Summary of Benchmarking Study

In Spring, 1999, ACC contracted with MGT of America to develop peer benchmarks for key indicators of college effectiveness. These were updated in Spring 2002 based on data from 2000 and 2001. Data were collected from eight (8) Texas peer community colleges and four (4) non-Texas institutions. These colleges represent a sample of large, comprehensive urban community colleges similar to Austin Community College.

A summary of how ACC compared to other colleges follows.

Enrollment
- A larger percentage of the headcount students at peer colleges were enrolled as fulltime students: 33.6% compared to 24.3% at ACC.
- A larger percentage of the headcount students at peer colleges were minority students: 43.6% compared to 35.2% at ACC.
- When compared to the adult population in the service area, ACC enrolled a smaller percentage of minority students than are represented in the adult population.

Facilities
- ACC’s assignable square feet of classroom space per FTSE was below the space planning benchmarks suggested by the Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APAP): ACC had about 11 square feet of classroom space per FTSE while the APAP benchmark was 14 to 22 square feet of classroom space per FTSE.
- ACC’s classroom utilization rates at all campuses were higher than the suggested rate of 60% of the hours available made by the Council of Educational Facilities Planners, International. The Fall 2001 classroom utilization rates for Monday – Friday from 7 am – 10pm were Cypress--84%; Eastview—69%; Northridge—92%; Pinnacle—85%; Rio Grande—77%; Riverside—74%
- ACC had a plant value of about $4,024 per headcount student compared to $9,487 for peer colleges and $8,906 for the Texas peer colleges; ACC would need to more than double its plan investment to reach the level of the Texas peer colleges.

Faculty
- The headcount student to full-time faculty ratio at ACC declined from 88.2 in 1997-98 to 68.1 in 2000-01, but was still greater than the peer average of 60.4 headcount students per fulltime faculty member.
- The fulltime-equivalent student (FTSE) to faculty ratio was 33.8, which is similar to the 33.7 for peer institutions.
- For ACC to reach the average headcount student to fulltime faculty ratio, an additional 45 fulltime faculty members would need to be added.
- Based on fulltime faculty equivalents (FTFE), ACC faculty members taught fewer contact hours that did their peers at other Texas colleges, 11,768 contact hours per FTFE compared to 14,550 per FTFE at peer colleges.
Library and Learning Resources

- ACC expended less on libraries and learning resources than the recommended American Library Association standard. The standard is 6% of Educational and General budget; however, ACC’s actual FY2000 expenditures on libraries and learning resources were about 3%.
- ACC’s libraries/learning resource centers were open an average of 70.5 hours per week, while the average hours per week at peers was 74.4 hours.
- ACC is below the seating capacity standard set by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL); in FY2000, ACC had seating for about 5% of the fulltime equivalent students while the ACRL minimum is 10%.
- Based on FTSE, the ACRL benchmark space in learning resources for ACC would be 114,380 square feet; ACC had a total of 41,354 or about 40% of the benchmark.
- ACC had 1.61 square feet of learning center space per headcount student compared to an average of 3.99 square feet at peer colleges.

Revenues and Expenditures

- In FY2000, ACC received about $1,200 less in total revenue per student than did the peer colleges. If ACC were to be funded at the level of the peers, ACC would receive about $15.6 million more each year would be required.
- ACC received a smaller proportion of revenue from property taxes than peer colleges; ACC received $500 less per FTSE in revenues derived from property taxes than did their peer college.
- ACC is more dependent on tuition and fees paid by students than peer colleges; ACC received about $700 more per FTSE in tuition and fee revenues than did peer colleges.
- On average, tuition and fees at ACC are higher than that charged at the Texas peer colleges.
- Since 1997-98, ACC’s tuition and fees per credit hour have increased differentially, especially compared to its Texas peers: ACC in-district 17.3% compared to 28.3% for its Texas peers; ACC out-of-district 50.1% compared to 25.6% for its Texas peers; ACC out-of-state 24.2% compared to 10.2% for its Texas peers.
- Average Educational and General Expenditures per fulltime student equivalent were higher than Texas peers, ACC spent about $350 more per FTSE.
- ACC expended about $120 more per FTSE on Instruction than did its peers, and $102 more per FTSE on Academic Support, which includes the Learning Resource Center.
- ACC spent $643 more per FTSE in Institutional Support than did peer colleges.
- ACC spent about $244 less per FTSE in Student Services and $221 less per FTSE in Plant Operation than did the peer colleges.
- ACC received a smaller proportion of its budget is from federal sources than at the peer colleges; the majority of federal revenue at community colleges is in the form of student financial aid.
• ACC received about $220 less per FTSE in federal student financial aid than did its peers. Since federal student financial aid is based on student need, this may reflect differences in the make-up the student body.

Staffing and Compensation
• ACC had relatively fewer non-instructional staff to meet student needs than did the peer colleges: for ACC the ratio of headcount students to non-instructional staff was 23.2, while it was 11.1 for the peer colleges and 9.1 for the Texas peers.
• ACC expended about 70% of its FY2000 Educational and General budget for employee compensation, while peers spent about 65% of their budgets on compensation.

Tax Base, Tax Collections and Service Area
• In terms of serving the service area, ACC enrolled 1.49% of the service area population compared to an average of 1.55% for the Texas peer colleges.
• When taxing district is used as the basis of comparison, ACC enrolled a higher percent of the taxing district population: 2.86% compared to an average of 1.83% for the Texas peer colleges.
• ACC was supported by a taxing district that was much smaller in terms of population than other large, urban Texas community colleges. ACC had the highest ratio of population served to taxing district population (1.92) among the large, urban Texas community college districts, whose average ratio was 1.18.
• The net assessed valuation of ACC’s taxing district was about 33% less per student than for other large, urban Texas community colleges: $1,844,132 for ACC compared to $2,425,400 for other large, urban Texas community colleges.
• ACC’s tax rate per $100 was .05, the lowest rate in the state.
• In FY2000, ACC collected less than half the taxes per fulltime student equivalent than did the other large, urban college: $1,021 per FTSE at ACC compared to an average of $2,059 for the other colleges.