PRIMER ON COMPUTING FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT STUDENT (FTES)

California Community Colleges state apportionment is primarily driven by the Full-Time Equivalent Student (FTES) workload measure. FTES is not "headcount enrollment," but is the equivalent of 525 hours of student instruction per each FTES. For the 2007-08 Fiscal Year, the funding rate for each CREDIT FTES is $4,564.83 (this is a uniform CREDIT FTES rate for all community college districts and is adjusted annually for COLA) [the NONCREDIT FTES rate for the same period is $2,744.96, while the rate for Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) NONCREDIT FTES is $3,232.07]. CDCP Noncredit FTES is generated by Noncredit courses that are eligible to received an enhanced noncredit rate because they are part of a program or sequence of courses approved by the Chancellor's Office pursuant to Title 5 Section 55151. As provided by Title 5 Section 55151, these CDCP noncredit courses must result in a noncredit certificate of completion leading to improved employment or a noncredit certificate of competency in a recognized career field articulated with degree applicable coursework.

Basically, an FTES [formerly called "average daily attendance," (ADA)] was theoretically derived by considering that one student could be enrolled in courses for 3 hours a day, 5 days a week, for an academic year of 35 weeks---so basically, a total of 525 hours per one FTES (3 x 5 x 35 = 525).

The FTES are computed under four different attendance accounting formulas; positive attendance (actual attendance each class meeting), weekly census, daily census, and the alternative attendance accounting procedure for independent study/work experience education and distance education courses not computed using the other basic procedures (see Calif. Code of Regulations, Title 5 section 58003.1). Each method of attendance accounting ultimately calculates to a number of FTES (workload in contact hours) based on the number of students enrolled, the length of the course, and divided by 525. Per Title 5 Section 58003.1(a), the determination of the which attendance accounting procedure to apply is based on the type of course, the way the course is scheduled, and the length of the course. In the case of Noncredit courses, Title 5 Sections 58006 and 58007 provide that contact hours and FTES shall be computed based on the count of students present at each course meeting ("positive attendance" procedure -- actual student contact hours) except those noncredit distance education courses computed on the alternative attendance accounting procedure defined in section 58003.1(f)(2). Other than this fairly rare exception, noncredit courses must be on the positive attendance procedure (actual student contact hours/525 = FTES).

The major number of FTES reported by the colleges are generated in weekly census procedure courses that are scheduled in the primary terms (quarter or semester system colleges). Courses that are scheduled as "weekly census" must be scheduled the same number of hours each week of the primary term. The terms usually equate to 35 weeks, but in some instances there are more weeks, or fewer weeks, than 35. However, in the calculation of FTES for any primary

term weekly census course, the term-length-multiplier (TLM) may not exceed 17.5. (one half of two terms totaling 35).

As per requirements in the California Code of Regulations, for weekly census courses, a census point is determined for purposes of accounting for actively enrolled students. To calculate FTES, the number of actively enrolled students in each course are multiplied by the number of weekly scheduled hours as of the census day, the number of hours are then multiplied by a TLM of 17.5 (TLM could be lower if the academic calendar has been compressed) and divided by 525. This calculation is made for all weekly census courses for each primary term.

There are three times that colleges are required to submit their FTES data via the Apportionment Attendance Report (CCFS-320): First Period (July 1 through December 31 – report due January 15); Second Period (July 1 through April 15 – report due April 30); and, Annual Report (July 1 through June 30 – report due July 15). Districts can make adjustments/corrections to their Annual attendance reports up to November 1 of the subsequent fiscal year -- this is known as the "Recal" Report (this would be a 4th submission, but it only applies to districts that need to make corrections or changes). At the time of the First and Second Period reports, the total student contact hours and FTES for the academic year have not yet been completed. Therefore, so that the state revenue is allocated to the level that colleges will ultimately generate, the FTES data must be "annualized" to the best estimate for the full fiscal year.

For additional information concerning attendance accounting and FTES, please refer to Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations and the Student Attendance Accounting Manual webpage (SAAM), which includes links to several pertinent documents and materials. Please note that certain sections of the SAAM are not current and as such, in all cases, you should also refer to the latest guidelines/rules provided in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

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