-2007 school year included:

- A bake sale to raise money for a local animal shelter
- Monthly food events for students
- Monthly "Open Mic Nights" in the college commons
- An end of the school year luau, featuring a 300-pound pig roasted by the Student Union provided, free of charge, to students, staff, faculty and their families

Future plans include:

 **Voter Registration**

- Continue the ongoing effort to increase percentage of students registered to vote and voter turnout in national, state and local elections. In the last year, KRC SU registered more than 50 new voters. KBC's Student Association helped register more than 25 individuals.

 **Fall Welcome Event**

- Given the great success of the end of the year luau, the KRC SU plans to have a similar event early in the school year to encourage new students to engage on campus.

Educational Quality Strategies

Faculty Development: Faculty members at community campuses have less opportunity to pursue professional development due to distance and travel costs. However, KPC strongly encourages faculty to take advantage of UAA CAFÉ classes and online training courses. Future plans to increase faculty development include:

- Curriculum course designers from the UAA EMedia Center will conduct an all-day training seminar in November on creating web-based courses and using Classroom Response Systems.
- KPC will assess faculty training needs and look at other opportunities to bring in instructors to provide such training.
- This past academic year, KPC increased faculty development funds by \$1,000 per faculty member as a result of salary savings from an unfilled faculty position.
- During the 2006/07 KPC strategic planning process, it was decided to provide an annual stipend of an additional \$600 for each faculty and staff member. This is the first time that staff members have been provided earmarked professional development funds.

PART 3

CRITICAL FACTORS IN MEETING ENROLLMENT GOALS

KPC's ability to meet its enrollment and retention goals is affected by a variety of factors that are beyond the control of any single administrative structure. KPC finds itself being squeezed between rising tuition costs generating downward pressure on enrollment rates even as budget constraints force key faculty and staff positions to go unfilled. Over the last several years, KPC has been living on borrowed time concerning enrollment, but it seems the inevitable consequences of increasing costs while reducing services provided to students are beginning to manifest themselves. Unless these two trends are reversed, the long-term future of enrollment growth at KPC (or any of UA's other rural campuses, for that matter) looks very bleak indeed.

A summary of critical factors KPC faces in meeting its enrollment goals includes the following.

Commitment of Resources. If KPC is to remain attractive to its potential students, sufficient resources must be allocated to enable it to grow and improve. A recent example of this was the significant increase in enrollment at KBC following the completion of their new building. KRC completed an addition in January 2006 and constructed a new building in early 2007 which allowed MAPTS to move from rented facilities in Soldotna to the Kenai River Campus. It is likely that both of these additions have already produced positive effects on enrollment. When service area residents see new construction at "their" campuses, it shows them the university is investing in their communities. This makes a difference. Currently, KRC capital budget requests have been approved to upgrade its obsolescent science labs, refurbish the campus café, and construct a sky walk to connect the upper stories of two campus buildings and bring KPC into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. When these projects are brought to fruition in AY08, the significant upgrades to the Kenai River Campus will likely result in a very significant increase in enrollment and retention. Considering that KPC has not seen any major capital projects in more than 20 years and its infrastructure has remained relatively static, these projects will renew community interest in attending more classes.

Additional facilities upgrades which will be required in the foreseeable future at KRC include the transformation of the library into a 21st century digital learning lab, an upgrade to the Paramedic lab, and a consolidation of the Instrumentation, Process Technology and Electronics labs. Each of these projects is necessary to keep KPC current in these areas and competitive in the quest for new students.

In the capital budget recently passed by the legislature, KBC receives \$2.5 million to purchase the Homer City Hall and realize our long-standing goal of consolidating classes in Homer in one location. Assuming the current budget receives final approval, KBC can anticipate future increase in enrollment when its facilities are consolidated.

This past summer KRC invested thousands of dollars in the renewal of most their classrooms. New computer projection systems in many classrooms, new paint, reconfiguration of classrooms and a full remodel of the Learning Center provides a more inviting atmosphere to students and a more

learning-centered environment for faculty. These improvements should positively impact both recruitment and retention. KPC is very cognizant that making the public aware of these improvements is almost as important as the improvements themselves. A recent agreement with the Peninsula Clarion will allow KPC to produce an eight-page monthly supplement, which will be inserted in both that newspaper and the Homer News. This will allow us to keep community residents fully informed of the positive things happening at KRC and KBC.

Yet, even as KPC receives some resources for improvement, other desperate needs go unfulfilled. The planned hiring of an Assistant Director for Academic Affairs – a critical element in improving the quality and attractiveness of programs offered and support to faculty-- has been postponed indefinitely due to budget constraints. It strains credulity to expect that KPC will be able to continue to provide courses of the quality and quantity demanded by its prospective students without a significant increase in the resources committed to it.

KBC has significant need for a Program/Instructional Coordinator to more effectively and efficiently coordinate additional academic, continuing and vocational education and special event programs. This would result in a great increase of SCH and HC. The current campus director would then have more time for resource development, planning and campus leadership/administration.

Without secure operational funding for our critical staff and faculty positions and increasing operational costs, all elements of the quality of education on the Kenai Peninsula will suffer. There are limits to the returns that can be squeezed out of an institution utilizing good management and leadership. Certain problems can only be effectively addresses by the expenditure of money. KPC is fast reaching the point where such additional resources will be required for it to have any hope of meeting the goals being set for it.

❖ **Access and Affordability.** While the MAU is beginning to become concerned that the recent tuition increase “may negatively impact UAA’s ability to enroll and retain growing numbers of students”, KPC has already experienced negative effects. The most obvious of these is the significant decrease in the number of non-traditional age, part-time students who once formed the backbone of our student body. For many of these individuals, the tuition increases of the recent years, coupled with higher commuting and textbook costs, have made attending KPC a much less attractive proposition.

“Since the early 1990s, colleges and universities in Alaska have become less affordable for students and their families,” notes the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education in its *Measuring Up 2006* publication. The organization gives Alaska an “F” on measures of affordability, and notes that things are getting worse rather than better here. Of particular concern is the lack of need-based financial aid. “Alaska has made no investment in need-based financial aid, and does not offer low-priced college opportunities,” notes the Center. In many states, community colleges like KPC are the low-priced college opportunities, not so in Alaska.

National data indicate that most students from low-income families never go to college, and those who do tend to choose community colleges and for-profit colleges. KPC offers programs and serves populations that largely resemble community colleges in the Lower 48, and yet KPC’s tuition rates rank in the top 2% for community colleges nationwide. For example, Flathead Valley Community

College in rural Montana, a school comparable in size and degrees offered to KPC, charges approximately \$60 per credit, while KPC charges \$120.

❖ **Multiple Student Bodies.** Unlike many colleges, KPC cannot afford to think of its student population as a “student body.” There is simply too much diversity in our student population to design one-size-fits-all strategies. This presents special challenges for enrollment management, particularly with regard to marketing materials, recruitment strategies, and support services appropriate to different goals, preparation levels, and learning abilities. Current resources limit us to addressing issues and populations in succession. As we address those with the highest priorities, the others must necessarily wait.

❖ **Economic Development** KPC enrollment would likely be positively influenced by any of the following developments:

- ANWR is opened for exploration
- Northern Dynasty Pebble mine begins operations and other mines get permitted
- Gas is discovered in Cook Inlet
- Gas pipeline is built in Alaska

Each of these developments would result in a significantly increased demand for graduates of programs that KPC provides. KPC must ensure that it remains positioned properly to respond to such an increased demand in a timely fashion, but without over-committing itself until it is clear that the proposed project(s) will indeed become reality.