

TREND ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING 2021



LAKE LAND
COLLEGE

Author

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Faculty members participating in Future Focus Discussions

Part I.

INTRODUCTION

In 2021, Lake Land College began the process of planning for a new strategic plan for the College. The College's goal is to develop an innovative and adaptive strategic plan that addresses local, state, and national trends in higher education as well as position Lake Land to meet the student and workforce needs in a post-pandemic environment. To accomplish this, Lake Land is implementing a process that is deliberately inclusive of its potential community stakeholders as well as internal College personnel and students. This is the executive summary of the Trend Analysis Report and is the first of three steps involved with developing an Environmental Scan that will include the Trend Analysis Report, feedback from community surveys of external and internal stakeholders, and feedback from in-depth focus groups. Information from all three sources will be integrated into a comprehensive Environmental Scan that will be used to identify the priorities, goals, and objectives of the College's next strategic plan to begin in FY 2023.

The Trend Analysis Report provides an overview of the demographics related to the district which Lake Land College serves. In addition, it provides a summary of key research on a number of topics impacting higher education at the state, national, and global levels categorized by financial/economic, social, academics & technology, workforce, and collaboration factors.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To view entire document visit: [Trend Analysis Document](#)

The following key takeaways highlight the prominent ideas and issues identified through the research detailed in the body of the report. Each of the key takeaways is linked to the full section where the research is presented.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

- ◆ Illinois experienced the nation's worst **raw population** decline from 2010-2019. The consistent decrease in the Illinois population over the last few years as well as the decrease in high school enrollment significantly impacts enrollment at community colleges. These declining enrollments also create budgetary constraints for the college as well as workforce challenges for community businesses and industry.

Poverty & Diversity

- ◆ While the **percentage of minorities** in Lake Land's district is very low (3.7%) compared to Illinois (23.2%) and the United States (23.7%), the percent of low-income residents is higher. Around 11.8% of Lake Land's in-district residents live in **poverty** compared to the rest of Illinois at 11.5% and the United States at 10.5%. The average **household income** is \$53,444 compared to \$65,886 in Illinois and \$62,843 in the United States. Our district has decreased the poverty rate by 2.9% since 2015.

Educational Attainment

- ◆ **Lake Land's district** shows a lower rate of residents with a Bachelor's degree or higher with an average of 17.7% compared to the 34.7% in Illinois and 32.1% in the United States. However, Lake Land's district has a higher percentage of persons with associate degrees (8.5%) compared to Illinois (5.5%) and the Nation (5.7%).

ECONOMICS/FUNDING

Decrease in Government Support for Higher Education

- ◆ Illinois has consistently decreased its support of higher education for the past two decades, resulting in shifting more of the financial burden to students and families.
- ◆ Community colleges receive approximately **\$8,800 less funding** per student enrolled than four-year institutions.

- ◆ In the 2017-2018 academic year, community colleges enrolled nearly 41% of all undergraduates but only received 33% of Pell Grant funds distributed.
- ◆ Illinois has cut higher education funding by half since fiscal year 2002. The original funding formula for **Illinois community colleges** is one-third each from state, property taxes and tuition. The state is currently contributing only 16% of community college funding.
- ◆ In 2020, Illinois' community colleges served more **Monetary Award Program** (MAP) eligible students than all other higher education institutions combined, but only 11% of community college students received a MAP grant. MAP is awarded on a first-come, first serve basis and is exhausted before many community college students enroll in college. More than 40% of MAP-eligible community college students are placed in suspended status each year, meaning they are qualified to receive MAP, but the funds have run out.

Individual Economic Uncertainty

- ◆ **Financial insecurity** is a major concern for many community college students and can play a major role in students' inability to complete their higher education goals. Many students live at or below the poverty level.

Changing Attitudes about the Value of Higher Education

- ◆ **Many Americans** have significant concerns about the cost of higher education and there is increasing public skepticism for the value of higher education. This is despite the fact that median earnings for full-time employees are significantly higher for people attaining an associate's degree or higher in comparison to those with a high school diploma or less.
- ◆ Student loan debt is now the second highest consumer debt category in the U.S., with about **54% of college students** needing to borrow money to attend college.

Declining Enrollment at Community Colleges

- ◆ Nationally, community college enrollment has experienced a **steady decline** since 2016. Lake Land College has had a 27% decrease in annual student enrollment between 2009 and 2020.

SOCIAL FACTORS

Mental Health & Social Isolation

- ◆ The American College Health Association reports that 60% of college students suffer with anxiety and 40% have depression. It is likely the social isolation required during the COVID-19 pandemic may have intensified these issues. Traditional aged college students, who range in age between 17 and 24, fit into the vulnerable category in that half of mental health issues begin by age 14 and 75% begin by age 24 with higher rates of disorders in college-aged students, according to Active Minds.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- ◆ Illinois has established state-wide efforts to close the equity gaps for higher education attainment among low-income, minority, first generation, working adults and rural students. More than 40% of the Lake Land's students are classified as low-income, 35% are first generation and 36.8% are non-traditional.
- ◆ When compared to their four-year university peers, community college students are more likely to work full-time, to enroll part-time, to be older, to live in low-income households, and fail to pay on their student loans. In addition, community college students are less likely to borrow money for college and apply for financial aid than their four-year peers.
- ◆ From a national perspective on adult education, GED students are less likely to attend postsecondary education compared to students who receive a high school diploma, with 43% of students who complete a GED attending postsecondary education compared to 73% of students who receive a high school diploma attending postsecondary education. Only 5% with a GED will earn a bachelor's degree compared to 33% with a high school diploma.

Remedial Education

- ◆ In Illinois, nearly one-half of new high school graduates assess into developmental education courses. At Lake Land 73.2% of incoming students assess into developmental math education and 44% assess into developmental reading and/or English.

ACADEMICS & TECHNOLOGY

Students and Technology

- ◆ Technology (i.e., devices, Internet, etc.) has become an essential element in higher education, yet many students have problems accessing reliable and updated technology and devices, which is a bigger issue for low-income and minority students. Students with technology issues are more likely to have poorer outcomes than

students with steady access to technology and devices.

Teaching with Multiple Methods and Blended Learning

- ◆ A 2019 national survey found 38% of college students prefer completely face-to-face courses and only 7% prefer completely online courses. The remaining 55% prefer classes that blend face-to-face with online elements. This blended approach can provide learning advantages over fully online or fully traditional courses.
- ◆ Technology integrated effectively into a course can increase student satisfaction, grades, retention and completion as well as provide more flexibility for students.
- ◆ Hyflex courses offer students the flexibility to participate in class virtually, face-to-face, or in a combination of their choosing. This method can decrease barriers to enrollment and allow students with health issues and/or family and work obligations to make progress on their educational goals.

Online Education

- ◆ Since 2000, the online/virtual/remote/distance learning industry has exploded for academia, business and industry.
- ◆ Undergraduate enrollment in online courses increased from 15.6% in 2004 to 43.1% in 2016.
- ◆ Since 2000, eLearning in business and industry has increased 900% and 41.7% of Fortune 500 companies are using technology for training employees.
- ◆ Faculty perceptions of online learning are shifting. Around 57% of faculty are more receptive to digital learning materials, and 51% are more receptive to online learning than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ◆ During the pandemic, 71% of faculty reported changing their teaching techniques significantly, and all but 8% will likely keep these changes.
- ◆ Even with the demand for more online education, a Pew Research Center 2020 student survey conducted during the pandemic revealed a majority of students continue to prefer face-to-face classes over other learning environments.
- ◆ Institutions must promote academic integrity through policies and practices when transitioning to an online environment. Best practices, strategies and software programs can be utilized to minimize academic misconduct.

Open Educational Resources (OERs)

- ◆ Open educational resources (OERs) are cost effective options for students that allow access to the content anywhere with Internet availability, and have been shown to increase credit hour accumulation and retention of students. OERs must be checked for validity and language.

Artificial Intelligence & Data Analytics

- ◆ Artificial intelligence and data analytics can be used in multiple ways to benefit both students and institutions. Instructors can use AI to personalize learning experiences. Institutions can use AI and data analytics to improve communication with students as well as student success measures.

Alternative Credential Offerings

- ◆ The interest and need from employers and students for additional skills have opened the door to expanding alternative and stackable credentials offerings. These credentials have the benefit of being cost-effective, short-term, flexible, and promote lifelong learning. They also provide opportunities to gain new skills and/or a full degree.

WORKFORCE

Automation and the Workforce

- ◆ As automation and technology develop in business and industry, workers with little or no advanced education beyond high school diplomas may find themselves in need of additional education, training, or skills to keep their jobs, to complete non-automated tasks or to move into new positions. Alternative credentials can help fill the skills gaps for business and industry.

Decreasing Workforce

- ◆ In spring 2020, almost **70% of US employers** reported difficulties in hiring qualified employees, a 17% increase from 2018. January and February of 2021 both saw **increases in job openings** of 5.1% and 3.8%, respectively, yet there are still more job openings than unemployed workers.
- ◆ The US labor force participation rate (LFPR) measures the number of people employed or actively seeking work. According to Hetrick et al. (2021), this rate has decreased to a low not seen since the mid-1970s.

Science Technology Engineering and Math and Healthcare Jobs

- ◆ Increasing automation in occupations leads to higher salaries; however, these higher salaries can only be acquired with essential education and skills. Short-term training and in-plant training can provide employees with these skills. It has been estimated that 65% of jobs in 2020 required education beyond high school and only 41.7% of Americans have an associate degree or higher.

COLLABORATION

Business & Industry

- ◆ Workers in industries across the board require technical savvy to be successful. While community colleges can meet students in their communities and provide them with career and technical education opportunities, providing students with the education that aligns directly with work based learning opportunities continues to be a struggle. It is essential to develop, maintain, and expand collaboration among K-12, community colleges, and business and industry in order to provide students with opportunities for apprenticeships and work based learning.
- ◆ Apprenticeships or earn and learn programs benefit both employers and students or workers. These programs allow students/workers to train on the job, be paid, and learn the skills that employers need. They provide a hiring pipeline for business and industry.
- ◆ Students participating in paid work based learning opportunities are more likely than students with unpaid work based learning experiences to receive job offers across employer types. In addition, they are more likely to receive higher starting salaries than those that participated in unpaid opportunities.

Dual Credit

- ◆ According to the **US Department of Education**, between the academic years of 2002-03 and 2010-11, the number of high school students taking dual credit courses increased by 68% for a total of nearly 1.4 million students. Almost 70% of high schools provided dual credit opportunities to their students by 2015.
- ◆ Dual credit students are more likely than non-dual credit students to enroll in college, complete a college credential/degree and finish a degree in less time.
- ◆ Dual credit enrollees were more likely than their non-dual credit peers to graduate from high school, enroll in a four-year college, persist in college, accumulate more college credit and were less likely to take remedial courses.
- ◆ Dual credit programs can differ widely in eligibility requirements, affordability, and student support, which can create barriers for minority and low-income students.