

Final Grant Report

Grantor: Illinois University Council for Career and Technical Education (in conjunction with ISBE)

Address: Illinois State University Normal, Illinois

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Project Title: Postsecondary Enrollment: Secondary CTE Effects

Grant Number: 5-18210

Project Began: September 1, 2006

Project Ends: June 1, 2007

Project Summary: The following describes how each objective was met and its outcome.

Objective 1: Select a random sample of 1000 students admitted to a Midwestern university.

A random sample of 1000 students admitted to a Midwestern university was obtained after contacting the associate director of admissions and admissions data processing. The data processing analyst selected every 10th student (up to 1,000) admitted to the university for the 2006 – 2007 academic year. Faculty were given clearance to review student high school transcripts.

Objective 2: Identify the classification and number of secondary career and technical education courses using the LEA State Locale Codes, Grade Levels and the Career and Technical Education Career Clusters.

The 1000 students were first grouped according to: 1) locale code and 2) the number of career and technical education courses taken during each year of high school. Career and technical education courses were coded according to career and technical education career clusters and state of Illinois Classification list with additional coding added only if not included in existing career clusters. Consequently, a total of thirty clusters were used in the study. It was noted that as students gained in grade level, the number of career and technical education courses diminished. Illinois LEA Locale Codes were also used to identify the high school location of the student. An additional 9 = out-of-state and 10 = unavailable codes were included in addition to the original eight state locale codes (1= large city to 8 = rural, inside CBSA). As expected, the majority came from urban fringe of large city and the least from large town.

Objective 3: Identify selected postsecondary college/major at time of admittance, and the relationship to secondary CTE courses taken.

Postsecondary college/majors at time of admittance and secondary CTE courses were identified. College/majors were coded according to the four colleges a Midwestern

university with additional coding for interdisciplinary studies, general orientation, pre-professional and not enrolled to include all students. The study revealed secondary career and technical education coursework did not appear to influence postsecondary major declaration or career path.

Objective 4: Identify GPA and ACT scores and their relationship to secondary CTE courses.

GPA and ACT scores were coded to identify any relationship with secondary CTE course taking. GPA was coded every two-tenths (1 = 4.0 and 7 = 1.9 to 2.2) with 8 = 1.8 and below and 9 = Not Available added to include all subjects. ACT scores used the American College Testing Program figures and were coded in increments of 5 (1 = 31 – 36 and 4 = 17 and below). Another code of 5 = not available was added to include all subjects. The analysis revealed that students with more secondary career and technical education coursework had higher GPA and ACT scores than students who had a few or no secondary career and technical education coursework.

Objective 5: Identify randomly selected student current retention in admitted college/major.

Slightly over one-tenth of students admitted and attending the Midwestern university remained in their initial designated college/major for the second semester. Ongoing research will identify student's change of major.

Objective 6: Report results of research.

The research title: Postsecondary Enrollment: Secondary CTE Effects was presented on March 14th, 2007 at the Connections 2007 Conference in St. Charles, Illinois. Presentation attendees (9) were given a copy of the presentation and coding sheet. Discussion with the attendees revealed the data's importance in supporting career and technical education at the secondary and postsecondary level. Results will be discussed with and disseminated to the university Tech Prep Committee and local Regional Office of Education. Researchers are working on an article to be submitted to an appropriate journal in career and technical education.

Facilities, equipment, and staff: Faculty and faculty and university computers, printers, copiers and software (Excel and SPSS) were used in completing the study. A student researcher developed a spreadsheet and inputted data to import into SPSS.

Project Outcome: The project provided further evidence to the researchers to continue to track the current subjects throughout their postsecondary career and to replicate the study each year.