

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Performance of Transfers to University of Southern Mississippi Fall 2005

This report compares the performance of MGCCC transfers, other community/ junior college (CJC) transfers, and USM “native” students¹ on the basis of current (fall 2005) and cumulative grade point average (GPA) as reported in the USM “Mississippi Community College Transfer Report – Fall 2005.” MGCCC transfers the largest numbers of students to USM than any other four-year institution of higher learning.

Enrollment by College at USM

The USM follow-up report provided upper and lower division enrollments for students enrolled in each of the five colleges at USM. Table 1 summarizes the enrollment data. Because the USM report includes data for “all community college transfers,” data shown in Table 1 were calculated to arithmetically exclude MGCCC students from the “all community college” student data, creating an “other CJC transfer” category.

Table 1. Enrollments by College and Transfer Category at USM

	MGCCC Transfers		Other CJC Transfers		USM Native Students		Total	
	number	pct	number	pct	number	pct	number	pct
Arts & Letters	313	18.1%	1031	20.0%	1,356	32.9%	2,700	24.5%
Business	392	22.6%	983	19.1%	699	17.0%	2,074	18.9%
Science & Technology	316	18.2%	986	19.2%	897	21.8%	2,199	20.0%
Health	322	18.6%	1265	24.6%	769	18.7%	2,356	21.4%
Education & Psychology	390	22.5%	878	17.1%	401	9.7%	1,669	15.2%
Total	1,733	100%	5,143	100%	4,122	100%	10,998	100.0%

The largest number (392 students) of MGCCC transfers, both lower- and upper-division, was enrolled in the USM College of Business. This represents 22.6% of all MGCCC transfers at USM. The next-largest number (390 students or 22.5% of MGCCC transfers) was enrolled in the College of Education and Psychology, followed by 322 students (18.6%) enrolled in the College of Health. The lowest number of MGCCC transfers (313 students) was enrolled in the College of Arts and Letters, representing 18.1% of all MGCCC transfers at USM.

Interestingly, the distribution of transfers from *other* community and junior colleges (MGCCC excluded) among the five colleges at USM was different. Of transfers

¹ “Native student” refers to the student who began his or her college education at the University of Southern Mississippi. Lateral transfers from other universities and transfers from out-of-state community colleges are not included in the counts.

from other CJs, the largest number (1,265 or 24.6% of the group) was enrolled in the College of Health. The second-largest number (1031) was enrolled in the College of Arts and Letters, representing 20.0% of the group. The colleges of Business, Science and Technology, and Education and Psychology enrolled 19.1%, 19.2%, and 17.1% of other CJC transfers, respectively.

The enrollment distribution of USM native students across the five colleges differed from both of the above patterns. The largest number of native students (1,356 students or 32.9% of the group) were enrolled in the College of Arts and Letters, followed by 897 students (21.8% of the group) enrolled in the College of Science and Technology. The College of Health enrolled 769 native students (18.7% of the group), while the College of Business and Economic Development enrolled 699 native students (17.0% of the group) and the College of Education and Psychology enrolled 401 native students (9.7% of the group).

A one-way Chi Square test was performed to test the hypothesis that enrollment in the USM colleges was independent of whether the student transferred from MGCCC or from another CJC or if the student had begun as a freshman at USM. This test indicated that enrollment by college was dependent on the student's transfer status ($X^2 = 420.7$, $df = 8$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, the differences in the distribution of students from the three groups were significant. While transfers from MGCCC are more likely to enroll in Business or Education and Psychology, those from other community colleges are more likely to enroll in Health, and native students are more likely to enroll in Arts and Letters.

Current Term and Cumulative Grade Point Averages of Transfers at USM

Current term (fall 2005) grade point averages for MGCCC transfers, transfers from other CJs, and USM native students are summarized in Table 2. Total GPA averages were calculated by weighting each individual college's average GPA by enrollments in the college, computing the total, and dividing by the total enrollment. GPA averages for the "other CJC" category were calculated by arithmetically excluding MGCCC transfers from the category. GPAs shown in Table 2 for individual colleges for MGCCC transfers and USM native students were not calculated but are those provided by USM.

Table 2. Current Term GPAs by College and Transfer Category

	MGCCC Transfers		Other CJC Transfers		USM Native Students	
	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Arts & Letters	2.55	2.56	2.45	2.55	2.42	2.75
Business	2.08	2.42	2.07	2.25	2.20	2.50
Science & Technology	2.36	2.61	2.23	2.48	2.13	2.50
Health	2.32	2.67	2.25	2.78	2.20	2.76
Education & Psychology	2.10	2.98	1.83	2.76	2.34	2.69
Total	2.31	2.66	2.21	2.57	2.27	2.65

These data show that MGCCC transfers had higher mean current term GPAs than native students at lower-division level in the colleges of Arts and Letters, Science and Technology, and Health, and at the upper-division level in the colleges of Science and Technology and Education and Psychology. Moreover, MGCCC transfers had a higher total group current term GPAs than native students at both lower- and upper-division levels.

Table 3 shows average cumulative GPAs for the three groups. Mean GPAs for “other CJC transfers” as well as means for the group totals were calculated as described above. These data show that MGCCC transfers had higher cumulative GPAs than native students at the lower-division level in the colleges of Arts & Letters, Science and Technology, and Health, and MGCCC transfers had higher cumulative GPAs than native students at the upper-division level in the colleges of Science and Technology and Education & Psychology.

Table 3. Cumulative GPAs by College and Transfer Category

	MGCCC Transfers		Other CJC Transfers		USM Native Students	
	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Arts & Letters	2.51	2.71	2.47	2.63	2.49	2.91
Business	2.17	2.52	2.07	2.36	2.29	2.70
Science & Technology	2.34	2.73	2.22	2.53	2.23	2.69
Health	2.40	2.74	2.31	2.79	2.29	2.75
Education & Psychology	2.19	3.01	1.88	2.76	2.40	2.76
Total	2.34	2.75	2.24	2.62	2.36	2.78

While the nature of the data provided in the USM report precludes a statistical comparison of average GPAs between groups, it is safe to state that as a group MGCCC transfers to USM performed as well as or better than their “native” counterparts.

Current and Cumulative Grade Point Average Distributions

Current and cumulative GPA distributions for transfers from each MGCCC campus and college totals, as well as for *all* CJC transfers, the calculated “other CJC transfer” group, and USM native students are shown in [Appendix B](#). The percent distributions shown in Appendix B were recalculated: the percentages provided in the USM report used total enrollment rather than the actual number of GPAs tallied in the distribution table. The percentages in Appendix B were calculated based on the number of GPAs reported in each group.²

² Presumably, the total enrollment counts included students that withdrew and received no grades. The recalculations in Appendix B essential remove these “no grade” students from the distribution and represent a true distribution of grades assigned.

These distributions show that of transfers from MGCCC (total group), 13.3% had 4.0 GPAs for fall 2005 (current term), compared with 9.9% of the “other CJC” group and 8.1% of the native student group. Similarly, 4.5% of all MGCCC transfers had 4.0 cumulative GPAs, compared with 2.9% of the “other CJC” group and 3.4% of the native student group.

Figure 1 shows the current term GPA distributions for the three groups, MGCCC total transfers, other CJC transfers, and USM native students. Figure 2 shows the cumulative GPA distribution for the three groups.

Figure 1. Current Term (Fall 2005) GPA at USM

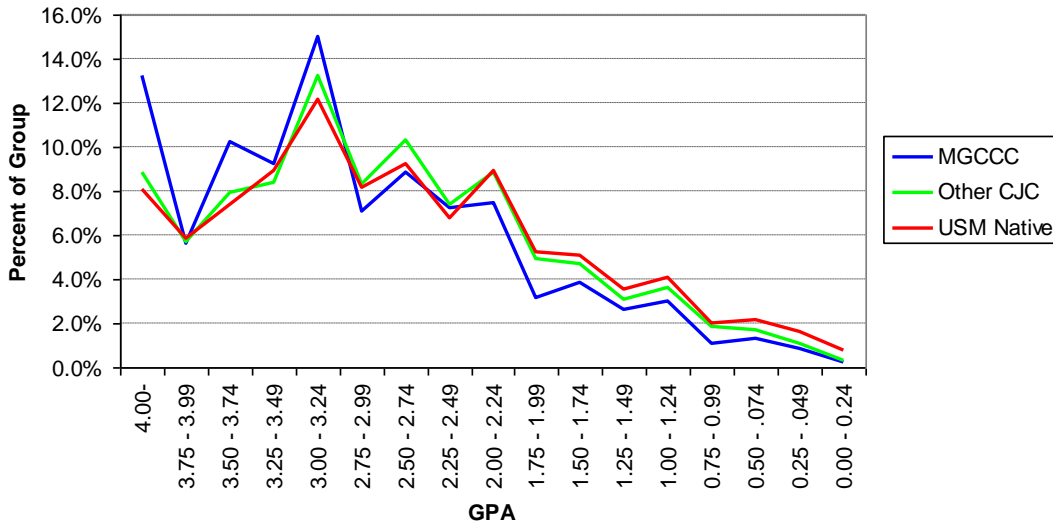
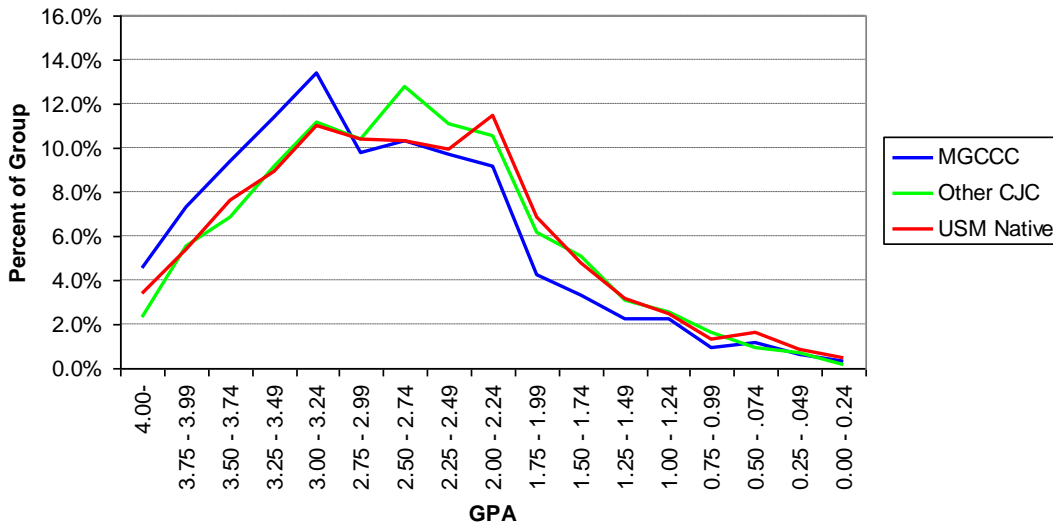


Figure 2. Cumulative GPA at USM



These graphs clearly show that for both current term and cumulative GPAs, a higher proportion of MGCCC transfers had GPAs of 3.0 or higher, and a lower proportion of MGCCC transfers had GPAs below 3.0. To test the relationship between GPA and group, two-way Chi Square tests were used. For purposes of these tests, the GPA distribution was collapsed from 0.25 intervals to 0.50 intervals. The collapsed GPA distributions are shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4. Current Term GPA Distributions

	MGCCC Transfers		Other CJC Transfers		USM Native Students	
	num	pct	num	pct	num	pct
3.50-4.00	465	29.08%	1,089	22.46%	815	21.37%
3.00-3.49	387	24.20%	1047	21.60%	803	21.06%
2.50-2.99	255	15.95%	900	18.56%	663	17.39%
2.00-2.49	235	14.70%	788	16.25%	600	15.74%
1.50-1.99	112	7.00%	465	9.59%	392	10.28%
1.00-1.49	90	5.63%	322	6.64%	290	7.61%
0.50-0.99	38	2.38%	171	3.53%	158	4.14%
0.00-0.50	17	1.06%	66	1.36%	92	2.41%
Total	1,599	100.00%	4,848	100.00%	3,813	100.00%

Table 5. Cumulative Term GPA Distributions

	MGCCC Transfers		Other CJC Transfers		USM Native Students	
	num	pct	num	pct	num	pct
3.50-4.00	357	21.21%	742	14.73%	649	16.36%
3.00-3.49	416	24.72%	1022	20.29%	791	19.94%
2.50-2.99	339	20.14%	1168	23.19%	823	20.75%
2.00-2.49	317	18.84%	1087	21.58%	849	21.41%
1.50-1.99	127	7.55%	566	11.24%	463	11.67%
1.00-1.49	76	4.52%	282	5.60%	224	5.65%
0.50-0.99	35	2.08%	129	2.56%	116	2.92%
0.00-0.50	16	0.95%	42	0.83%	51	1.29%
Total	1,683	100.00%	5,038	100.04%	3,966	100.00%

Two-way Chi Square tests indicated that GPA was related to the transfer group for both current term ($X^2 = 91.02$, $df = 14$, $p < 0.05$) and cumulative ($X^2 = 91.42$, $df = 14$, $p < 0.05$) GPA. Thus, for both current and cumulative GPAs, MGCCC transfers tended to have higher mean GPAs.

Conclusions

MGCCC transfers are more likely to enroll in the colleges of Business and Education and Psychology, while transfers from other CJC's are more likely to enroll in the College of Health and USM native students are more likely to enroll in the College of Arts and Letters.

MGCCC transfers had higher mean current term GPAs than native students at both lower- and upper-division levels in several colleges at USM. As a group, MGCCC transfers to USM have current and cumulative GPAs that are as high as or better than their "native" counterparts.

MGCCC transfers tended to have higher current and cumulative GPAs than transfers from other CJC's and USM native students. In particular, a higher proportion of MGCCC transfers had current and cumulative GPAs of 3.0 or higher than the other two groups, and a lower proportion of MGCCC transfers had current and cumulative GPAs below 3.0.

For a number of years, MGCCC and other community colleges have asserted that community college transfers perform as well as or better than their "native" counterparts at the university level. This report continues support for that statement.