Swirl Studies for the California Community Colleges

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Session Objectives

- Propose a template for output of swirl analysis by the Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) for each community college
- Note contingent nature of such a proposal (no promises clause)
- Collect input from community college IR staff, et al, about this proposal

Format

- Briefing on proposal
- Comments and questions

Student Swirl—A Narrowed Concept

- Defined here as enrollment of individuals in a community college district other than the community college district of their official residence
- Includes concurrent enrollment in multiple districts and exclusive enrollment in a district other than the district of residence at a specific point in time (i.e., during an academic term)
- Traditionally, “swirl” meant enrollment at multiple institutions---not the definition this proposal will use

Strategic Market Factors

- State law permitting out-of-district enrollment (and state setting of fees for all districts)
- Schooling while working (enrollment related to place of work vs. enrollment related to place of residence)
- Voting with their feet (students' perceptions about quality, convenience, amenities, culture, etc.)
- Declining "brand loyalty" or neighborhood attachment (the propensity for "switching" behavior)
- Technology & distance education
- Special programs (hard-to-staff and wide in "drawing area"—the specialty good)
- Reduction in course schedules

Why Do a Swirl Study?

- Understand strengths and weaknesses of an institution or district
- Scope out potential impacts of administrative decisions (such as beginning or ending a program of study or type of certificate)
- Enrollment projections
- Enrollment management

Major Considerations

1. Need for local decision making
2. Data security
3. Economy of scale
4. Equity
5. Ability to test feasibility of each report element (CCCCO effort is on trial basis only)

Need for Local Decision-making

- Background in Willett & Hom (2007) article in *Journal of Applied Research in the Community Colleges*
- Serving a district's residents
- Program level analysis
- Regional planning (elements of cooperation and competition)

Data Security

- Provision of aggregate data rather than student-level data
- Suppression of cells (or collapsing of categories)

Economy of Scale & Equity

- Use of a GIS-based file to define the zip codes within each CCC district
- A standard query to define data elements used and output tables for each district in the state
- Electronic provision of final tables at no charge to a district (a website for downloading)

Exports Table

- Exports (in-district residents exclusively enrolled out-of-district)— not feasible for districts to study without data at CCCCO

  Total count; demographic distribution; destination districts; and median, mean, quintiles of credit units enrolled for a given term. Assume one selected fall term as the study “window.”

Imports Table (Optional)

- Imports (out-of-district residents exclusively enrolled at a district) — feasible for districts to study without data at CCCCO

  Total count; demographic distribution; source zip codes (and translated to district if needed?); and median, mean, quintiles of credit units enrolled for a given term. Assume one selected fall term as the study “window.”

Concurrent Exports Table

- Partial Exports (district residents concurrently enrolled at the home district while also enrolled at another district)

  Total count; demographic distribution; destination districts; and median, mean, quintiles of credit units at “home” district and at “away” district,” for a given term. Assume one selected fall term as the study “window.”

Concurrent Imports Table

- Partial Imports (out-of-district residents enrolled at a district while also enrolled at a district of residence)

  Total count; demographic distribution; source districts; and median, mean, quintiles of credit units at “home” district and at “away” district,” for a given term. Assume one selected fall term as the study “window.”

Pie-in-the-sky Ideas – Part I

- Linking zip code census-type data to estimate "neighborhood effects" upon swirl
- Year-to-year shifts in data
- GIS-based computation of median or mean distance traveled (excluding distance ed enrollments) based on centroids of zip code areas.
- Relationships to distance ed enrollments
- Application of data to outreach planning
- Application of data to facility planning

Pie-in-the-sky Ideas – Part II

- Longitudinal Switching Matrix

  a basic “before and after” table of counts to compare flows between two CCCs; all students in the table must be enrolled in both periods

		After	
		At CC-1	At CC-2
Before	At CC-1	n1	n2
	At CC-2	n3	n4

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Thank you for your participation.

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