

OIRE Research Brief

“Data From The Advising Questionnaire, New Students and the PAR Cohort: What Do We See?”

Context

The legislatively mandated Performance Accountability Report done each year requires that we track new MC students to ascertain how many have attempted 18 credits in a two-year period. Those who *have* attempted 18 or more credits are followed over four years from entry. Those who did not attempt 18 credits are excluded from this analysis. What about this sub-population? Are there any clues in extant institutional data to differentiate the two groups?

The Advising Questionnaire (AQ)

Starting in Fall 2013, and made mandatory from Fall 2015 forward, every new MC student must complete the Advising Questionnaire first, before being allowed to register (Example A below). Students are asked all of the reasons for coming to MC and to rate their competence in core learning areas of math, writing, reading, as well as in speaking, time management, etc. To date these data have never been used for analytical purposes.

Research Question

Using the AQ and other extant student record data (OIRE Datamart), what are the differences between the group of new students attempting 18 or more credits and those not attempting 18 credits within two years entry?

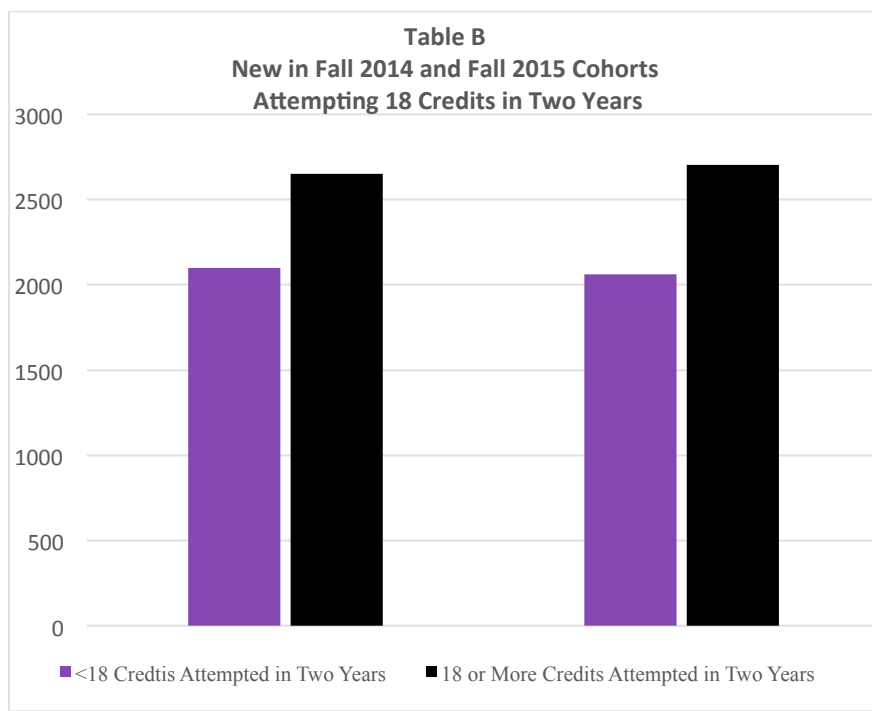
Method

New student cohorts (OIRA_Type=New) and associated student record data were culled from the Fall 2014 (N=4,749) and Fall 2015 (N=4,767) official third week census files of the credit population. Using their IDs, matches were made to the Advising Questionnaire database. For purposes of this analysis, the PAR cohort distinction (18 credits threshold) was operationalized as those having already attempted 18 credits, or not, by the start of the Fall 2016 or Fall 2017 semesters (two years hence).

Findings

Table B below reveals that over half, 56-57% of each cohort, had attempted 18 credits by the start of the Fall 2016 and Fall 2017 semesters respectively. Were there noticeable differences between the two groups? Table C presents the salient characteristics and AQ responses that differentiate them. The less than 18 credits attempted group had much higher percentages of part-time, older, African American, and Takoma Park/Silver Spring students than the group attempting 18 or more credits. The AQ data points up the fact that higher percentages of the less than 18 credits attempted group were more interested in a personal desire to continue their education, less interested in transferring, and rated their abilities lower than the 18 credits or more group. The starkest difference is the self-reported highest math completed. A much higher percentage of the 18 credits or more group self-reported having Pre-

Calc or Higher, while a much higher percentage of the less than 18 credits group reported having only had Basic Algebra.



Conclusions

The less than 18 credits attempted group is older and less sure of its abilities coming into MC. Coupled with their demographics, they may be the most “at risk” of falling by the wayside. The Advising Questionnaire data might be used analytically and diagnostically, to identify the most “at risk” new students, and to allow time for the College to craft effective outreach efforts to these “more vulnerable” students.

Example A

Advising Questionnaire Response Sample

Student Name:

MyMC ID:

MyMC ID:	COMPLETED	18-Nov-2013 4:44 am	
<u>Display Order</u>	<u>Question</u>	<u>Response</u>	
20	1. Which of the reasons below led you to apply to Montgomery College? Please c	Take courses that lead to a certificate or degree at Montgomery College	
30	If there are any other reasons that led you to apply to Montgomery College that are		
40	2. How long do expect to be taking classes at Montgomery College?	Two years	
50	3. Have you earned college credits from any of the following? Please check all that...	College/University courses in the United States	
60	4. Would you like to know more about how to send official documents/transcripts t	Yes	
80	Do you enjoy activities that involve: (please check on that apply)	Physical/hand-on tasks	
80	Do you enjoy activities that involve: (please check on that apply)	Thinking/Mental Tasks	
80	Do you enjoy activities that involve: (please check on that apply)	Assisting Other/People-Oriented Tasks	
80	Do you enjoy activities that involve: (please check on that apply)	Leading/Managing/Selling Tasks	
80	Do you enjoy activities that involve: (please check on that apply)	Organizing/Detail-Oriented Tasks	
90	6. Would you like to know more about a career exploration course?	Yes	
100	7. If you are required to take a placement test before beginning your studies at Mo	Not prepared	
110	8. What is the highest level of math you have successfully completed before Mont	Other (specify below):	
120	If none of the above answers regarding math apply to you, please specify the detail...		
130	9. How prepared do you feel to begin your education at Montgomery college?	Somewhat prepared	
140	10. Would you like to know more about a First Year Experience program and/or F	Yes	
160	Writing/Grammar Skills in English:	Average	
170	Reading Skills in English:	Above Average	
180	Speaking/Listening Skills in English:	Above Average	
190	Math Skills:	Below Average	
200	Computer/Technology Skills:	Average	

Table C

Cohorts: OIRE Type= "New", Fall 2014 (N=4,749) and Fall 2015 (N=4,767) Census Files Attempted Credits In Two Years Time*				
Demographics**				
	Fall 2014 Cohort By Fall 2016		Fall 2015 Cohort By Fall 2017	
	<18 Credits	18 or More	<18 Credits	18 or More
% Part-Time	67.3%	28.2%	69.4%	30.0%
% 25+ Years Old	23.9%	8.3%	23.5%	9.3%
% African American	31.9%	23.1%	29.4%	19.5%
% Takoma Park/Silver Spring	30.8%	20.4%	30.5%	23.3%
n	2,099	2,650	2,063	2,704
Advising Questionnaire Responses***				
	Fall 2014 Cohort By Fall 2016		Fall 2015 Cohort By Fall 2017	
	<18 Credits	18 or More	<18 Credits	18 or More
% Personal desire to continue education	34.5%	28.5%	32.8%	25.7%
% Taking courses leading to transfer	17.1%	23.8%	16.9%	25.1%
% Expecting to take classes for 2 years	55.4%	67.0%	58.6%	67.9%
% Expecting to take classes for >2 years	12.0%	4.9%	11.7%	2.7%
% Highest Math: Basic Algebra	20.6%	7.6%	18.0%	5.0%
% Highest Math: Pre-Calc or Higher	27.6%	46.3%	29.4%	58.7%
% How Prepared Feel:< Well Prepared	54.8%	49.4%	53.1%	45.7%
% Writing/Grammer Skills: Average or Lower	74.9%	68.1%	74.7%	60.7%
% Reading Skills: Average or Lower	66.3%	61.4%	64.4%	53.0%
% Speaking Skills: Average or Lower	62.8%	57.4%	62.4%	51.2%
% Math Skills: Average or Lower	83.5%	77.1%	85.3%	75.1%
n	1,867	2,549	1,622	2,330
*DMT: MC_Attempted_HR				
**From DMT: MSFSTDN				
***Matched by ID: Using DMT table RAVEN_GOBTAC, translating MyMCID to PIDM.				
Source: OIRE (Ault), April 2018.				