

## History

The area served by Ozarka College includes four counties in north central Arkansas: Fulton, Izard, Sharp, and Stone. This hilly or even mountainous region in the eastern Ozarks was thinly settled until well after the Civil War and remains rather sparsely populated even today. Settlement, largely out of Tennessee, began along major waterways in what would become Izard County shortly after 1800, the county itself being organized in 1825. In 1843 Fulton County was formed from the northern part of Izard. Sharp County was established in 1868, and Stone County, created in 1873, was one of the last counties to be formed in the state.

Because of the thin soils and rocky terrain, agriculture never advanced much beyond subsistence level, although production of chickens for the broiler industry has become important in the last twenty years. Extractive industries, such as mining and logging, were important in the nineteenth century but declined as supplies of ore and virgin timber were depleted. Topography has always limited transportation, with the railroad not reaching Stone or Izard Counties until the early twentieth century and no major roads being constructed until the 1930s. U.S. Highways 62, 63, and 167 run through Fulton and Sharp Counties, but Izard and Stone are served only by state and county roads. The main highway through Stone County was not even paved until the 1950s.

Historically, educational opportunities were limited. Few schools existed before the Civil War, but afterwards academies opened in scattered locations, only to be replaced by the creation of state-supported schools in the 1870s. Even then, schools were small, offered short terms taught by minimally qualified teachers, and received inadequate local support. After World War II, better roads and increased financial support made possible

comprehensive public schooling, but opportunities for post-secondary or higher education did not exist in the area. People wanting collegiate or vocational education had to go elsewhere.

Post-secondary technical education in Arkansas started in 1957 with a legislative appropriation for the states first vocational technical school, located southeast of Little Rock at Pine Bluff. Legislative initiative provided the impetus for expanding and upgrading vocational and technical education, and by 1965 the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee supported the idea of building enough vocational technical schools to serve the entire state. The following year a group of area legislators petitioned then-Governor Orval Faubus, the state Board of Education, and the Commissioner of Education to construct such a school north of Searcy and east of Harrison, using currently available state funds. While Faubus was supportive, the effort failed.

In 1969, however, the Board of Education selected Melbourne as one of five top priority sites for a new school, if funds could be obtained. Because of strong local support and the city's willingness to acquire and donate some forty acres of land for a campus, Melbourne ranked fourth out of twenty-one applicants. Over the next few years supporters sought grants from the Ozarks Regional Commission and the federal Economic Development Authority (EDA). Despite support from Arkansas' strong Congressional delegation, EDA funding never came through.

In approaching the EDA, supporters developed a list of instructional priorities for the proposed new school:

1. Auto and heavy equipment mechanics
2. Appliance service, air conditioning, and heating

3. Building trades
4. Cooking, waitressing, and tourist service
5. Industrial equipment mechanics.

Other ranked needs included

6. Office occupations, especially data processing
7. Heavy equipment operators
8. Radio-television service
9. Service station servicemen
10. Practical nursing

Nursing was actually seen as a top priority, but hospital facilities at that time were not adequate to support the requisite clinical training.

One reason for EDA's reluctance to support a vocational technical school in Melbourne was its isolated rural location. Some state educational authorities also doubted the viability of a school in an area with such a small population, but in 1972 then-Governor Dale Bumpers expressed strong support for the Melbourne location:

While other areas have severe poverty and heavier concentrations of population they do not suffer from the combined problems of difficulty of transport, lack of needed job skills and the resulting out migration that characterizes the Melbourne and North Central Arkansas region. The proposed school is necessary if we are to reverse the economic decline and improve the skill level of the area labor market.

It was his hope that such a school would “halt the decay of our rural areas and improve the quality of life for the residents of Ozark hill country.”

With this level of political support, the school was finally funded by the state in 1973. The first director, Dr. Walter B. Hall, and a secretary were hired that year, and ground was broken for the first building in March 1974. Ozarka Vocational Technical School opened

August 11, 1975, and graduated its first class of forty-three students on July 2, 1976. Based on the earlier priority list, the first programs offered included automotive service, appliance service, building trades, food service, industrial equipment maintenance, and business education. In 1978 a practical nursing program originally sponsored by another new vocational technical school moved to campus, providing a foundation for what has since become one of Ozarka's strongest programs.

A key year for Ozarka came in 1987. The growing business education program moved into a new building in January. After completing a self-study, the school was visited in March and October by a team from the North Central Association's Commission on Schools, which recommended accreditation in March 1988. In July 1987, Dr. Hall retired and was succeeded by Douglas W. Rush.

Perhaps the most significant year in the school's history, however, was 1991, when the Arkansas Legislature, still concerned about the technical education needs of the people of Arkansas, passed Act 1244, converting a number of vocational technical schools, including Ozarka, into technical colleges. By combining technical education and training with general education and college transfer courses offered through a contract with Arkansas State University (ASU), Ozarka greatly expanded educational opportunities for people in north central Arkansas. Despite predictions in some quarters that a small school in such an isolated location would never survive, in 1993 the College gained candidacy status with North Central's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education and was authorized by the State Board of Higher Education to award the Associate of Applied Science degree and to offer college transfer courses on its own. In 1994 both the state and NCA authorized the awarding

of the Associate of Arts degree. In January 1996, Ozarka was granted initial accreditation by NCA for a period of five years, one of the first of the new colleges to achieve this goal.

In the nine years since becoming a college, Ozarka has grown from under 150 students to more than 800, from nine full-time faculty members to twenty, from three academic and administrative buildings to six, and from courses offered only on campus in Melbourne to courses offered in a dozen locations as well as by telecourse, Internet, and interactive videoconferencing. While still one of the smaller two-year colleges in the state, it has made a tremendous difference for the citizens of its service area, providing higher education opportunities previously unavailable without leaving the area. It has also assisted area economic development by providing training for business and industry and is currently leading a planning program designed to bring Information-Era jobs and expertise to the counties it serves. As a convenient, low-cost, open-admissions institution, it has always welcomed people with a wide range of abilities and experiences and has helped them develop productive lives. With its transformation from a solely vocational institution to a college offering both technical and academic instruction, Ozarka College has broadened its ability to make a difference in the social, economic, and cultural life of its region.

## **Response to Previous Visit**

An NCA team of four consultant-evaluators visited Ozarka October 30-November 1, 1995, to determine whether to recommend the College for initial accreditation. Their report listed twenty strengths and two concerns, both of which the College has addressed.

- 1. Ozarka Technical College lacks an integrated administrative/student information system and networked academic computers resulting in the inefficient use of human and fiscal resources*

In 1996, Ozarka purchased SONIS (Scholastic Online Information System), an integrated administrative/student information system. Its Student Management module handles all registration, student grade reports, transcripts, and required state reporting. It also records and maintains personal and demographic data on all currently enrolled students. Initially, access was available only to the Registrar's Office and Finance Office, but subsequently other administrators gained access. During the 1998-99 academic year, faculty also gained access to the system from their offices. This module supports degree audit functions and tuition and fee transactions.

The Scheduling and Course Management module creates course records, including data on individual student schedules, instructor records, room management, and master schedules. Other modules are Prospect Tracking and Admissions, Alumni and Prior Student Management, Faculty Resource Management, and Financial Aid and Billing Management. While some modules are not yet fully implemented, student services personnel plan to increase their use as needed.

The College still uses MIP accounting software for all Finance Office operations. The Director of Computer Services and the programmer (both newly employed after the last team visit) have, however, built links between SONIS and MIP, allowing the integration of student and financial information. In addition, the programmer, using SONIS reporting functions in conjunction with Microsoft Access, can pull information needed for state and institutional reporting functions from the system. Currently, over sixty "normal reports" and more than forty "special reports" and queries are available.

Implementation of SONIS, availability of e-mail and Internet access in all campus offices since 1998, and continuing development of an institutional portal at the College's

Web site have eliminated frustrating delays when information is needed. Identification of students required to take the state's "rising junior" assessment test, for instance, used to take nearly a week. With SONIS, a prospect list is available in minutes. Ozarka implemented on-line registration in the summer of 2000 by accessing SONIS' registration function through the Internet portal, further reducing duplication of effort and lengthy lines of students during registration periods.

2. *The composition of the faculty, staff, administrators, and students is not representative of the goals established by the Board approved Affirmative Action Plan.*

The Review Committee somewhat modified the team's stated concern, noting that both the team and the institution understood "that the focus in affirmative action will be upon staff and, especially, faculty, rather than the mix of students." Because student recruitment for many programs is limited to the service area, attracting minority students is extremely difficult. One African-American male completed the Physical Therapist Assistant program in 1999, and an African-American female is now enrolled in Practical Nursing. Otherwise, the racial and ethnic make-up of the student body (less than 2 percent) continues to mirror that of the almost-exclusively-white population of Fulton, Izard, Sharp, and Stone Counties.

The College has attempted to increase the cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of its faculty and staff by advertising all faculty openings nationally in the *Community College Times* or *Chronicle of Higher Education* and in the one statewide newspaper with a primarily African-American readership (it, however, ceased publication as of 1999). Faculty position announcements are also mailed to several regional graduate institutions which serve large numbers of minority students. All faculty and professional staff positions are also advertised in the only statewide general-readership newspaper, as well as throughout the service area.

The challenge issued to Ozarka College by the NCA Review Committee was to develop a faculty-based focus in affirmative action, rather than in the mix of students. This is indeed a challenge, because of the differences between the culture of north central Arkansas—and especially Ozarka’s legally-defined service area—and the culture of the general American population. Ozarka’s goal is to assemble a faculty team that will (a) expose students to an environment more nearly typical of contemporary America; (b) exhibit greater diversity than is found in Ozarka’s service area; and (c) develop a curriculum that introduces students to the reality of cultural diversity.

To increase the level of diversity among the faculty, Ozarka has expanded its advertising base, reaching out through national publications such as the *Community College Times* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, numerous web sites, several local newspapers, placement offices at Arkansas colleges and universities with larger minority populations, and, as the College has grown, increasingly through word-of-mouth. The success of this diversification effort can be seen in the increased number of applications Ozarka has received over the last five years.

Based on the Equal Employment Data Sheets filed with State applications to Ozarka, in 1995-96, the College received 14 data sheets, with no members of minority groups having applied. In 1996-97, 42 data sheets were received, with no minority groups applying. In 1997-98, 139 data sheets were received, with four minority applications. In 1998-99, 143 data sheets were received for full-time and adjunct openings, with seven minority applications, and one applicant who did not reply to the question. Of these seven minority applications, one Euro-African adjunct faculty member was hired. Finally, in 1999-2000, 145 data sheets were received, with eight minority applicants. An adjunct of Asian heritage

has been employed for the fall semester, and a contract for full-time employment as an instructor was offered to an Asian female. Problems with obtaining a work permit, however, kept the College from being able to employ her.

Ozarka has developed a more academically diverse faculty. In 1995-96, eight of the sixteen full-time instructors (50 percent) had received degrees from Arkansas State University, and only three (19 percent) had received degrees outside the state of Arkansas. For the 2000-01 school year, nine out of 22 faculty members teaching twelve or more hours per semester (41 percent) have degrees from ASU, and six (27 percent) have out-of-state degrees. The remainder have degrees from Arkansas institutions other than ASU. It should be noted, also, that two of the College's Vice Presidents have advanced degrees from institutions outside the state.

Further, professional development is very important at Ozarka, which helps instructors to bring diversity into the classroom. The College continues to use a number of adjunct faculty, who bring real-world work experience and culturally diverse backgrounds to the students.

In addition to the two expressed concerns, the team offered eight items of advice and suggestions. Two of these related to the concerns, and all have been addressed:

- 1. Hiring faculty and staff outside of the Melbourne area/region and with diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds.* As noted above, a higher proportion of the faculty now comes from outside the immediate area and holds degrees from institutions outside Arkansas. Ethnic and racial diversity has been harder to achieve, although one adjunct instructor of Euro-African descent was employed for two years, and a Korean-American is currently

employed as an adjunct. In addition, the food service director emigrated from Guatemala.

2. *Hiring technical instructors with a minimum of a bachelor's degree.* Since the last visit, Ozarka has hired eleven new instructors in technical programs. Three hold bachelor's degrees, and six have master's degrees (one of these with the Educational Specialist as well). The nursing instructor with only the AAS is currently working toward completing a bachelor's degree.

<i>Business Technology</i>	
Baltz	MBA, EdS
Hollaway	MBA
Langston	MEd
Lawrence	BS
Maddox	MBA
Tyler	MSE
<i>Culinary Arts</i>	
Tankersley	AAS, AA
<i>Physical Therapist Assistant</i>	
Smith	BS
Wyatt	MS
<i>Practical Nursing</i>	
Johnson	BSN
Sherrell	AAS

3. *Clustering or linking computers to share information and better utilize human resources.*

All faculty and administrative offices (and all staff offices except maintenance) now have access to e-mail. Memos are routinely distributed to all personnel by mailing to "ozarka" and to all faculty by addressing "faculty." Other special mailing lists are created by the Director of Computer Services as needed. Campus e-mail can be accessed from any location worldwide through the portal at the College's Web site. Also available via the portal are departmental budget reports, committee minutes held in public folders, news releases, the library catalog, course schedules, registration functions, and student data.

The number of paper memos has declined markedly, and many processes now require much less time than previously. One example is entering new student data only once, with all who need access to this data able to retrieve it from the campus network. All these improvements have been greatly aided by the establishment of a new computer services office, staffed by a director, programmer, and technician.

4. *Seeking additional funds to assure the growth of the library.* Besides increasing the library budget to allow acquisition of additional electronic resources, the College continues to submit grant proposals to Title III's Strengthening Institutions program, incorporating significant funding for the library. Two proposals have scored high but have not been funded. A proposal to be submitted early in 2001 includes approximately \$600,000 for the library over a five year period, including a new position for an electronic resources librarian, additional computers, subscriptions to electronic databases, and purchases of over 6,000 volumes in addition to the 3,000 volumes to be ordered during the same time period using institutional funds.
5. *Additional equipment for Culinary Arts.* In the fall of 1999, the Culinary Arts program moved into new space featuring an up-to-date industrial kitchen adjoining a classroom which can also be used as a private dining facility.
6. *Pursuing additional shared programming with other institutions using interactive television.* Ozarka continues to host ASU's LPN-to-RN completion program offered via compressed video. ASU also schedules additional courses for its BSN nursing program and some graduate level courses in education and agriculture. The College also participates in Access Arkansas, an effort to provide two-year college coursework statewide over the Internet.

7. *Reproducing and protecting student records.* Ozarka is in the process of scanning all student records before 1998 and putting them on CD-ROM. In this format, records can be stored both on campus and in a secure off-campus location. This process should be substantially completed by October 2000. As students transfer or complete programs, their permanent records are scanned.
8. *Clarifying the program evaluation process.* Changes in state policy in 1998 led to revision of Ozarka's policy. The new document specifies fourteen criteria and sets up a schedule to review each program on a five-year cycle. Data from a three-year period are presented for many of the criteria. All full-time faculty members received a copy of the policy, and the Vice President for Planning and Assessment notifies program faculty two years in advance of when their program will be reviewed. In some cases, program review is more frequent, to coincide with review by external accrediting or approving agencies.

## **Self-Study Organization and Processes**

The self-study process began in the spring of 1999, when the faculty, administration, and Board of Trustees reviewed and revised the College's Mission Statement and Purposes along with its General Education Philosophy. Faculty in-service meetings covered the importance of the self-study process and were followed with the naming of various self-study committees. Committee charges were developed and disseminated by the Vice President for Planning and Assessment, who was named by the President to coordinate the self-study process.

In the fall of 1999, each committee developed timelines to gather and evaluate relevant information. The College's NCA staff liaison visited the campus and met with committee chairs, administration, and faculty to provide guidance on the process. Initial

reports were completed by the end of the semester and reviewed by the Steering Committee as they were submitted. Additional information was gathered during the spring 2000 semester as the draft document was compiled. After review by all committee chairs and others, the report was refined and reviewed again for accuracy and completeness at the beginning of the fall 2000 semester.

***Self-Study Steering Committee***

Diane Tebbetts, chair	Vice President for Planning and Assessment
Shelia Titus, recorder	Administrative Assistant
Ron Helm	Director of Student Services and Registrar
Linda Morgan	Vice President for Academic Affairs
Douglas Rush	President
All other committee co-chairs	

***Educational Programs and Services Committee***

Mary Ellen Hawkins, co-chair	Librarian, Chair of Faculty Council
Joan Stirling, co-chair	Science Instructor
Leveda Tate, recorder	Nursing Secretary
Susan Beshears	English Instructor
Trish Miller	Learning Lab Director, Business Technology Instructor
John Rohweder	English Instructor
Charley Sandage	Director of Distance Learning (1999-2000)
Kay Smith	Physical Therapist Assistant Clinical Coordinator
Rick Tankersley	Culinary Arts Instructor
Wayne Wilson	Adult Education Coordinator

***Student and Community Services Committee***

Karla Morgan, co-chair	Director of Continuing Ed. and Business Outreach
Kellie Young, co-chair	English Instructor, Phi Theta Kappa Sponsor
Debbie Yancey, recorder	Adult Education Administrative Secretary
Joyce Baker	Institutional Research Officer
Eric Booth	Student
Eugenia Brown	Counselor
Joyce Goff	Financial Aid Officer
Ron Helm	Director of Student Services and Registrar
Tony Kirk	Social Science Instructor, Student Council Sponsor
Dan Lindsey	Library Technician
Shelley Moser	Student Academic Support Services Tutor Coordinator
Jerry Smith	Applications Programmer
Kitty Smith	Practical Nursing Instructor, HOSA sponsor (1999-2000)

***Physical and Financial Resources Committee***

Tina Wheelis, co-chair	Accounting Supervisor
Gayle Cooper, co-chair	Vice President for Finance
Pam Miller, recorder	Secretary (1999)
Tina Fowler	Preschool Director (1999-2000)
Brenda Jones	Business Technology Instructor
Scott Pinkston	Director of Computer Services
Douglas Rush	President
Ronny Rush	Maintenance Supervisor
John Thornton	Chairman of the Board of Trustees
Larry Wilkes	Automotive Service Technology Instructor

***Human Resources and Governance Committee***

Linda Hall, co-chair	Biology Instructor
Rex Whitfield, co-chair	Math Instructor
Lorrie Rorie, recorder	Student Academic Support Services Secretary
Judy Cannady	Speech/Theater Instructor
Libby Cone	Personnel Officer, Administrative Assistant to President
Cindy Hall	Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees
Brad Holloway	Business Technology Instructor
Sandy Miller	Adult Education Correctional Counselor/Instructor
Mimi Newsome	Food Services
Fern Sherrell	Practical Nursing Instructor (1999-2000), Department Chair, HOSA Sponsor (2000-2001)

***Ethical Behavior Committee***

Barbara Wyatt, co-chair	Physical Therapist Assistant Instructor
Tom Bruns, co-chair	Business Technology Instructor (1999-2000)
Peggy Jackson, recorder	Accounting Technician
Steven Baltz	Business Tech. Instructor at Mountain View Center
David Guthrie	Business Technology Instructor (1999-2000)
Gwenn Lea	Former Board of Trustees Member
Querida Long	Student Academic Support Services Academic Advisor (1999-2000)
Wally Pittman	Social Science Instructor
Judy Sharp	Special Needs Assessment Coordinator
Ron Stovall	Maintenance

## General Institutional Requirements

NCA teams visiting Ozarka in 1993, March 1995, and October 1995 found that the College met all the General Institutional Requirements. The following information illustrates that this is still the case.

### **Mission**

1. *It has a mission statement, formally adopted by the governing board and made public, declaring that it is an institution of higher education.*

A mission statement was adopted by the Ozarka Board of Trustees in March 1992 and reviewed and expanded in 1994. It was further revised and expanded in 1999. The mission statement is published in the Board Policies and Procedures Manual, Institutional Assessment Plan, Planning Yearbook, Catalog, Employee Handbook, Adjunct Faculty Handbook, and on the Web page. It is also posted in each academic building. The mission statement makes clear that Ozarka College provides comprehensive higher education opportunities in both transfer and technical programs, offering certificates and associate degrees.

2. *It is a degree granting institution.*

The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) approves all degree programs at the associate degree level or above at state-supported institutions of higher education. At its April 1993 meeting, all technical colleges were authorized to submit proposals for Associate of Applied Science degrees, effective July 1, 1993. Ozarka forthwith submitted a proposal for the Associate of Applied Science in Business Information Technology at the state Board's July meeting, and it was approved. Subsequently, AAS degrees were approved for Medical Transcription in April 1994, Automotive Service Technology in October 1994, General Technology in January 1996, Physical Therapist Assistant in April 1996, and Criminal Justice Leadership in August 1997. Since their

approval, program expansions have prompted two name changes: Business Information Technology is now Business Technology and Medical Transcription is now Health Information Management.

In April 1994, the state Board also approved Ozarka's proposal to offer the Associate of Arts degree. The College had already begun offering general education courses for transfer purposes in the fall of 1993. Because offering this degree required a major change in the Statement of Affiliation Status, NCA's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education scheduled a focused visit in June 1994. The visiting team found no obstacles, and the commission subsequently approved the change of status in August.

Ozarka College also awards certificates of proficiency and technical certificates in technical programs.

### **Authorization**

- 3. The College has legal authorization to grant its degrees, and it meets all the legal requirements to operate as an institution of higher education wherever it conducts its activities.*

Ozarka is so authorized by Act 227 of 1973, which established Ozarka Vocational Technical School at 218 South Drive in Melbourne, and by Arkansas Act 1244 of 1991, which established the Arkansas Technical and Community College System, converting Ozarka to a technical college. State Board action, as described in GIR 2, authorized the granting of various degrees. Copies of these Acts are available in the Resource Room.

On February 26, 1999, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Institutions of Higher Education extended accreditation for Ozarka to include the Stone County Education Center at Mountain View, Arkansas. On July 23, 1999,

the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approved the establishment of the Stone County Education Center as an administrative unit of Ozarka College, effective August 1999.

4. *It has legal documents to confirm its status: not-for-profit, for-profit, or public.*

Act 1244 confirms Ozarka's status as a state-supported, public institution of higher education.

## **Governance**

5. *It has a governing board that possesses and exercises necessary legal power to establish and review basic policies that govern the institution.*

Ozarka's Board of Trustees, established under the provisions of Act 1244, meets quarterly to establish and review policies and consider issues affecting the College. Local governing policies are codified in the Board Policies and Procedures Manual, available in the Resource Room.

6. *Its governing board includes public members and is sufficiently autonomous from the administration and ownership to assure the integrity of the institution.*

Board members are all knowledgeable qualified electors of Ozarka's service area. As set forth in Act 1244, they are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Arkansas Senate. None receive salaries, wages, or fees from the College.

7. *It has an executive officer designated by the governing board to provide administrative leadership for the institution.*

In March 1992, the Board appointed Mr. Douglas W. Rush, then the Director of the College, chief executive officer. Subsequently, in September 1993, Mr. Rush was named president. Board minutes are in the Resource Room.

8. *Its governing board authorizes the institution's affiliation with the Commission.*

The Ozarka Board of Trustees, at its March 1992 meeting, adopted a resolution authorizing the institution to affiliate with the Commission.

## Faculty

9. *It employs a faculty that has earned from accredited institutions the degrees appropriate to the level of instruction offered by the institution.*

All Ozarka faculty members have appropriate academic credentials for their level of instruction as defined by Arkansas Department of Higher Education policies. All instructors teaching transfer-oriented courses hold at least the master's degree. All degrees are from accredited institutions. Data in the current catalog provide greater detail.

10. *A sufficient number of the faculty are full-time employees of the institution.*

The number of adjunct instructors varies from semester to semester, but the on-campus (Melbourne and Mountain View) ratio of full-time to part-time faculty members generally runs 1:1. In addition, approximately twenty part-time instructors offer general education courses at high schools throughout the service area. All programs offered by Ozarka are staffed with at least one full-time instructor.

11. *Its faculty has a significant role in developing and evaluating all of the institution's educational programs.*

Through clearly defined structures, faculty and administration share in exercising oversight of all educational offerings.

To illustrate, specific departments may develop new programs/degrees. The business department, for example, recently expanded its program by adding new degrees/certificates. After a department develops a new program, the proposal is sent to the Curriculum Committee where it must be approved. Once the proposal gains approval by the Curriculum Committee, it goes to the Faculty Council for approval before moving to the Administrative Council. New programs, degrees, and certificates are then presented to the Ozarka Board before being forwarded to AHECB for notification or, in some cases, final approval.

The faculty also assumes responsibility for assessment of educational programs, both through the program review process and through measuring student learning outcomes.

### **Educational Program**

12. *It confers degrees.*

In May 1994, Ozarka awarded its first AAS in Business Information Technology. Since then, the number of degrees awarded annually has risen, with 99 associate degrees awarded in May 2000. These included 68 AA degrees and 31 AAS degrees.

13. *It has degree programs in operation, with students enrolled in them.*

Six hundred and eighty students enrolled in degree programs in the fall of 1999.

14. *Its degree programs are compatible with the institution's mission and are based on recognized fields of study at the higher education level.*

Ozarka's degree programs are compatible with its mission: "To provide students and other citizens with quality comprehensive higher education, technical education, adult education, continuing education, workplace education and cultural opportunities," specifically by offering "a two year college transfer program leading to an AA degree" and "the AAS degree" and "certificate programs in vocational and technical education."

15. *Its degrees are appropriately named, following practices common to institutions of higher education in terms of both length and content of the program.*

The Associate of Applied Science is the standard degree for two-year programs designed for students seeking occupational or technical skills. This degree requires 60 to 72 credit hours and takes two years to complete. All Ozarka AAS degree programs are based on recognized occupational fields and are similar to programs offered by other community and technical colleges.

The Associate of Arts degree is the standard degree for students who wish to continue

working toward a baccalaureate degree at a four-year institution. This degree requires 62 credit hours and also takes two years to complete.

16. *Its undergraduate degree programs include a coherent general education program consistent with the institution's mission and designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry.*

In the spring of 1999, the faculty reviewed, discussed, and revised the College's general educational philosophy statement. The statement, as listed in the 1999-2000 catalog, included four goals. The new one, which can be found in the 2000-2001 catalog, was expanded to encompass seven goals. The Ozarka faculty decided, in expanding upon the previous general education philosophy, it was imperative that students be exposed to technology and to multicultural viewpoints in the classroom, helping to prepare them for the more connected world of today, which is a result of and accessed by current technology. Faculty members are experimenting with including various aspects of goals six and seven from this statement into courses and syllabi where applicable.

Ozarka's commitment to general education is evidenced by the general education courses required in its technical certificates, AAS degrees, and AA degree. These requirements can be found in the current catalog.

17. *It has admission policies and practices that are consistent with the institution's mission and appropriate to its educational programs.*

In keeping with its mission to serve residents of north central Arkansas, Ozarka College maintains an open-door admissions policy. Applicants are required to have a high school diploma or GED, and a student's ACT or ASSET placement scores then determine academic placement. Arkansas' state legislature has set minimum placement standards for English, reading and mathematics. Ozarka adheres to such standards, advises students who are not adequately prepared for college-level work, and offers courses to develop academic

skills necessary to succeed in higher education. Admission policies are published in the Ozarka catalog and on application and schedule materials.

Some degree programs at Ozarka (physical therapist assistant, practical nursing, and health information management) require selection in addition to general admission to the College. The criminal justice program is open only to certified law enforcement and corrections officers.

18. *It provides its students access to those learning resources and support services requisite for its degree programs.*

Shops, computer centers, laboratories, and equipment essential to all technical and academic programs at Ozarka are adequate to provide the experiences required to prepare students for careers in their chosen fields. Ozarka's library has expanded to provide traditional print resources as well as electronic, CD-ROM, and inter-library loan access to support degree programs. A small reference library and intralibrary loan provide learning resources to students at the Stone County Center, supplementing materials available through an agreement with the local public library.

In addition, student support services are comprehensive, including career, academic, personal, and financial counseling. Tutoring and computer assistance is available to students who are on the main campus or at the Stone County Center. All students are assigned advisors to assist with academic planning and completion of degree requirements.

## **Finances**

19. *It has an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency at least every two years.*

The Division of Legislative Audit of the Arkansas Legislative Joint Auditing Committee audits all financial operations of Ozarka College annually.

20. *Its financial documents demonstrate the appropriate allocation and use of resources to support its educational programs.*

In 1998-1999, 57 percent of restricted and unrestricted funds were expended on direct instructional costs, including adult education and for-credit instruction. The credit program alone accounted for 44 percent of total general revenues.

Budgeting begins at the program level and builds up to the proposed institutional budget. Faculty and other campus units prepare budgets for their departments each year, including operating expenses, extra help, travel, professional development, and equipment. Priority is given to instructional budgets, with allocation of funds based on projected enrollment. The Director of Computer Services oversees all computer hardware and software purchases.

A special fund of \$6,500, administered by the Faculty Council's Professional Development Committee, supplements the amount authorized for professional development in individual departmental budgets. Technical programs also have access to funds through Carl Perkins for instructional support, professional development, and equipment. Creation of an internal budget and cost information studies have improved allocation and use of financial resources.

21. *Its financial practices, records, and reports demonstrate fiscal viability.*

As a state agency, Ozarka has a legislative budget plus additional revenue through Workforce 2000, a corporate tax-funded supplement to assist the colleges created under Act 1244 of 1991. The internal budget and related cost information studies assure that Ozarka's financial resources are used effectively. Implementation of a computerized accounting system and Web-based access to reports has improved all employees' ability to keep up with their budgets, assuring better control over College funds and financial reporting consistent

with NACUBO standards. Other significant revenues available to Ozarka include student tuition and fees, a special local one-cent sales tax for capital projects, donations made to the Ozarka College Foundation, and federal funding for a Title IV Student Support Services program.

**Public Information**

22. *Its catalog or other official documents include its mission statement along with accurate descriptions of its educational programs and degree requirements; its learning resources; its admissions policies and practices; its academic and non-academic policies and procedures directly affecting students; its charges and refund policies; and the academic credentials of its faculty and administrators.*

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The current Catalog, which is given to all students and employees, includes accurate information. Any member of the public who requests a Catalog is also given one. The Employee Handbook includes the mission statement and information related to some academic and non-academic policies and procedures. The Board Policies and Procedures Manual contains the mission statement and all College policies. All three publications are available to the public in the main administrative office and in the library.

23. *It accurately discloses its standing with accrediting bodies with which it is affiliated.*

Ozarka College accurately discloses its institutional and program accreditations and affiliations in the Catalog.

*23. It makes available upon request information that accurately describes its financial condition.*

Accurate and updated information describing the College's financial condition and resources is available to any interested person from the office of the Vice President for Finance. Financial reports are given at quarterly meetings of the College's Board of Trustees which the public may attend, and overall appropriations of the College can be found on the Arkansas Department of Higher Education's Web page. Audit reports, Legislative books A & B, and GAPP reports (which are sent to the Governor's office) are documents concerning the College's financial condition and are made available through the office of the Vice President for Finance. All information is open to the public, with notice given under the terms of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

***CRITERION I: The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.***

## **The Mission Statement and Objectives**

The role and mission of Ozarka College was set by the Arkansas legislature when it passed Act 1244 of 1991. The purpose of this act was to establish, organize, and administer

A system of educational institutions throughout the state offering courses of instruction in technical, vocational and adult education programs, industry training and two-year college transfer programs . . . easily accessible by all segments of the population. (Section 2)

The act defined a technical college as

An institution of higher education . . . dedicated primarily to the education needs of the service area offering a comprehensive program including, but without limitation, vocational, trade and technical specialty courses and programs, courses in general adult education and courses comparable in content and quality to freshman and sophomore courses which may carry transfer credit to a four-year institution in a chosen course of study. (Section 3)

Ozarka, then, is a public two-year college offering a broad range of educational programs to meet community needs within its legally-defined service area of Fulton, Izard, Sharp, and Stone Counties. Besides offering vocational and technical programs, including specialized courses to meet business and industry training needs, it provides adult education and college transfer courses.

In 1999 it changed its name from Ozarka Technical College, dropping the word “Technical,” to indicate more accurately the scope of programs it offers and overcome some public confusion about the standing of its academic transfer (Associate of Arts) program. It should, however, be noted that the name change in no way reflects a lowered emphasis on vocational or technical programming.

In keeping with the legal definitions found within Act 1244, Ozarka developed its mission statement and institutional objectives, most recently revised in 1999.

*The mission of Ozarka College, a public two-year institution located in north central Arkansas, is to provide its students and other citizens with quality comprehensive higher education, technical education, adult education, continuing education, workplace education, and cultural opportunities. Ozarka's primary objective is to encourage development of academic, technical, economic, social, cultural, and global awareness skills that lead to a positive, productive, and fulfilling life in an ever-changing world*

In the spring of 1999, the faculty reviewed the existing mission statement as part of the initiation of the self-study process. They drafted a new version which expanded on the previous statement and made more specific the kinds of learning experiences available at the College. The Administrative Council and the Board of Trustees subsequently reviewed their draft. Further minor revisions were made, with the present document being accepted by all parties in the fall of 1999. The mission statement and objectives are found in the Board Policies and Procedures Manual, Catalog, Employee Handbook, annual Planning Yearbooks, and Institutional Assessment Plan, and form the basis for all planning and assessment done at the College.

Survey results suggest that students and employees believe the College meets its mission. The 1999 Alumni Survey showed 96 percent agreeing with the statement, "Attending Ozarka improved my quality of life," up from 92 percent the year before. Agreement was also at 96 percent for "Ozarka has helped me have a more productive life," up from 94 percent. For each of the five years from 1995 through 1999, College employee satisfaction with "How well the College is meeting its mission" was rated at 97 percent or higher.

*The College is committed to the following general objectives:*

- 1. Through the Associate of Arts program, Ozarka students will gain the general*

*education information, skills, and attitudes which support successful transfer to a four-year college or university.*

Twenty-nine (64 percent) of 1998 Associate of Arts graduates successfully transferred to senior institutions during 1999-2000. Because the state Attorney General's office has indicated that under FERPA, Ozarka cannot request data on its transferred students, no formal data are available on student success after transfer.

Associate of Arts graduates returning Alumni Surveys in 1999, however, were satisfied with what they had learned. Figures showing how many agreed or strongly agreed with various survey statements indicate that these alumni believe the College achieved this objective:

<i>Survey Item:</i>	<i>Strongly Agree/Agree</i>
I learned how to think and solve problems.	100%
I am interested in getting further education.	96%
I continue to use a library for information/pleasure.	77%
I know how to use a library to find what I need.	96%
I was well-prepared to continue my studies elsewhere.	89%
I learned to write effectively.	92%
I learned to understand written information.	96%
I learned to speak to others effectively.	88%
I learned to learn and work independently.	96%
I learned to work cooperatively in a group.	96%
I learned to plan and carry out projects.	96%
I learned to appreciate people who are different from me.	96%
I learned math concepts that are useful in what I do.	81%

A series of questions specifically focused on preparation for upper division work in different academic areas showed that two-thirds or more of respondents felt adequately prepared overall (responses to individual items ranged from around 50 percent to over 80 percent feeling prepared). About a quarter felt at least somewhat prepared overall, and only a few felt unprepared in a handful of areas, such as writing answers to essay examinations (8

percent), using mathematical data in everyday life (8 percent), and understanding the development of Europe and North and South America (8 percent).

All students in the transfer program are required by state law to take a “rising junior” examination after completing at least 45 hours but before completing 60. The instruments used are the Writing, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning components of ACT’s Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) test. Ozarka’s results over the past five years compare very favorably with both state and national data. Better than two-thirds of all those taking CAAP have scored at or above the national average on the writing, reading, and science portions, with just over half scoring at that level on mathematics. Ozarka students, then, tend to perform at an average level in mathematics (a very strong result, given that the majority of entering freshmen here require remediation in mathematics) and well above average in the other areas.

2. *Through the Associate of Applied Science programs, Ozarka students will gain the broad range of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for successful entry into the workforce.*
3. *Through the Technical Certificate and Certificate of Proficiency programs, Ozarka students will gain the specialized knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for entry level positions in their fields.*

Results on the Alumni Survey indicate that graduates of technical programs, both certificate and associate-degree level, are satisfied with their education as well. According to the most recent survey (fall 1999), 79 percent of technical graduates are working and another 17 percent are working and continuing their education. Besides strong ratings on the general education items, very similar to results from the transfer alumni, these graduates gave high ratings to areas related to gaining the skills needed for their jobs.

<i>Survey Item:</i>	<i>Strongly Agree/Agree</i>
I am employed in the field I studied	84%
I learned what I needed for what I am currently doing.	96%
I learned how to think and solve problems.	92%
I can adapt what I learned to fit my current needs.	91%
I attend training/classes to stay up to date on my job.	60%
I learned to write effectively	88%
I learned to understand written information.	96%
I learned to speak to others effectively.	96%
I learned to learn and work independently.	96%
I learned to work cooperatively in a group.	100%
I learned to plan and carry out projects.	96%
I learned to appreciate people who are different from me.	88%
I learned math concepts that are useful in what I do.	84%

Licensure results are another way of assessing whether the College is achieving its objectives in technical education. At the AAS level, 86 percent of the first class of fourteen Physical Therapist Assistants has achieved licensure. First-time testing candidates had a 71.4 percent pass rate, compared to a state first-time rate of 66.7 percent and a national rate of 71.6 percent. Retake candidates achieved a 66.7 percent pass rate, compared to only 40 percent at the state level and 43.7 percent nationally.

At the Technical Certificate level, 87 percent of Practical Nursing 1999-2000 graduates achieved licensure on their first try, which is in line with a statewide rate of 88 percent and a national rate of 86 percent for that year.

4. *Through the Adult Education program, adult learners throughout the service area will be able to improve their academic and practical skills and complete a GED.*

Persons who have not completed high school may enroll in Adult Basic Education or GED classes, either on campus or at various satellite locations throughout the College's service area. Tutorial assistance is available in the Learning Laboratory on campus.

<i>Year</i>	<i># Tested</i>	<i># Passing</i>	<i>Success Rate</i>
1995-1996	169	138	82%
1996-1997	221	176	80%
1997-1998	188	152	81%
1998-1999	204	165	81%
1999-2000	157	121	77%

5. *Through the Continuing Education program, citizens of Ozarka’s service area will gain the knowledge and skills they desire for personal improvement or community service.*

Based on public demand, non-credit courses are offered under the leadership of the Director of Continuing Education & Business Outreach. The goal of the Continuing Education program is to offer various courses which will be of interest to persons from a range of age groups. The continuing education students should find the courses satisfactory for their personal growth and/or cultural enrichment. Courses offered have included basic computer and software applications, oil painting, culinary and herbal courses, aerobics, stock market fundamentals, and College for Kids (summer enrichment for youth).

6. *Through the Business and Industry Outreach program, adult learners at local businesses and industries will be able to upgrade job skills by accessing customized training activities which promote workforce readiness and on-the-job success.*

The Director of Continuing Education and Business Outreach, along with other staff persons, actively participates in local Chamber of Commerce and economic development initiatives as well as the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges Workforce Consortium. The Consortium includes all state two-year institutions working together to share training expertise and resources to deliver the best possible training to the workforce in Arkansas. For a series of courses customized for an area uniform factory, the Director completed all

required training to lead AchieveGlobal Training Modules and continues to teach classes in supervisory management and teamwork to employees there.

In addition, Ozarka College works cooperatively with the area Customized Training Coordinator, employed by the Arkansas Department of Economic Development, to schedule workplace education and training for businesses and industry. Training can be developed specifically for an industry's needs in areas such as computer literacy, software applications, small business administration, team building skills, etc.

7. *A low teacher-to-student ratio will promote comprehensive learning and understanding.*

The average class size at Ozarka is sixteen. The FTE student to FTE faculty ratio is presently 19:1. While enrollment in some individual courses is higher, the College has set a standard of maintaining this ratio at no more than 25:1.

8. *Learners will benefit from ease of access to educational facilities by provision of off-campus sites.*

Ozarka offers most of its courses each semester on its campus in Melbourne. More than half of the courses necessary for the Associate of Arts and the Associate of Applied Science in Business Technology are also offered at its Mountain View campus. In addition, general education courses are scheduled in a number of area high schools, with some of these offered during the day and open only to dually-enrolled high school students who have been recommended by their counselor and principal as ready to earn concurrent credit for collegiate-level work. Other courses are offered in the evening and are open to any interested

student. The College is also exploring the feasibility of opening an off-campus center in Sharp County, similar to the one established in Mountain View.

9. *Learners will benefit from being able to choose from a variety of technology-supported, distance-education learning opportunities: web-based and telecourse instruction in academic areas, compressed two-way video delivery, and expanded technological access to library and research materials.*

Ozarka normally offers two to four telecourses each semester in cooperation with the Arkansas Educational Television Network, usually general education courses in the social sciences. Two faculty members have begun offering a very limited number of courses (three) over the Internet, and the College has purchased videoconferencing hardware to allow synchronous course delivery between Melbourne and Mountain View beginning fall 2000. The library already provides students with electronic access to numerous journals, databases, and the Internet and plans to continue expanding these services.

10. *Expanded financial and scholarship assistance, as well as academic, vocational, and personal guidance and counseling, will help students meet their educational goals.*

Both financial assistance and guidance/counseling have expanded greatly over the past five years. Besides offering Pell Grants and Guaranteed Student Loans, the College was declared eligible in 1999 for Title III, allowing Ozarka students access to Federal Work-Study and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants for the first time beginning in the fall of 2000. The College itself provides financial assistance to selected students in the form of tuition waivers, Vocational Student Organization scholarships, scholarships awarded as prizes in College-sponsored academic competitions for area high school students, academic ability scholarships, and institutional work-study.

In addition, a growing number of local civic and charitable groups have established scholarships, and the Ozarka College Foundation's assets have expanded enough to permit the College to establish a very liberal scholarship, loan, and local work-study program to meet the financial requirements of students who may not qualify for federal assistance but have genuine demonstrated financial need. Financial aid awards are discussed on pages 21-30 of the Catalog.

In 1997, the College was successful in gaining funding for a Student Support Services (TRIO) program under Title IV. This grant has allowed Ozarka to add three staff members who provide personal, academic, and career counseling to participating students. This program also encourages retention of students through graduation and transfer of Associate of Arts students to senior institutions. Services are provided both at Melbourne and at Mountain View to low-income, first-generation, and/or students with disabilities, with more than 200 participating each semester.

*11. The College will assist educational, civic, social, and cultural endeavors in the service area by offering its facilities and professional staff in support.*

Numerous community, professional, and educational entities, such as the Lions Club, Chamber of Commerce, area schools, and the Northcentral Arkansas Educational Service Center, use Ozarka's facilities regularly. Especially popular are the 150-seat lecture hall and 802-seat auditorium located in the John E. Miller Education Complex, the newest academic building on campus. Private individuals also use the College Student Center for reunions, showers, wedding receptions, and similar events.

College personnel, led by the President, are currently facilitating an ambitious community economic development program as part of the Governor's Initiative for Statewide

Technology Advancement. The Steering Committee, comprising leaders from Stone and Izard Counties, meets monthly in College facilities to identify development issues, evaluate the area's technology infrastructure, design applications to address issues, select appropriate technology, seek funding, and guide and monitor development activities. Ozarka is committed to continuing to provide leadership in this significant effort.

12. *The College is committed to assessment and evaluation to ensure that programs and services grow and change with the needs of the service area.*

Ozarka has had a formal institutional assessment program since 1994. During the spring and fall of 1999, the Institutional Assessment Plan was revised and updated for the second time, concentrating on the assessment of student academic achievement at the program level. Results from assessment are communicated to students, faculty, staff, and administration, and numerous changes have occurred in response to information gained.

### **Appropriateness**

The College's mission statement and objectives are appropriate to a comprehensive, two-year institution of higher education and are consistent with those of similar institutions in Arkansas and across the country. The Arkansas Legislature chose to create a system of two-year colleges to provide accessible, affordable education to prepare students for both careers and further education. Ozarka College, in its mission statement and objectives, conforms to this expectation. All NCA teams visiting Ozarka in the past have found that the College meets Criterion I.

### **Strength**

1. Ozarka College regularly reviews its mission and revises it when necessary to reflect its role as an institution of higher education serving north central Arkansas.

## **Recommendation**

1. The College should continue to review its mission statement and objectives thoroughly at least every five years to assure that they continue to reflect current institutional and community priorities.



***CRITERION II: The institution has effectively organized the human . . . resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.***

## **The College's Constituency**

Ozarka College will never be large, but it serves an important purpose in providing collegiate education to an isolated rural population with few other options for entering an institution of higher education. The service area includes Fulton, Izard (where the main campus is located), Sharp, and Stone (site of the Mountain View campus) Counties in the Ozarks of north central Arkansas. The terrain, winter weather hazards, and highway conditions make commuting difficult, even when other two-year institutions are located 31 and 51 miles away (University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville and Arkansas State University-Mountain Home respectively).

Demographic and statistical data confirm the continuing rural nature of Ozarka's service area. Arkansas, with an average 1990 population density of 45.1 persons per square mile, is considered rural. Density in the counties served by Ozarka ranges from 16.1 to 23.3, and population growth has been slow. No towns in the area have populations above 3,000. As is normally true in rural areas, the population is older than the state average. In 1990, for instance, the median age of residents of the four counties varied from 39.2 to 44.8, while the state average was only 33.8. With retirement communities located in the northern part of Izard and Sharp Counties, almost a quarter of their population was 65 or older.

The 1990 population of the service area was almost entirely white, as is the case throughout all parts of the upland South. The following table illustrates the racial and ethnic makeup of the state and service area.

Population of:	White	Afr Amer	Hispanic	Other
<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>82.7%</b>	<b>15.9%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>
Fulton County	99.3%	0.1%	0.3%	0.6%
Izard County	99.1%	0.1%	0.6%	0.8%
Sharp County	98.6%	0.5%	0.4%	1.0%
Stone County	99.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.8%

The total minority population (African American, Hispanic, and other) was only 653 out of 45,285 (1.4 percent).

While poultry, cattle, and swine are produced in small to moderate quantities, field crops such as rice, soybeans, corn, and wheat are rare because of the rocky, hilly terrain. Farms tend to be smaller in acreage than the Arkansas average and have been decreasing in size much more rapidly than in the rest of the state. The average value of agricultural sales per farm is, not surprisingly, well below the Arkansas average.

Although employment rates and manufacturing payrolls have grown, dollars earned remain well below state payroll averages. Service establishments, on the other hand, have done well, reflecting the growth of retirement communities and tourism. Service area per capita income in 1997 ranged from a low of \$13,731 in Fulton County to a high of \$15,717 in Stone County, in comparison to a state average of \$19,595 and a national average of \$25,288. Three of Ozarka's four counties ranked in the bottom 20 percent of Arkansas' 75 counties, with only four other counties ranking lower than Fulton.

Educational attainment of adults has lagged as well, as shown in 1990 census data. Area residents over the age of 24 were even less educated than state residents as a whole, and Arkansas' statistics were unimpressive. While three-fourths of all adult Americans had high school diplomas, only two-thirds of Arkansans had completed high school at that time. Twenty percent of Americans are college graduates, but presently Arkansas can claim this

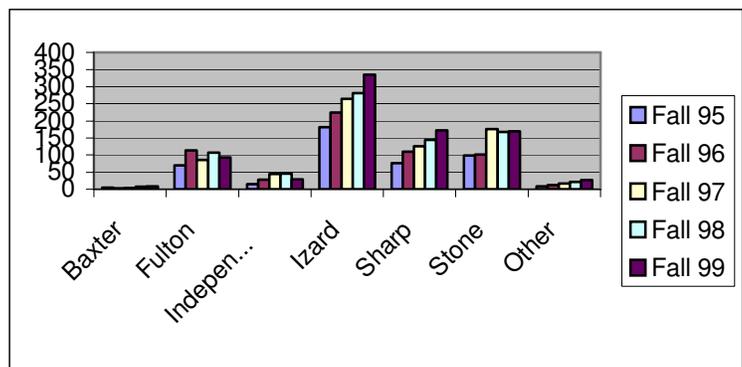
level for only 13 percent of its residents, the lowest rate in the nation. While only 10 percent of adult Americans have less than a ninth grade education, 15 percent of Arkansans fall into this category. Figures for the service area in 1990 were even bleaker:

	Fulton	Izard	Sharp	Stone	Arkansas
% completing less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	24.2	19.7	16.9	23.4	<b>15.2</b>
% completing high school	54.9	61.1	64.5	59.6	<b>66.3</b>
% completing 4-year college degree	5.4	9.4	8.7	9.4	<b>13.3</b>

Not surprisingly, a high percentage of persons living in Ozarka’s service area fall below standard poverty level. The Arkansas Employment Security Division, using data from the 1990 federal census, found that 32 percent of the Fulton County population, 27 percent of Izard County, 26 percent of Sharp County, and 33 percent of Stone County were below standard poverty level or below 70 percent of the Lower Standard Income Level. The rate for the ESD Service Delivery Area, which includes Ozarka’s designated service area, was 26 percent. For the state as a whole, 23 percent were similarly disadvantaged. Obviously, the area has a great need for locally-based, low-cost education and for the associated improvement in income and living conditions.

### Students

Izard County is the largest source of students at Ozarka, with 331 in the fall of 1999. A similar number were divided between Sharp and Stone Counties, and 92 originated in Fulton County. The remainder came from neighboring Baxter and Independence Counties, each of

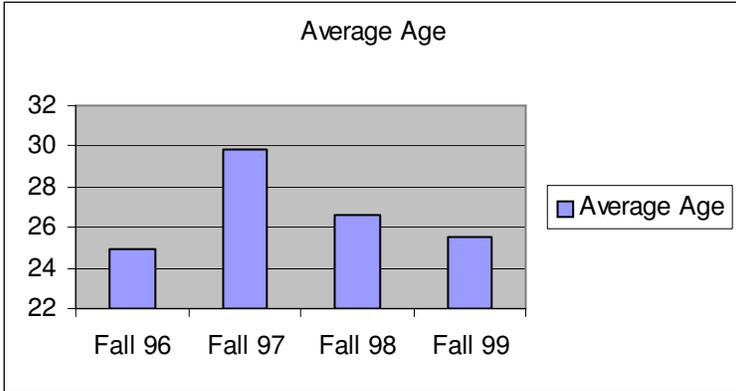


which also has a two-year college, a bordering Missouri county, and a scattering of other counties across the state. The percent of enrollment by county has remained relatively stable in the last five years. The greatest change occurred in the fall of 1997 in Stone County, a result of opening an off-campus center in Mountain View to overcome the physical barriers presented by the White River valley separating Stone and Izard Counties.

Before Ozarka became a college, the area had an extremely low college-going rate, with only 20 percent of Izard County's 1991 high school graduates becoming full-time college students that fall, putting the county seventy-fourth out of Arkansas' seventy-five counties. The other service area counties sent from 31 percent to 38 percent of their seniors to college, compared to the overall state rate of 52 percent.

Ozarka has made a difference, especially in its home county. In 1998 the Izard County college-going rate was 71 percent, with nearly two-thirds of those students at Ozarka. The other counties had rates from Sharp County's 40 percent to Fulton County's 54 percent. The state average that year was 56 percent. Out of all service area students enrolled anywhere in Arkansas colleges and universities, over a quarter were enrolled at Ozarka College. The presence of an institution of higher education at Melbourne, with a center in Mountain View and courses offered in other locations in the four-county area, has clearly stimulated greater awareness of and interest in the benefits of college attendance.

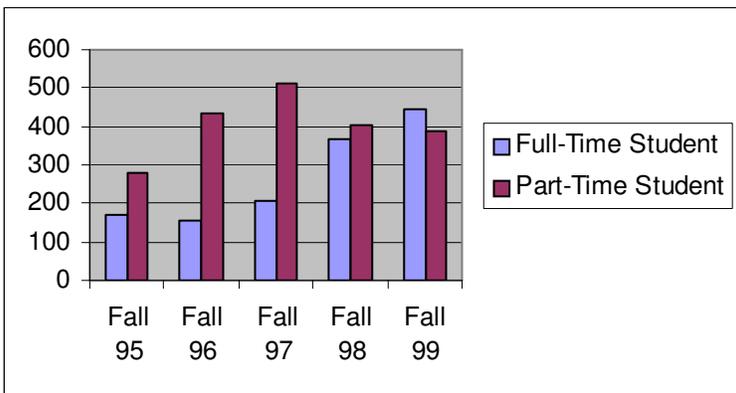
Besides the "typical" recent high school graduate, Ozarka also serves non-traditional students. The 1990 service area population of 45,285 included only 5,644 in the 5-17 years age group (12 percent compared to the state's 19 percent). Among the population were 4,337 persons over the age of 24 with some college but no degree and 12,622 who never completed high school. High school graduates with no college experience numbered 11,487.



Population growth during the last decade has tended to come more from in-migration than from births. Obviously, Ozarka will need to continue to serve and recruit students from this

undereducated adult population. Still, the increase in the college-going rate has led to an overall decrease in the average age of the student body since 1997.

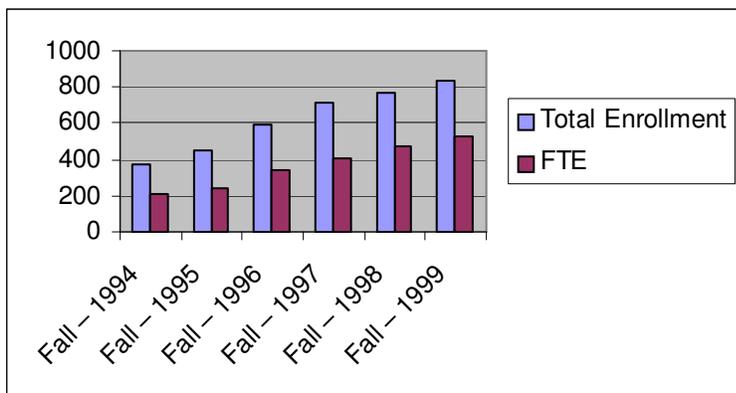
When Ozarka was a vocational technical school and in its first three years as a college, full-time students outnumbered part-time. This mix resulted largely from the predominance of technical programs which almost exclusively enrolled full-time students. As the number of transfer (Associate of Arts) students increased, however, the number of part-time students also grew. A fairly strong local economy also contributed to this change, with many students working part-time or full-time and taking a reduced class load. A third source of increasing numbers of part-time students has been the development of off-campus locations, especially courses offered in area high schools for concurrent high school and



college credit. Beginning with two courses at Mountain View High School in the fall of 1994, the concurrent program in the fall of 2000 comprises fifteen courses at six high schools. In addition,

seven courses are available in the evenings at four schools and are open to both high school students and regularly-enrolled students.

Since fall 1997, however, part-time enrollment has decreased as full-time enrollment has jumped up. The ratio of full-time to part-time students was one to three in the fall of 1996, growing to one to one by fall 1998. By the fall of 1999, the ratio was slightly more than one to one. The increase in full-time enrollment appears to stem largely from the increasing enrollment of traditional-age students. As a result of this changing pattern, both

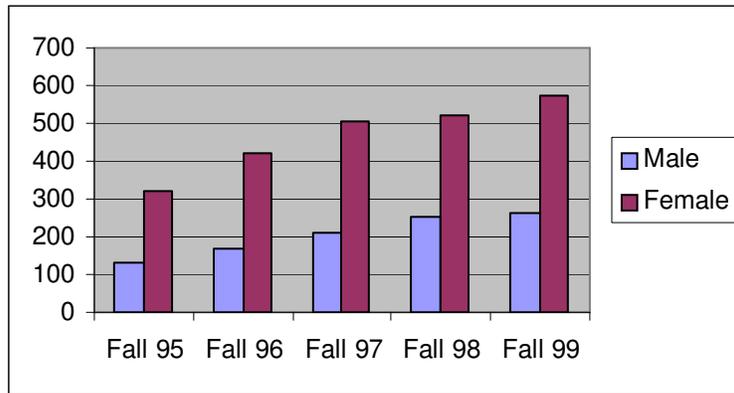


total enrollment and FTE enrollment (total credit hours divided by 15) have steadily increased in each of the last six years.

Surveys of entering students over the past five years show that about 30 percent plan to complete the Associate of Arts, 20 percent a business technology degree, and 10 percent a technical certificate in practical nursing. Approximately 40 percent are interested in programs awarding an associate degree, about 15 percent want to earn a certificate, and the remainder are undecided, with many planning to enroll for one or more semesters at Ozarka and then transfer to a senior institution before completing a degree.

Over half completing the survey have been 20 or younger. The smallest age group has been those 35 to 40, comprising only about 5 percent of the total. Those 21 to 25 or 26 to 34 each constitute about 13 percent, with those 41 or older being another 10 percent. Less than a quarter expect that they will not be working, while nearly a third expect to work half-time or more.

Ozarka has traditionally been the first choice of more than 80 percent, with location (rated “very important” by about three-quarters) and cost (“very important” to around 60 percent) the major influences on the decision to enroll. Other influences rated highly by half or more of respondents have been a particular program of study, availability of financial aid, small classes, and being able to work while going to school.

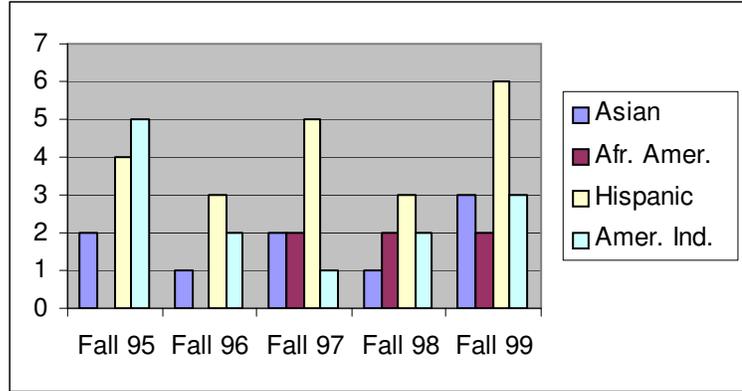


The distribution of students by gender shows a preponderance of females. While this is normal for two-year colleges, at Ozarka female enrollment exceeds the ratio for

the state as a whole (about 62 percent) and for the nation (about 57 percent). For the past six years, female enrollment has remained stable at approximately 70 percent, or seven females for every three males. The college transfer program, nursing, and business technology all tend to attract more females than males, and these are the three largest programs in terms of enrollment. The automotive service technology and criminal justice leadership programs are the only ones at the College which mainly enroll males, and they have relatively small enrollments (fewer than twenty students each). The College expects to see additional male enrollment when a proposed new major in Information Science Technology is implemented in January 2001.

Of 834 students enrolled in the fall of 1999, three were Asian, two were African-American, six were Hispanic, and three were Native American. The total minority student population of fourteen was 1.7 percent of the total student body, comparable to the

ethnic/minority makeup of the service area. This percentage has remained relatively stable at less than 2 percent throughout the history of the College, and numbers are expected to remain small because



Ozarka mainly recruits within its service area, which has a very low ethnic/minority population. The physical therapist assistant and health information management programs, unique in this part of the state, have, along with nursing, helped attract the African-Americans who enrolled during the past three years.

Student enrollment at Ozarka has risen for a variety of reasons, including a gradual change in the educational expectations of area citizens with the establishment of a local college, increased and improved marketing efforts, increased faculty involvement in recruitment and retention efforts, Ozarka's reputation in the area for supporting student success, and the College's growing outreach to its service area through off-campus programs, distance learning options, and establishment of the Stone County Education Center.

Ozarka's media coverage has become more consistent, using such forms of advertising as radio spots, billboards, and direct mail to promote programs and name recognition. Up-graded program brochures, a bookmark advertising the Ozarka web site, and an over-all College brochure have also been developed for use at college fairs and special program presentations highlighting particular options such as culinary arts and physical therapist assistant. The College also hosts a regional college fair program which reaches students from approximately twenty high schools within and beyond the service area. As a

full member of the Arkansas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, Ozarka now has access to high school counselors across the state for dissemination of recruiting materials and information.

The Ozarka faculty and staff have promoted enrollment and retention by assisting such community organizations and activities as North Arkansas Youth Council, Students Against Drugs, Kids College, county and district fairs, and Melbourne's annual Pioneer Day celebration. They participate in Career Day (the regional college fair) and SpringFest (a recruiting activity targeting GED graduates) on campus, make presentations at various high schools and vocational centers, and speak at area civic and governmental meetings.

Students themselves also assist. Phi Beta Lambda members host competitions for area high school business students, for example, bringing hundreds of potential enrollees on campus each year. A new development is the organization of a Drama Club. With the hiring of a full-time speech and theater instructor, Ozarka now produces plays featuring students and community members who perform for area public school students, Ozarka students, and the general public. The Drama Club also takes theater programs into local schools. This extracurricular activity has proven very popular with students, both those who perform and produce the plays and those in the audience.

All students have the opportunity to succeed. Grants, scholarships, work-study, and other financial assistance have increased. The Ozarka Foundation now supports a program to assist needy students who do not qualify for federal financial aid or who have especially high program costs which normal aid does not cover. Beginning in the fall of 2000, the College will be able to offer federal work-study in addition to institutional work-study. Also, new courses and programs have been developed and offered, allowing students more options in

areas of interest. Additional full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and staff have been employed to help maintain the personal service to students which is a vital part of their success.

Ozarka College has developed and opened the Stone County Education Center in Mountain View, a great asset for students in that area, allowing more students the opportunity to enroll by making many classes readily available and eliminating as much as two hours or more of driving time required by a round trip to the main campus. This fall, for the first time, several courses can be offered simultaneously at both Melbourne and Mountain View by making use of videoconferencing technology. Student Support Services (SSS) and other services are also available to students at the Stone County Center.

Students in Ozarka's service area may also take telecourses through AETN and Internet courses. Concurrent credit courses are offered in many area high schools which allow students an opportunity to make a smoother transition from high school to college.

Many students take advantage of the assistance in the College's Learning Laboratory. Computer assisted tutorials in areas such as math and English, computer research, assistance with writing a research paper, assistance with assignments in computer classes, and e-mail are all available there, with help available from a full-time instructor and part-time assistants. In January 1999, several tutorial modules of the PLATO system were installed and are now used to support and reinforce instruction in developmental mathematics, writing, and reading courses. An additional module on work/life skills is slated to be added soon.

Especially important to student success has been the development of the Student Support Services program. In 1997, Ozarka was successful in gaining a federal Title IV Student Support Services (TRIO) grant. Participating students are eligible for tutoring,

academic advising, transfer advising, campus visits to four-year colleges, and cultural-awareness trips. Since SSS began, Ozarka's fall-to-fall retention rate has soared.

Even before enrollment for college credit, some students develop an interest in continued education by participating in Ozarka's GED program. The Adult Education Program increases student understanding of the value of an education and provides opportunities for students to gain knowledge and develop skills. All instructors hold valid teaching certificates. Open-entry, open-exit classes for GED are offered at various locations in the four-county region at various times during the day and evening. Students successfully completing their GED are invited to participate in graduation exercises at Ozarka and encouraged to continue their education at Ozarka. Both local and state scholarships are available to those with outstanding GED scores, including one special scholarship which allows those working toward the GED at Ozarka to enroll in developmental math and English courses.

## **Faculty**

The faculty providing both career and academic education focus on teaching, advising, and carrying out limited administrative duties. The College seeks to employ instructors who are well qualified, professionally active in their disciplines, and committed to the College's mission. Ozarka employs twenty-two full-time (teaching at least twelve credit hours) instructional personnel, sixteen with at least a master's degree. Their academic preparation took place at a variety of institutions, which are listed in the catalog.

Faculty members are active in various professional organizations and attend workshops, seminars, and other meetings to keep current in their fields. All faculty attend the annual two-day meeting of the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, and each

year most attend one or more professional development activities related to their teaching field. The College also provides in-service training on such topics as using technology in the classroom, both on campus and in a retreat setting.

For the year 1999-2000, one faculty member held a doctorate degree, two held specialist degrees, twelve held masters' degrees, two held bachelor's degrees, and three held associate degrees. The average age of the instructors was forty-three, with a range from 29 years to 58 years. The average number of years of teaching experience was 7.8 years with a range from zero to 32 years. The Basic Institutional Data forms provide information on the present faculty.

The State Board of Higher Education developed hiring policies for technical colleges in 1991. These stipulate that instructors teaching in AAS programs must “hold an associate degree or 60 semester hours in an appropriate bachelor's program, national certification in the discipline and three years of directly related work experience. A bachelor's degree is strongly recommended.” Instructors in technical certificate programs are required to “have 18 semester hours of postsecondary education in the teaching field or national certification in the discipline, and four years of directly related work experience. An associate degree and two years of directly related work experience are strongly recommended.” Academic faculty, those teaching transfer or general education courses, must “hold a master's degree with 18 graduate semester hours in the discipline taught” (p. 8-4 from Agenda Item No. 8, Regular Quarterly Meeting, October 4, 1991).

Ozarka observes these requirements and has established its own employment policies, which may be found in the Board Policies and procedures Manual in section 2.10, 2.12, and 2.21. These cover authorizing and advertising of new positions, interview procedures,

verification of credentials, types of appointments, and compensation. The most recent NCA team report included a recommendation that the College develop a more pro-active affirmative action plan. At its September 1995 meeting, the Board of Trustees adopted a new plan, outlining how more diverse applicants for positions will be identified and how the curriculum can accommodate instruction related to diversity. Hiring follows these guidelines.

During the 1999-2000 academic year, Ozarka employed forty-one persons as adjunct faculty, with approximately thirty individuals teaching each semester. Some adjuncts taught both fall and spring, while others taught only one semester, based on particular scheduling needs. All met or exceeded state guidelines for academic preparation for the level at which they taught. Adjuncts are hired on an as-needed basis by course with appointments lasting one semester and pay based on the number of credit hours taught. Evaluation is based on class observation by the Vice President for Academic Affairs or a designee, self-evaluation, and student course evaluations.

The typical full-time faculty member signs a contract for a 9-month period. Although teaching assignments may vary, most faculty teach fifteen student credit hours per week. Actual contact hours vary because laboratory classes call for more time with students than do lecture classes. Office hours, which are used for such tasks as committee work, student advising, and class preparation also vary. If a scheduled class fails to attract sufficient enrollment, it may be cancelled and the faculty member reassigned to other duties.

Full-time faculty evaluation, approved by the Faculty Council and the Board, is a four-part process consisting of administrative evaluation, peer evaluation, student evaluation, and self-evaluation. This process allows broad input in evaluating the instructor's

performance relative to various levels of concern. When these four components are reviewed as a whole, the faculty member can identify strengths, weaknesses, and needs for improvement.

The Faculty Council Professional Development Committee instituted a Professional Development Plan (PDP) in 1994 to allow employees access to College-sponsored in-service workshops as well as off-campus workshops, seminars, conferences, or classes. This plan assures that all employees have the opportunity and College support to develop talents and skills. PDP activities result in a better educated, more competent faculty and staff who can accomplish the College's mission. The College reimburses tuition and professional meeting costs in accordance with BPPM 2.35.

Effective July 1, 2000, Ozarka instituted a system of division chairs. Each division includes both technical and academic areas to enhance communications and prevent any perception that some programs are more favored or more valuable to the College than others. Full-time faculty apply for these positions, and those selected are given one course a semester of release time and are employed for ten months rather than the normal nine. The division chairs meet regularly with the president and the chief academic officer to exchange information and assist with the budget development, professional development, planning, and assessment processes. Faculty already perceive the new structure as conducive to better communications between administration and faculty and between instructional programs.

At the end of the 1999-2000 academic year, the College experienced an unusually high rate of turnover, with five full-time instructors leaving. One nursing instructor retired, and two business instructors left for higher-paying positions in the private sector. Although two others (business and biology) resigned for reasons related to family health problems,

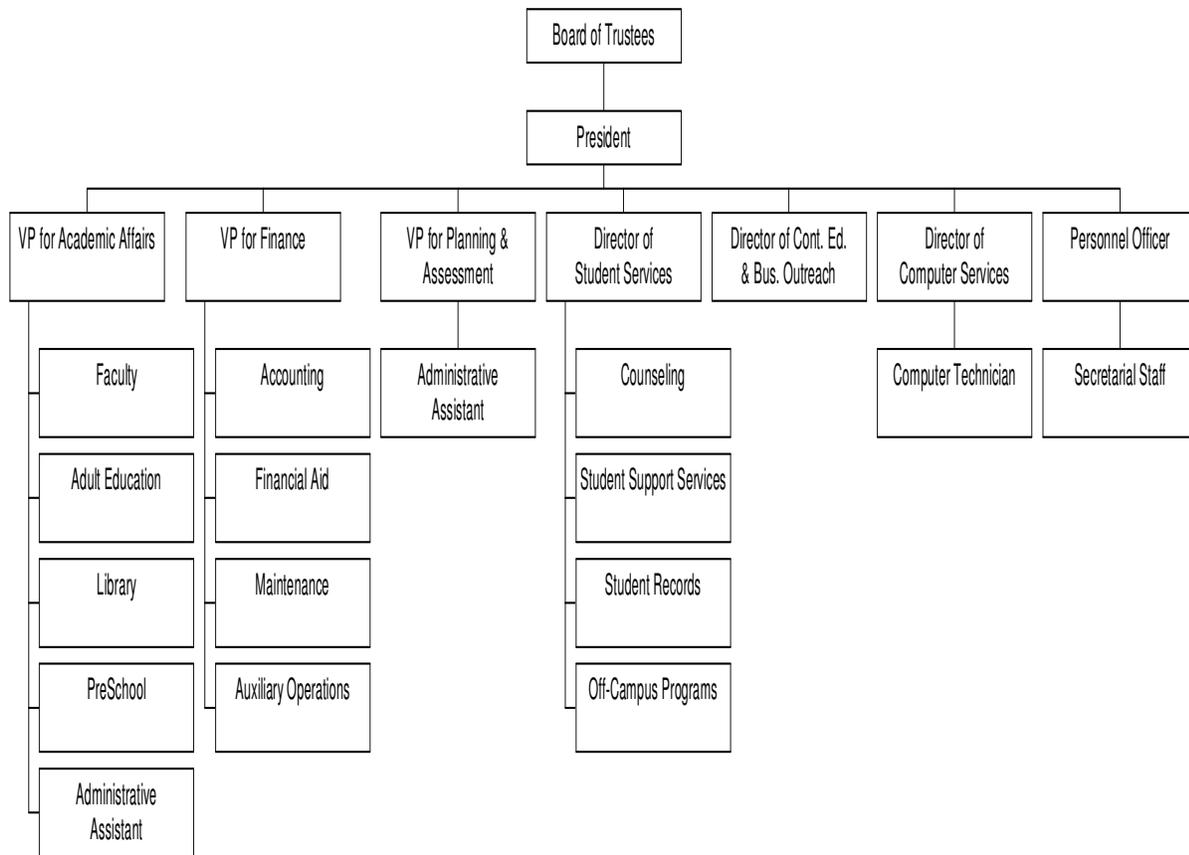
both continue to teach two days a week at less than full-time status. One currently teaches two courses (six hours) as an adjunct and has expressed a desire to return to full-time status at a later time. The other is teaching four courses (twelve hours). The vacated positions have been filled with qualified new instructors. In addition, a vacancy created in the summer of 1999 by the unexpected death of a full-time mathematics instructor has been filled for the fall of 2000. One of the new instructors had previously been an adjunct and another graduated from Ozarka's practical nursing program, but four others are new to the institution. While three have degrees from Arkansas State University, two graduated from other Arkansas institutions and one has a degree from outside the state.

### **Administration**

The present administrative organization is the result of evaluation by the institution and a desire to create an environmental structure that contributes to achieving its mission and purposes. The organizational chart may be found on the next page.

The president, as chief executive officer, is responsible for the general operation of the institution under the direction of the Board of Trustees. The Board appointed Douglas W. Rush to this position on March 26, 1992. The Board of Trustees delegates to the President authority to administer the policies governing the College, with the President being the formal channel for communication between the Board of Trustees and the staff of the College. In this capacity the President has the responsibility for continuously reviewing Board policies and making such recommendations to the Board as are necessary and appropriate.

The President directly supervises the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Finance, Vice President for Planning and Assessment, Registrar/Director of



Student Services, Director of Continuing Education and Business Outreach, Director of Computer Services, and Personnel Officer. Additional responsibilities of the President include supervision of the development of the instructional programs of the College; budget preparation; personnel administration and supervision; school-community relations; and overall supervision of the College program. Development, human resources, self-study and long-range planning, and liaison with outside groups such as accrediting and governmental agencies are also centralized in this office.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for technical and academic programs, general adult and basic education, faculty supervision and evaluation, library, Learning Laboratory, Ozarka Kids Academy, and faculty professional development and continuing education.

The Vice President for Finance is responsible for budget preparation, development of annual financial plans, payroll, financial aid, bookstore and food services, maintenance of staff benefit programs, purchasing formulation and coordination of finance office operations, fiscal reporting to President and Board of Trustees, transportation coordination and supervision, and campus safety.

The Vice President for Planning and Assessment is responsible for educating and involving the College community in planning, developing and administering an institutional assessment program, coordinating grant-writing activities, planning and carrying out the marketing and public relations program, and maintaining North Central Association accreditation.

The Registrar/Director of Student Services is responsible for maintenance of all student records, issuance of grade reports and transcripts, registration, counseling, off-campus credit classes, and liaison with local school districts. He also supervises the Student Support Services program.

The Director of Continuing Education and Business Outreach is responsible for developing and administering all non-credit educational efforts, including avocational classes, children's programming, and customized business and industry training. She also assists with student recruitment and works with the College Foundation.

The Director of Computer Services is responsible for network policy, security, and operations; administration of messaging systems, software packages, domain name systems, and servers; and support for end users and web-based courses. He maintains file systems, approves and orders all hardware and software, and directs staff in operating the Computer Services help desk.

The Personnel Officer is responsible for such matters as Affirmative Action, insurance issues, job interviews, maintenance of all personnel evaluation documentation, supervision of secretarial staff, liaison with the Board of Trustees, maintenance of Board minutes, and presidential correspondence.

The President evaluates all administrators, and the Board of Trustees evaluates the President. Evaluation is held annually in a conversational setting and is based on tasks listed in each person's job description.

For the year 1999-2000, one administrator holds a doctorate, one holds a specialist's degree, two hold master's degrees, and one holds a bachelor's degree. The Director of Computer Services is a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer and Microsoft Certified Professional + Internet. The personnel manager is working on an associate degree. The average age of the administrators is forty-seven with a range from 28 years to 56 years. The average number of total years of related experience is fourteen with a range of 5 years to 26 years.

### **Advisory Committees**

The technical program advisory committees, all established while Ozarka was a vocational technical school, encourage local professionals and community leaders to have direct input into the operation of the College and its programs by sharing their experience and expertise and by expressing their requirements for employees' education and training. The committees provide information to assist programs in staying current in curriculum and equipment and in recruiting students for the programs. The various advisory committees have proven invaluable in providing advice about current vocational and technical issues in

various fields. An important function of the advisory committees continues to be evaluation of student outcomes when compared to the needs of the employer.

The participation of a wide range of people, including faculty, staff, administration, and community members in accomplishing the goals of Ozarka College demonstrates the dedication of the institution to including as many people as possible in the decision-making process. Further, this participation clearly demonstrates an active involvement of the community in the success of Ozarka.

### **Foundation Board**

The Ozarka College Foundation was incorporated in 1992. Its main purposes are to assist with the development and enhancement of programs and facilities at the College, encourage gifts of money and property, and manage these gifts so as to maintain or increase their value. All efforts focus on expanded educational opportunities for and services to the College's students and community.

Presently the Foundation has thirteen members, each serving five-year terms. Meetings are scheduled quarterly. The Foundation has donated financial aid funds for students and supported various building projects and improvements.

### **Governance**

Key to the success of any educational institution is the organization and administration of the institution itself. These are of such importance that they affect not only the number of services and programs which the institution sponsors but also their quality. At a deeper level, excellence in organization and administration affects the College's ability to advance its mission by meeting the needs of the community.

Governance is an area which has seen much change since Ozarka became a college. Formerly, major decisions were made at the state level and passed down to the directors at each school, who, in turn, passed them along to faculty and staff. The degree to which faculty participated in local decisions varied from school to school. At Ozarka, the administration sought faculty and staff participation in many decisions. When the question of becoming one of the new technical colleges was raised in 1990, for instance, the issue was thoroughly discussed and then put to a vote. Only after the faculty voted in favor of the change did the administration commit to the transformation. Since the change, governance has become a much more inclusive and locally controlled process, with a local board of trustees and numerous campus committees working with administration to carry out the mission of the College.

### **State Governance**

The Arkansas State Board of Higher Education (now the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, or AHECB), under the authority of Act 1244 of 1991 enacted by the Arkansas General Assembly, on July 1, 1991, designated Ozarka Vocational Technical School as a technical college which became part of the Arkansas Technical and Community College System.

Act 1244 serves as a legislative charter under the authority granted by the Arkansas Constitution, Amendment 52, for the establishment, organization, and administration of a system of educational institutions throughout the state offering courses of instruction in technical, vocational, and adult education programs, industry training, and two-year college transfer programs. The system provides easily accessible and highly responsive educational programs of training, retraining, or upgrade training for employment.

Ozarka College functions under the authority of AHECB as administered by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE). New degree and certificate programs must be approved by AHECB. The President and other administrators attend quarterly meetings of AHECB.

**Board of Trustees**

Under Section 17 of Act 1244, control of Ozarka College is vested in a local Board of Trustees composed of seven members who are residents and qualified electors of the counties served by Ozarka. Sections 1.20, 1.21, and 1.22 of the Ozarka Board Policies and Procedures Manual contain regulations pertaining to the composition and operations of the Board. The term of office is seven years. When a vacancy occurs, the President notifies the Governor with recommendations of local qualified electors who sit on no other board or commission. The successor is appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate.

At its first regular meeting after July 1 of each odd-numbered year, the Board elects from its membership a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Secretary, all of whom serve two-year terms. Two standing committees--Academic Affairs and Finance--are chosen by the full Board. Special committees may be appointed by the Chair and cease to exist when their functions have been discharged.

Local Board members represent the public interest as evidenced by qualifications mandated in Act 1244. The Board members are electors of the service area of the College and have knowledge in the areas of business, labor, industry, or economic development:

**Ozarka Board of Trustees**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Hometown</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Occupation</i>
Paul Balentine	Mountain View	Stone	High Tech Manufacturing
Lawrence Billing	Horseshoe Bend	Izard	Retired Educator
Cindy Hall	Ash Flat	Sharp	Hospital Administrator

Barbara Perryman	Viola	Fulton	Real Estate
Susan Smith	Melbourne	Izard	Retail/Hospitality Industry
John Thornton	Ash Flat	Sharp	Banker
Jack Ward	Calico Rock	Izard	Retired Retailer/Graduate Student

The members chosen to serve on the Board have a strong community-based background to better serve the College and its mission. At the present time, the Board is composed of three women and four men. Two members have master's degrees, and two have bachelor's degrees. The Board members have a range of work experience that contributes to the growth and development of the institution.

Members of the Board have attended training sessions on institutional governance sponsored by ADHE, and, in addition, an ADHE representative has attended a local Board meeting to explain ADHE functions and AHECB policies. Members have attended sessions for trustees at annual meetings of the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges and have been elected as officers, including Chair of the Trustee Division. Board members understand the mission of the College and the goals of the self-study. All participate in the College's annual planning retreats. Members attend functions held at the College in support of Ozarka.

State law mandates the powers and duties of the Board with the Board having responsibility for policy development and hiring and evaluation of the President of the College. The Board also approves administrative appointments, program development, the annual budget, and tuition rates.

The Board of Trustees meets quarterly with special meetings called as needed. The public is routinely informed of Board meetings through newspaper announcements. Action items are presented to the Board as written resolutions, and the President in consultation with the Chair prepares an agenda. These items are mailed to each member of the Board at least five days in advance of the meeting. The Board maintains minutes of all meetings, which

provide evidence of their review and approval of all major policy decisions. These are available in the Resource Room. The minutes are maintained and kept by the Personnel Officer and are available in a public folder on the College network.

### **Council and Committee Structure**

Ozarka College has two standing councils: Administrative Council and Faculty Council. The Administrative Council is responsible for informing and updating the Faculty Council on activities in each administrative area, including considering recommendations made to administrators by other committees, and making administrative decisions concerning the daily operation of the school.

The Administrative Council is composed of the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Finance, Vice President for Planning and Assessment, Registrar/Director of Student Services, Director of Continuing Education and Business Outreach, Director of Computer Services, and Personnel Officer as permanent members. The weekly Council minutes are posted in the faculty lounge and in a public folder on the Ozarka network for the purpose of sharing pertinent information.

The Faculty Council is responsible for promoting communications among departments and staff; organizing and disseminating information to and from the Administrative Council and committees; assisting in the identification of priorities; naming chairpersons from its membership for its standing committees; reviewing and evaluating work of standing committees; making recommendations to the Administrative Council; assisting committees and departments in meeting and maintaining accreditation standards; and taking a leadership role in the continuing process of maintaining NCA accreditation. A faculty representative from each department serves on the Faculty Council. The Vice

President for Academic Affairs and the Counselor meet with the Faculty Council as a non-voting ex-officio members. The by-laws and the standing committee structure were developed and are maintained by the Faculty Council.

The Faculty Council recognizes that the overall function of its committees is to identify the needs of the College that are the responsibility of each particular committee, to obtain specific information on those needs, to organize and distribute appropriate requests to the different departments, and to organize information and submit it to the Faculty Council with recommendations for action. To promote the open exchange of information, all Faculty Council and committee meetings are open to any interested person. The Council and committees post their minutes to public folders on the Ozarka network.

The Faculty Council has established five standing committees, each having a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary, with membership representative of all departments. As time allows, the Vice President for Academic Affairs meets with the committees as a non-voting ex-officio member. Each committee meets at least monthly.

**Curriculum Committee** - responsible for (a) reviewing and recommending to the Faculty Council program, degree, and graduation requirements; (b) recommending to the Faculty Council new courses and programs to be offered; (c) reviewing syllabi and selected course material as a part of the faculty evaluation process; (d) reviewing or initiating recommendations for courses or programs being considered for possible deletion or significant change; (e) investigating curriculum concerns and curriculum assessment.

**Institutional Improvement Committee** - responsible for (a) recommending guidelines for acquisition of equipment; (b) recommending uses and hours of Library/LRC and other available facilities; (c) recommending improvements for current and future campus facilities and grounds.

**Student Affairs Committee** - responsible for promoting student life issues such as counseling, advising, parking, student organizations, recreation, transportation, cultural opportunities, and placement.

**Faculty Professional Development Committee** - responsible for (a) planning the distribution of personnel development funds for faculty (attendance at professional meetings, work toward certification and degrees) and (b) developing and maintaining the Employee Handbook.

**Technology-Enhanced Education Committee** - responsible for (a) identifying opportunities to reach students via technology-enhanced delivery and media-assisted teaching; (b) identifying courses and situations that may lend themselves to technology-enhanced and mediate-delivery and those that may not; (c) developing practices that will ensure quality in the content, student support, instructor support, and evaluation of technology-enhanced and mediated courses; and (d) reviewing all departmental web pages hosted by Ozarka's server to enhance consistency and professionalism.

The Faculty Council has taken a leadership role and has greatly increased effective communication between administration and faculty. Clearly, the work within the committees demonstrates the efforts of administration and faculty toward shared governance.

Besides this formal committee structure, the faculty as a whole meets approximately four times a semester for lunch and invites administration and staff when appropriate. Faculty members take turns organizing the meetings and set agendas according to expressed needs. The meeting provides an additional forum for faculty to discuss issues and to share ideas.

### **Strengths**

1. An active Board of Trustees is involved in institutional policy-making, dedicated to the promotion of the College within the service area, and knowledgeable concerning the needs of the service area.
2. The administrative structure is well-defined and understood through policies and procedures established by the State and the Board.
3. The administrative personnel are qualified, experienced, and knowledgeable of their responsibilities in overseeing institutional activities.
4. The faculty of the College have accepted the responsibility of shared governance through active participation within the committee structure.

5. The faculty, administration, and Board have a wide variety of educational training and background which enhances the educational environment of the institution.
6. Faculty credentials meet or exceed the requirements of the state.
7. All students have an opportunity to succeed by taking advantage of support services and offerings at locations other than the main campus.
8. The Ozarka Foundation Board is active in its assistance to the College by providing voluntary help and solicitation of funds for scholarships.

### **Challenge**

1. Although the College has had a steady increase in enrollment from all counties of its service area, enrollment from areas outside IZARD County still needs to grow.

### **Recommendation**

1. Ozarka needs to develop off-campus sites like the Stone County Education Center at Mountain View in other parts of its service area.

***CRITERION II: The institution has effectively organized the . . . financial and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.***

## **Land and Buildings**

Ozarka's physical facilities have consistently been listed among its strengths by visiting NCA teams and have continued to improve over the past five years. The campus is located on approximately thirty-eight acres of land in the southeast section of the Melbourne city limits and is one-quarter mile south of state Highway 69. Buildings and parking occupy about one-half of the total campus area, leaving ample room for future expansion. The College is accessible from three entries off College Drive, which forms the western boundary of the campus, and one entry from Haley Street, along the northern edge of the campus. In addition to these main entries to Ozarka's campus, an additional entry from College Drive provides access to the Ozarka Kids Academy facilities.

The College's main building complex was constructed in 1974-75, using federal and state funding, on land donated by the city of Melbourne. It contains administrative offices, private dining room, general purpose cafeteria, and kitchen in the front portion and library, two general purpose classrooms, compressed video classroom, faculty offices, staff lounge, student commons area, automotive and physical therapist assistant laboratories, and storage areas in the rear section of the building. Besides its use for educational and student support purposes, this building is also heavily used by the public and outside groups for meetings and social events, especially the dining room and the cafeteria/student center.

The Walter B. Hall Building is one of the busiest buildings for classroom instruction. The Hall Building contains three general purpose classrooms, a computer laboratory, a

business machines room, one biological sciences laboratory, one physical sciences laboratory, several faculty offices, and a copy room.

The John E. Miller Education Complex is home to an 802-seat auditorium, 150-seat lecture hall, culinary arts laboratory, two computer laboratories, five classrooms (four of which are general purpose, with the other being dedicated as a culinary classroom adjacent to the lab), a testing area, and a video production/videoconferencing room (which can be converted to a general purpose classroom if necessary), faculty offices, industrial training room, board room, and reception area. This attractive new building is also heavily used by the community, especially the lecture hall and auditorium.

The Nursing Building contains the practical nursing laboratory, one classroom, and a faculty office. A new building, serving nursing in one wing and adult education in the other wing, is planned for the area immediately east of the present Nursing Building, which will be remodeled for other classroom use. This new structure, which should be completed by the fall of 2001, will contain one classroom, one multi-purpose room to be used as a laboratory, two faculty offices and a reception area on the nursing side. An atrium will separate the nursing and adult education centers and will be used as a student commons and waiting area. It will also contain three offices. The adult education facility will house a testing room, four offices, and a reception area.

Other structures on campus include a maintenance building just east of the main building complex, storage buildings, and the Ozarka Kids Academy, which has four learning areas, an administrative office, and a kitchen.

In addition to structures on the main campus, the College also operates the Stone County Education Center, which contains three classrooms, computer laboratory, resource

room, and administrative and faculty offices. The College is currently negotiating with the owner of this property to purchase it and two additional buildings on the site for further expansion of services and educational programs. Ozarka is also planning to open a satellite center in northern Sharp County to meet local demands for courses beyond what is currently offered in the facilities of Highland High School.

All buildings are inspected periodically by various state, federal, and private agencies for safety purposes. Ozarka is in compliance with all health and safety codes including those of the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA). Records of inspections are available in the maintenance office. The maintenance staff also inspects buildings regularly, keeps records for all equipment on file, and follows a preventive maintenance plan for the HVAC units. Equipment is upgraded or replaced as needed and as funds are available.

Since the conversion to a college in 1991 and the growth in student numbers, parking has been a concern to both students and employees. With the completion of the Miller Complex in 1998, approximately two hundred parking spaces were added, bringing the total paved and marked parking spaces up to three hundred eighty. Ozarka conforms with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing signs marking the route to handicapped parking areas. Currently there are nine designated handicapped spots at the Melbourne campus and two at the Stone County Education Center.

## **Computer and Telecommunications Equipment**

The Ozarka College campus network, managed by the Director of Computer Services (a position created in 1999), utilizes a fiber-optic backbone with 10/100M auto-sensing switches providing desktop connections. Network connectivity is available in all administrative offices, 95 percent of faculty offices, 75 percent of classrooms, and 50 percent

of instructional labs. A total of 119 computers are available in user centers and open access labs, with 75 of those purchased in 1998-1999. The College is aggressively purchasing computer systems and equipment, ensuring students access to current trends in Information Systems. The Computer Services department tracks computer systems and schedules replacements every 3-5 years, depending on usability.

Ozarka's achievements in using technology for administrative and educational purposes earned it sixth place on a national listing of the most-wired two-year colleges in America by Yahoo! Internet Life magazine. A hundred institutions in each of four categories of colleges and universities were selected in the spring of 2000 for excellence in providing and using Net resources on campus. The survey was designed so that no single criterion could make or break a school. As a result, only institutions exhibiting a healthy balance of wired services scored well in the ranking.

Nearly 1300 accredited two-year and four-year institutions furnished information on campus access to technology, infrastructure, general resources, and use of technology to provide administrative services and student support. Value of the information was weighted to reflect differences between types of schools. Only three other Arkansas colleges, all private four-year institutions, made the list.

The survey looked at the number of public computers purchased in the last two years, percentage of classrooms wired for high-speed Net access, capability for students to apply and register for classes electronically, amount of technical support, special services for the handicapped, student access to e-mail services, and other indicators of successful use of technology on campuses.

Ozarka supports instruction with a number of computer-based laboratories. The business computer lab, located in the Hall Building, consists of 22 computers which have been standardized in both hardware and software to minimize troubleshooting. All have Pentium processors and are networked with Internet capabilities. Students are issued an account and save their work on the network server. The lab has a HP Laserjet 4500 color printer and three HP Laserjet 4 printers. Approximately 20 TRC-8080 transcribers, 25 Sharp 2630GII calculators, and a SharpVision projector are also housed in this lab.

The purpose of the business computer lab is to provide a learning environment for basic computer skills. Word processing, database, spreadsheet, desktop publishing, business machines, computer information systems, and microcomputer applications typify the courses taught in the lab. The software used consists of Microsoft Office 97, Pagemaker 6.5, Netscape 4.5, Microsoft Windows 98 operating system, Gregg Document Processing for Word, and Gregg Skillbuilding (keyboarding software).

The medical transcription lab, also in the Hall Building, contains eight Pentium PCs connected to one printer via a DataDoc printer-sharing device. These PCs are not networked and, consequently, have no Internet capabilities and cannot be used by students wanting to work on documents stored on the network server.

A new Learning Laboratory, located in the Miller Complex, has 34 computers with Pentium processors and one HP 4000T laser printer. Computers are stationed on tables with keyboard trays, and students have ergonomic chairs. These computers run standard software: MS Office 97, Pagemaker 6.5, Gregg Document Processing for Word plus SkillsBank (basic English and math), nursing software (RN Challenge and NCLEX) for preparation for state boards, math tutorial software, GED 2001 and Basic Life Skills software. Several tutorial

and life skills components of the PLATO system are also available on ten computers. The lab is networked and Internet capable. Other resources available are dictionaries, thesauruses, and information on resume writing. The lab is available for classes if reserved and has a smaller classroom/computer lab adjacent to it for specialized uses. Computer literacy classes for Adult Education and developmental math and reading are taught as computer/teacher hybrid classes in the lab. A dedicated lab manager assists students and troubleshoots the equipment.

The Student Support Services laboratory was created in 1997 in the main administration building and contains ten Pentium computers for student use and one tutor computer, also a Pentium. The lab, which serves approximately 200 students per year, is managed by two full-time individuals and six part-time student tutors. Standardized software used in the business labs plus study and developmental software such as Discover (career advisement), Personal Algebra Tutor, NCLEX license practice software, and LASSIE (Learning and Study Skills Inventory) are all available.

Other resources found in the SSS lab are college catalogs, applications, and scholarship information for those students interested in furthering their education after Ozarka. Also students can find books on study skills and resume writing and brochures on various life skills. The lab also offers life skills workshops taught by the two full-time managers whenever needed.

The ASTRO (Advanced Studies in Technology and Research at Ozarka) laboratory, located in the Miller Complex, contains fourteen workstations, Trimble Navigation Geoexplorer II Education Kit, HP Designjet 450C color plotter, QMS Magicolor 2DX color laser printer, Kodak DC220 digital camera, and NT local area network. Available software

includes Bentley Microstation SE, Intergraph Smartsketch, Bentley Systems Triforma, Unigraphics Solid Edge, Intergraph Modelview Professional, Softimage, Windows NT, Geographical Information Systems, Global Positioning System, Microsoft Front Page 2000, Microsoft Visual Basic Pro, and Microsoft Office Pro 2000. The lab supports service learning projects developed by students using technology to solve local problems.

Corporate support for ASTRO is available from Wellsco Graphics, Bentley Systems, Intergraph Corporation, and Trimble. Academic partners include Ozark Unlimited Resources Educational Service Center, the University of Central Arkansas' College of Education, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Center for Advanced Spatial Technology and College of Information Science and Systems Engineering, and Louisiana State University's College of Design.

At the Stone County Education Center, a business computer lab contains twenty-one PCs with the same standard software as the business lab plus Corel Word Perfect, SkillsBank 4, and the Gregg Skillbuilding software. Each computer is networked to a local area network for the facilities in Mountain View and is Internet capable. Student file storage is available on the network server. A T-1 line provides high-speed connectivity between the Melbourne and Mountain View campuses.

Technology weaknesses which have not yet been addressed include lack of network access for the maintenance office and Nursing Building. The new Nursing and Adult Education building will be wired into the campus network and phone system. During its construction, it is possible that the maintenance department can be wired into the system as well. Another possibility is using wireless technology.

The campus telephone system, which does not support voicemail, is old and nearing maximum capacity. Currently the College is investigating new system requirements based on user feedback, demands, and price.

Responsibility for submitting yearly budget requests for all laboratory equipment falls on the lead instructors for each program area and on the division chairs. Current policy is for the departments to include their requests for replacement equipment in their budget request or, in the case of technical programs, in the planning for the Carl Perkins grant monies. An exception is made for requests related to computers, printers, scanners, other peripheral equipment, and software, all of which is handled by the Director of Computer Services.

## **Other Laboratory Resources**

The main building houses the laboratory for the Automotive Service Technology program. Shop equipment currently meets standards necessary to train students on equipment like that which will be used in their future occupation. This lab contains four bays, two hydraulic lifts, multimeter, wheel balancers, a wheel alignment unit, engine crane, air conditioning test equipment, tool sets, valve grinder, brake drum lathe, engine analyzer set, valve refacer, transmission jack, alternator/generator/regulator tester, vehicles, engines, part cleaning equipment, and numerous other small items. Recently, a master tool set for the lab has been started, and items will continue to be purchased as funding becomes available. New heating and lighting systems have been installed in an effort to provide students with a more comfortable learning environment.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Lab is one of the newest instructional laboratories on campus. Opening in 1998, this lab provides equipment representative of the profession's

technology. Recently, an additional ultrasound machine was added to the inventory to allow students greater access to this widely used type of equipment.

The Nursing Lab is currently located in one of the oldest buildings on campus but will be relocated to a new building within the next year. Some of the equipment now in use has been used for several years, but much of the older equipment will be replaced with more modern versions in the new facility. The present nursing lab houses hospital beds, bedside tables, over-the-bed tables, IV poles, screens, walkers, wheelchairs, bedside commodes, various training models and manikins, suction machines, examination tables, glucometers, an otoscope, an ophthalmoscope, and a variety of supplies. In addition to these traditional training materials, several computers with nursing-related software applications and videotapes are available for use by the students.

The Culinary Arts Laboratory in the Miller Complex consists of a complete professional kitchen, with stoves, grill, refrigerator, freezer, commercial mixers, work tables, and all necessary cooking and serving utensils.

Laboratories for the physical and life sciences are located in the Walter B. Hall Building. The biology lab is used for instruction in General Biology, Microbiology, and Anatomy and Physiology. Equipment includes binocular and monocular microscopes, electrophysiology systems, numerous anatomical models, incubators, centrifuge, water bath, sterilizer, herbarium, and various small items. A major addition to this lab was the recent purchase of ten new microscopes. In addition, four computers were installed in the summer of 2000 to allow simulations of laboratory experiments. The physical science lab contains equipment and computers to support experiments in the basis physical science course (physics, astronomy, and earth sciences) as well as general chemistry and introductory

organic/biochemistry. New equipment recently purchased for this lab to support the chemistry courses includes an acid cabinet, hazardous location lab exhaust, spectrophotometers, pH meter, milligram scales, lab station hoods, vacuum pumps, acid resistant counter tops, storeroom cabinetry, glassware, and chemicals. Eight computers were installed in the summer of 2000 in this lab as well. Students at the Stone County Education Center use the lab facilities of Mountain View High School.

## **Learning Resources**

The library on the main campus has made consistent progress in collection development. Since 1995, the collection has grown from 5500 to 9000 books with a collection goal of 20,000 volumes in order to comply with ACRL standards for a two-year college library serving up to 1000 students. The Ozarka library subscribes to 20 newspapers, which include city, county, area, state, and national newspapers. Subscriptions to 100 periodical titles in print, as well as a monthly CD-ROM Proquest Research II index to 1600 periodical titles that are abstracted and indexed and the electronic full-text to approximately 600 titles.

The library also subscribes to several Internet databases as well. Proquest Direct (contains 1925 titles with 1170 full text), Health Trac (an online health database to approximately 350 titles), Legal Trac (database of legal journals), and Electric Library (magazine, newspapers, books, pictures, maps, etc). Encyclopaedia Britannica online and other e-journals are available for students. The library provides a subscription to All-Data, a comprehensive CD-ROM automotive product. Students have Social Issues Resources Series (SIRS) available to them. These consist of 121 loose-leaf volumes containing reprinted articles from newspapers, magazines, government documents, and journals that cover social

issues. SIRS is an updated version of the vertical file. In addition to print form, the library also has the same information on a CD-ROM version which contains SIRS Researcher, SIRS Government Reporter (government documents), and SIRS Renaissance (current perspectives on the Arts and Humanities).

The Ozarka College Library provides materials at hand and also participates in a consortium of outside resources including Group Access Capabilities, through the Arkansas Library Online Network ([GAC-AL@N](#)) system, a computer-based Interlibrary Loan (ILL) system through OCLC. Through [AL@N](#), interlibrary loan requests can be electronically transmitted directly from Ozarka to other libraries in the network and from those libraries to Ozarka. The library also has access to OCLC First Search on the Internet, with twelve databases available.

The library manages several pieces of equipment (such as tape players, TVs with VCRs, slide projectors, and overhead projectors) for faculty use in the classroom. An acquisition plan schedules the purchase of additional needed equipment. Since 1995, Ozarka has purchased six new TV/VCR combinations with three new equipment carts, a large screen TV for the lecture hall, and four new overhead projectors with equipment carts.

Five computers dedicated for Internet use have been installed, and a new computer for use with the SIRS has been purchased. To support distance learning courses being offered through the Arkansas Educational Television Network, the library purchased four video-copying units to duplicate tapes for student use. Three computers provide access to CD-ROM information. A separate computer, modem, and printer connect the Ozarka library to the Arkansas Library Online Network ([AL@N](#)).

Ozarka's library is fully automated, with one primary dedicated computer and three dumb terminals. Students have access to the online card catalog from one terminal in the library. The library staff uses another library terminal to check materials out and in. The third terminal is reserved for staff use in the office. Bibliofile (a CD-ROM product) provides in-house cataloging and is tied to an automated main frame using PK Harmony.

Library funding for acquiring learning resources has more than doubled since the 1990-91 academic year, when the budget was \$31, 264. The budget for 2000-2001 is \$69,830.

The main library contains approximately 2800 square feet with space available for shelving 15,000 volumes. Increasing numbers of students, a growing print collection, and addition of computers for student use insure that every foot of space is heavily used. Six study carrels, a room for video viewing and audio listening, eight tables seating four at each table, a couch and chairs in the periodical section, and an upstairs study area with conversation seating provide space for students to study privately or in small groups. An office area, equipment storage area, and reference/circulation desk are located on the lower level. A small children's section has been added in one corner of the library to accommodate the Ozarka Kids Academy. A photocopier is available in the library for student use. The College is currently planning to expand the library by adding on to the north side of the main building.

Through networking ([AL@N](#)) and resource-sharing, academic libraries in Arkansas have access to materials needed to fulfill student's research needs. Ozarka College has reciprocal agreements with the Melbourne Public Library, Northcentral Arkansas Education Service Center in Melbourne, and the Mountain View Public Library. NAESC allows

Ozarka faculty to borrow from its collection of video titles, and the public schools participating in NAESC have access to the Ozarka library for research purposes.

The Stone County Education Center at Mountain View has the start of a small reference library. Each year for the next five years, \$5000 has been designated to bring information access to that campus. Students and instructors at Mountain View now have access to Proquest Direct, Electric Library, Health Trac, Legal Trac, Encyclopaedia Britannica, ERIC, and many other e-journals through the Internet. Intralibrary loan is provided between campuses with faculty members acting as carriers of the exchanged materials.

## Revenue Sources

Ozarka College is subject to the Arkansas state agency appropriation process and to the funding strategies developed by the State Coordinating Board (AHECB) and administered by ADHE. The College administration reviews general funding levels and presents the total appropriation request to the Board of Trustees for review and approval.

Funding categories for the Unrestricted Educational and General Fund are tuition and fees, state revenues, private gifts, and other miscellaneous income. The major funding categories for the Auxiliary Fund are food service, bookstore and day care incomes. State appropriations provide the largest source of revenue for Ozarka, amounting to approximately 75 percent of total funding. Tuition, fees, and other programs generate the balance.

The following list shows a cost per credit hour comparison of other institutions of higher education within a 100-mile radius for 1999-2000:

Lyon College	\$428.00
University of Central Arkansas	135.00
Arkansas State University	98.00
Arkansas State University – Beebe	45.00

Arkansas State University – Mountain Home	45.00
Ozarka College	40.00
North Arkansas College	39.00
University of Arkansas Community College – Batesville (in-district)	32.00

In 1991 a group of local leaders formed the Ozarka Technical College Foundation with tax exempt status to support and assist in the continued development of the institution. A separate and independent Board of Directors was created to focus on fund raising, representing four counties in the service area. Fund raising activities have included direct mailings, personal solicitations, and special events such as a golf tournament and a gala dinner, all designed to increase public awareness of the strengths and needs of the College. The Foundation was active in the campaign to pass the one-cent sales tax in Melbourne in 1994. In 1999 the group’s name was changed to the Ozarka College Foundation, reflecting the change in the institution’s name.

Community support of the College appears to be one its greatest strengths. Besides formation of the Foundation, another sign of support is the one-cent Melbourne city sales tax vote with over 90 percent in favor of the sales tax increase to construct the auditorium portion of the John E. Miller Education Complex. The tax generates about \$240,000 per year. When fifteen-year bonds for this project were offered at less than the prevailing interest rate, all banks in the service area purchased the bonds in a strong show of support.

Growth in tuition income is also a strength. Over the last five school years, tuition generated by student enrollment has increased dramatically:

1995-96	\$322,624
1996-97	\$466,847
1997-98	\$540,504
1998-99	\$631,998
1999-00	\$647,540

Through Act 1052 of 1991, the Arkansas General Assembly approved a one-half percent corporate tax to be used to finance the transformation of eleven postsecondary vocational schools to technical colleges. The funds generated by this tax provide the Workforce 2000 assistance previously mentioned. Act 1246 of 1991 provided Workforce 2000 developmental funds to the newly created technical colleges to assist them with achieving accreditation by the North Central Association. These funds are divided into three categories: (a) approximately \$150,000 annually to each institution for upgrading faculty and meeting additional operating expenses, (b) a one-time allotment of \$250,000 for the 1993-95 biennium to upgrade equipment and plant renovation to help meet NCA accreditation requirements, and (c) \$250,000 dollar-for-dollar matching funds to be matched with locally raised funds (taxes and donations) for construction purposes. With the aid of Workforce 2000 funds, Ozarka's operating budget increased 24 percent during its first year as a technical college. The College was also able to claim all available matching funds to receive the third category of support. During the last fiscal year, however, collection of the corporate income tax declined markedly, resulting in lower than expected funding for the participating colleges.

Ozarka receives restricted funds from the state Department of Workforce Education for Adult Basic Education (ABE) and General Adult Education (GAE) programs. The total adult education budget, including special grants, has shown a general pattern of growth. These funds are administered by the State of Arkansas, which provides 100 percent reimbursable costs for the ABE and GAE programs.

Funding for construction comes from various sources. In 1994 Ozarka borrowed \$250,000 from the state's College Savings Bond program for renovations and expansions of

the main building. Under Act 423 of 1993, technical colleges have the authority to ask for a sales tax. The city of Melbourne responded to Ozarka's request by approving a one-cent sales tax that will be used to pay back bonds for the construction of part of the John Miller Education Complex. The state of Arkansas matched \$283,000 to assist in the construction of this project, along with providing \$500,000 from the Governor's capital improvement fund and \$535,615 from College Savings Bonds.

## **Budgeting, Accounting, and Auditing**

The budgeting process for Ozarka was completely changed under Act 1244 of the 1991 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas. For twenty years within the Vocational Division, a lump sum budget request for all twenty-four Vocational Technical Schools was presented to the Legislature. From the approved lump sum budget, the Vocational Division prepared budgets for the individual schools.

As a college, Ozarka develops its own budget request, which is presented to the Department of Higher Education and AHECB for approval. This budget then goes to the Legislature for approval and finally to the Governor. As a part of the Revenue Stabilization Act, the total appropriation level is divided into funding release levels to balance with overall projected state revenues. These release levels may change during the fiscal year depending on the general condition of the state's economy. Under the new organization, it is clear that Ozarka is responsible and accountable for managing these financial resources according to law and sound accounting principles.

All departments participate in the planning and budgeting process by submitting requests prior to each fiscal year. These budget requests are submitted to the appropriate supervisor for review and revision. They are then forwarded to the Accounting Supervisor

who compiles and submits all requests to the Budget Review Committee for final review and revision. The Budget Review Committee is composed of the President, Vice President for Finance, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Accounting Supervisor, and division chairs. The complete operating budget is prepared based on anticipated revenues and submitted to the Board of Trustees for review and approval. The final authority and responsibility for the internal operating budget of Ozarka College rests with the Board of Trustees. The Board charges the President and Vice President for Finance with the preparation, control, and implementation of this budget.

The budget process involves many internal and external reviews. The College Finance Office staff may be conducting many activities at any given time, such as revision of the current year budget, administration of the current year budget, preparation of budget analysis reports, preparation of subsequent budget requests and preparation of next year's budget. Faculty and administration have access to their departmental budgets at any time during the year by use of the College's local area network system. Information concerning budgets is posted daily, and as a result, departments are able to review their current budget information at their convenience.

The accounting policies and procedures of Ozarka College include control, purchasing and accounting. Several policies and procedures are in place to ensure appropriate administrative management of the College's resources. Accounting procedures are designed to disclose the business fiscal operations and the financial health of the College. Evaluation of fiscal procedures takes place at three distinct points. First, the President and Vice President for Finance present the Board of Trustees with a financial statement for their approval. Second, the Finance Office reviews and makes adjustments when necessary in the

appropriations and funding for the College. The Board of Trustees must receive and approve all substantive budgetary revisions. Finally, the Arkansas Legislative Audit Division conducts an annual audit. All financial information is presented in a form adopted by the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO).

All purchases made by Ozarka must be in compliance with Arkansas' state purchasing laws. The Vice President for Finance establishes and manages procurement functions and ensures administrative procedures and controls in accordance with state regulations. No obligations by Ozarka College will be honored without prior authorization from the Vice President for Finance or the President. Faculty members must submit purchase requests to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for preliminary review and approval. Faculty and all other personnel are then required to submit the requests to the Finance Office for final review and approval. This procedure is carried out throughout the year as need arises. While state accounting procedures allow some general revenue funds to be carried over at the end of the fiscal year, other unexpended funds must be returned to their source because of inadequate time between release of funds and payment for a purchase. Ozarka has always been able, however, to expend the bulk of monies released late in the fiscal year.

The internal accounting system operates in accordance with regulations established by the State of Arkansas. The accounting system includes control of cash receipts, disbursement of funds, accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll, fixed assets, and indirect costs. The objectives of the accounting system are (1) to provide management so that assets are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition; (2) to ensure that transactions are executed in accordance with management authorization; (3) to ensure

that transactions are recorded properly to permit the preparation of financial statements according to generally accepted accounting principles; (4) to provide inventory control for capital outlay such as equipment, library holdings, books, and supplies for resale; (5) to provide reports to the President and Board which will facilitate control over budgetary accounts; and (6) to review and make corrections if necessary on all travel forms submitted for reimbursement.

The Finance Office is currently using the MIP (Micro Information Products) accounting system that is cost centered at the department level. This allows an overview of each department's budget for proper analysis and adjustment at any given point during the year. The MIP system also supports the timely preparation of in-house interim financial reports.

The College is audited by the State Legislative Audit Division annually in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The auditors study and evaluate the College's system of internal accounting control and compliance with applicable state statutory and constitutional provisions to the extent they consider necessary for a sound evaluation. All internal accounting controls, including areas of cash receipts, accounts receivable, purchasing, receiving, accounts payable, payrolls, fixed assets, inventory, and indirect costs are evaluated.

Ozarka has had no major exceptions to its audits of the financial records in any past audits. The College has always conformed to all accounting procedures according to the Legislative Audit Division and has made all corrections deemed necessary.

As of December 1999, Ozarka held approximately \$308,000 invested in Money Market Accounts, Certificates of Deposit, and Savings Accounts as a reserve for

contingencies. Based on general revenue receipts for 1999-2000 of \$2.1 million, Ozarka's debt-to-equity ratio is extremely low.

## **Adequate Resources**

Ozarka College believes that the evidence cited in this chapter and preceding one supports the evaluation that the College has the human, physical, and financial resources in place to accomplish its purposes and that it therefore meets Criterion II.

### **Strengths**

1. Up-to-date, attractive facilities provide a supportive learning environment and serve numerous community needs as well. The addition of the John E. Miller Complex, in particular, has allowed for the cultural development of not only Ozarka students but also the populace in a four-county area.
2. Ozarka is meeting the challenge of technological updating as evidenced by the addition of a Director of Computer Services, the updating of the Learning Lab from 13 computers in 1998 to 44 computers now, and student access to state-of-the art technology in the ASTRO lab.
3. Ozarka has been recognized for its use of technology for administrative and educational purposes as one of America's "most-wired" two-year colleges.
4. The Ozarka library provides students Internet access to its catalog and numerous learning resources.
5. Existence of the Foundation and passage of the sales tax indicate strong community willingness to support Ozarka financially.
6. Tuition generated by student enrollment has increased steadily.
7. Departments have significant input into the budget process.
8. State accounting procedures for institutions of higher education allow some general revenue funds to be carried over at the end of the fiscal year.
9. Ozarka has had no major exceptions to its financial audits.
10. The College maintains a low debt-to-equity ratio.
11. Ozarka maintains a cash reserve.

## **Challenges**

1. Facilities in Stone County must be expanded to allow more courses to be offered, stimulate further enrollment growth, and serve the needs of the public.
2. The present telephone system is out-of-date and inadequate to support addition of more lines.
3. Library book holdings are below ACRL standards.
4. While state funding and tuition growth are adequate to support current levels of instruction, additional funding is necessary to assure a level of excellence beyond what the College has already achieved.

## **Recommendations**

1. The College must pursue expansion of its facilities in Stone County.
2. The College must purchase and install an up-to-date telephone system.
3. The College must seek significant additional funds for expansion of library holdings.
4. The College and the Foundation should continue to seek community financial support and corporate, foundation, or government-sponsored grants.



***CRITERION III: The institution is accomplishing its educational . . . purposes.***

**Educational Mission**

Ozarka College’s mission statement specifies that its purpose is to “provide its students and other citizens with quality comprehensive higher education, technical education, adult education, continuing education, workplace education, and cultural opportunities” so that its students develop “skills that lead to a positive, productive, and fulfilling life in an ever-changing world.” Out of the twelve general program objectives which amplify this statement, six speak directly to educational programs, including academic, technical, and adult education along with non-credit continuing education and business outreach.

A major part of the College’s institutional assessment plan focuses on whether this mission is being met. A strongly favorable indication that it is can be found in data released by ADHE on student success, as measured by retention, program completion, or transfer of freshmen from fall to fall. For the 1997 freshmen cohort, Ozarka had the highest success rate of any two-year college in Arkansas. Of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students enrolling here in 1997, 70 percent either completed their educational program or returned for a second year in the fall of 1998. The over-all rate for public two-year colleges was 56.8 percent. Ozarka is well above average when comparing total public four and two year colleges.

Analysis of all data in the ADHE report reveals that Ozarka is succeeding in the area of student retention. Comparing the 1993 and the 1997 cohort, retention more than doubled, going from 24.7 percent to 51.7 percent, overtaking and surpassing the state two-year college rate of 47.6 percent. Preliminary data on the 1998 cohort show retention increasing again to

63.6 percent. In addition, data from student records show that Ozarka does well at keeping students enrolled from beginning to end of individual semesters, with 93 percent or more of students enrolling for fall semesters from 1996 through 1999 still enrolled at the end of those semesters.

Effective instruction and instructor attitude contribute to high retention, as does the presence of the Student Support Services program. Respondents to a recent alumni survey indicated that 84 percent of technical program graduates were employed in their field. While instructors point graduating students toward possible employment opportunities, the College does not presently provide a formal placement service. It is possible that the number of technical graduates finding employment would be even higher if a formal program were in place. Seventy percent of Associate of Arts alumni were enrolled for further education, and 88 percent felt they were well-prepared to continue their studies elsewhere. Ninety-six percent of all respondents indicated that if they were to start their education all over again they would do so at Ozarka.

At least 95 percent of all respondents agreed or strongly agreed with several items about their educational experiences, with no item in this category showing less than 82 percent agreement. The highest-rated items included learning how to think and solve problems, knowing how to use the library, learning to understand written information, learning to learn and work independently, learning to work cooperatively in groups, and learning to plan and carry out projects. All respondents agreed that Ozarka instructors cared about them personally, and 98 percent agreed that other Ozarka personnel treated them well. One reason faculty are able to give students personal attention is a student:faculty ratio of approximately 19:1.

The annual Student Opinion Surveys also indicate that Ozarka students are pleased with the quality of instruction. Since 1994, more than 95 percent of all respondents have indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied in this area.

### **General Education**

Before the change to technical college status, Ozarka Vocational Technical School required all students in its certificate programs to complete courses in communications and mathematics to demonstrate competency in those areas. Instruction in both subjects first became available in the fall of 1982, and the school subsequently implemented placement testing to determine whether students were prepared for the required courses or needed remediation. Ozarka was one of the first vocational technical schools in the state to implement general education requirements.

Ozarka College has in place general education requirements for its technical certificate, Associate of Applied Science, and Associate of Arts programs. The number and type of courses vary, and students whose placement scores indicate they do not read at a collegiate level or are not adequately prepared to enter the math or English course required by their program must first successfully complete a developmental course or sequence of courses to improve their knowledge and skills. Those who score at a remedial level in two or more areas are also required to enroll in a study skills course.

The technical certificate requires three hours of English and three hours of mathematics. The AAS requires fifteen hours of general education, and the AA requires forty-four hours. Specific courses vary from program to program, but the general education philosophy and individual requirements are listed in the Catalog on pages 65-66. A complete range of general education courses is available and attracts growing numbers of students.

These required courses are similar to general education requirements at other two-year and four-year institutions of higher education throughout the state.

Besides these distribution requirements, the College also expects that general education skills, such as communicating well in writing, thinking through problems, finding information on the Internet and communicating through e-mail, or using the library to gain information will be reinforced across the curriculum. Faculty include general education skills in their syllabi, reinforcing the importance of being able to communicate orally or in writing, collect and evaluate evidence, understand and use numerical data, work together in groups, and gain a broad base of knowledge about themselves and the world.

Data from the Alumni Survey, as described above, indicate that graduates have gained important skills and knowledge from their general education experiences. A Non-Returning Student Survey, sent to students who were enrolled for at least nine hours in fall 1998 but did not graduate or return for the spring semester, revealed no noticeable dissatisfaction with the College's current offerings. Over 88 percent had either taken jobs, or having completed some basic coursework, transferred to other institutions.

Assessment of general education in the technical programs consists of measuring how well students perform in one or more areas related to the general education philosophy statements adopted by the faculty in 1999. For instance, automotive graduates are asked about their satisfaction with their ability to use a library to find information, understand written information, and write effectively. They must also perform at a high level on in-class oral reports backed up with a researched paper. Nursing students complete an assessment of their attitudes toward human diversity on entry into the program and at exit, with instructors expecting to find growing tolerance for people who are different from the students in culture,

race, attitude, and social responsibility. The nursing curriculum has been revised during the last year to increase students' exposure to diverse populations.

In the Associate of Arts program, assessment of general education is mainly accomplished through administration of four components of ACT's CAAP: writing, mathematics, reading, and science reading. The goal calls for at least 60 percent of Ozarka students to score at or above the national norm on the algebra subscore of the math test and on the overall scores for the remaining three tests. Algebra results have generally not achieved the measure, resulting in curricular changes. The College expects to be able to submit matched ACT and CAAP scores for analysis of value added during the students' college program. Because a large number of Ozarka students enter needing remediation, this additional analysis will be important to determine if the gains in mathematics are comparable to gains in the other areas. If so, the CAAP-related measure for algebra may change to acknowledge that Ozarka students enter at a serious disadvantage and still make acceptable gains. Pre- and post-tests have also been developed in several other general education courses, including General Biology, Physical Science, and English Composition I.

### **Transfer Courses**

Ozarka has added many transfer courses since the 1994-95 school year, when lack of electives was identified as a challenge. Twenty-four new courses have been offered since that time, with only seven dropped. Five more business courses have been added that can be used as electives in the Associate of Arts program for transfer to four-year institutions such as ASU in Jonesboro. Only one such business course has been dropped. The last self-study recommended the addition of General Chemistry and Organic/Biochemistry to the current offerings. General Chemistry I and II and both labs were added in the 1997-1998 school

year. The Organic/ Biochemistry course and lab were added in spring of 1999. A business law course has also been added.

The majority of the general education courses are offered during the daytime to accommodate the majority of Ozarka's students. To create flexibility for students who work during the day and wish to attend late afternoon and evening classes, many of these general education courses and some of the business courses are also offered then. The Fall 1999 schedule listed evening sections of Accounting I, Art Appreciation, Law and Banking Principles, Anatomy & Physiology I, Business Principles, Microcomputer Applications, Records/Database Management, Navigating the Net, English Composition I American History I, Fundamentals of Algebra, College Algebra, Music Appreciation, Concepts of Physical Activity, General Psychology, Elementary Spanish I, and Oral Communications. All of these courses were offered on the main campus.

Additional flexibility has also been gained by taking advantage of technology. Ozarka offers a number of telecourses in cooperation with the Arkansas Educational Television Network, including Cultural Anthropology, Introduction to Sociology, Introduction to Geography, and others. Beginning in 1998, a small number of Internet-supported courses have been offered, including English Composition, World Literature, and Oral Communication. A new development this fall allows courses to be shared between the Melbourne and Mountain View campuses by using computer videoconferencing. A newly-installed T-1 line permits fully-interactive linkages between both locations, so that one instructor can teach students at both locations at the same time.

In a further outreach effort, Ozarka offers concurrent courses in many of the area high schools. During the fall of 1999 several courses were held at the following high schools with only high school students allowed to attend:

Mountain View High School	English Composition I (2 sections) World Civilization I Physical Science Physical Science Lab College Algebra
Cave City High School	English Composition I College Algebra
Calico Rock High School	Microcomputer Applications Elementary Spanish I English Composition I
Highland High School	Trigonometry

Ozarka also offers many off-campus courses in the surrounding area. During the fall semester of 1999, the Stone County Education Center offered twenty-four day courses and eleven night courses. Besides these, the following courses were held evenings in fall of 1999 in local high schools:

Mountain View High School	Concepts of Physical Activity Sports Officiating
Mammoth Spring High School	English Composition I
Salem High School	English Composition I
Highland High School	Becoming a Master Student English Composition I General Psychology

All of the general education courses, most elective courses, and many of the business courses offered at Ozarka College transfer to other colleges and universities. Summary lists are available from the Registrar's office. An articulation agreement, described on page 70 of

the catalog, continues with ASU and includes newly added courses such as Chemistry I and II. On September 9, 1999, Lyon College, a selective liberal arts college in nearby Batesville, and Ozarka College signed an articulation agreement, also available from the Registrar. This fall, seven former Ozarka students have newly enrolled at Lyon, showing that the articulation agreement is encouraging the transfer function. In addition to these agreements, all state-supported colleges and universities in Arkansas have defined a minimum core curriculum that transfers to any of these institutions. Ozarka's core of thirty-four semester hours is outlined in a document available in the Resource Room.

ASU continues to offer a LPN-to-RN transition program at Ozarka. Of the fifty-five hours required in the program, thirty-four are professional curriculum courses offered by ASU on-site by compressed video or by an instructor and twenty-one hours are courses offered directly by Ozarka. While students are taking these Ozarka courses, they are considered a part of the Associate of Arts program.

Assessment of the transfer program, in addition to the CAAP testing and pre-/post-tests mentioned earlier, uses Alumni Surveys and the Community College Student Experience Questionnaire to explore students' evaluation of the effectiveness of their educational experiences. While results are generally very positive, in those areas where goals are not met, the faculty considers what changes are necessary to improve the program.

### **Technical Programs**

Ozarka currently offers four certificates of proficiency, four technical certificates, and nine programs with associate of applied science degrees. Requirements for all the technical programs are found on pages 82-130 of the Ozarka Catalog. The existing programs are as follows:

Certificates of Proficiency:	Business Support Services** Certified Nursing Assistant Early Childhood Development** Emergency Medical Technician**
Technical Certificates:	Automotive Service Technology Information Management** Culinary Arts Licensed Practical Nursing
Associate Degrees:	Automotive Service Technology Business Administration** (option under Business Technology) Banking and Finance** (option under Business Technology) Information Management** (option under Business Technology) Criminal Justice Leadership** Health Information Management (formerly just Medical Transcription) Physical Therapist Assistant** General Technology** Medical Coding** (option under Health Information Management)

\*\*Programs not listed in the 1994-95 catalog

In 1995, the need to offer additional technical programs as the College grows was identified as a challenge. In response, the programs marked above have been initiated, and a new program in Information Science Technology is expected to begin in the spring of 2001. Two programs dropped since the 1994-95 catalog were a Certificate of Proficiency in Over-the Road Trucking and a Technical Certificate in Industrial Equipment Technology, both closed because of low enrollment in combination with high expense. The technical curriculum continues to change to address local employment needs.

Most technical courses are offered only on the Melbourne campus during the day. Some of the required courses for Business Technology and Health Information Management, however, are offered evenings or off campus. Early Childhood Development classes are

primarily held evenings and Saturdays, and Emergency Medical Technician classes meet in locations where there is a need for training. Many Business Technology courses are offered days, evenings, or sometimes Saturdays at the Stone County Education Center.

In the fall of 1999, Ozarka added the ASTRO (Advanced Studies in Technology and Research at Ozarka) program to its business offerings. This unique, dynamic educational program was originally designed to engage high school students who have not been successful in the typical classroom setting. A performance-based course that combines community service projects and advanced technology in a laboratory environment, ASTRO teaches advanced software applications by “hands-on” experience. In the fall of 1999 it drew forty area high school students to campus for concurrent credit and was also open to Ozarka’s regularly-enrolled students. ASTRO will provide the foundation for a new Associate of Applied Science degree program which the College will present to AHECB for approval in October 2000.

Four of the technical programs currently are regularly audited by outside agencies: Automotive Service Technology (National Automotive Training Education Foundation), Physical Therapist Assistant (Commission on Accreditation for Physical Therapy Education), Certified Nursing Assistant (Arkansas Office of Long-Term Care), and Licensed Practical Nursing (Arkansas State Board of Nursing).

The current mix of technical programs includes only three with a strong appeal to males, including Automotive Service Technology, Criminal Justice Leadership, and the developing Emergency Medical Technician program. The planned new Information Science Technology program should help increase the male student population and bring it more in line with state and national two-year college enrollment patterns.

The last needs survey of the area to assist in planning for new technical programs was completed in 1995. Building on results of that survey, the College has added two options to the AAS in Business Technology, Banking and Finance and Business Administration. Other programs added to meet community needs include the AAS in Criminal Justice Leadership and Physical Therapist Assistant and Certificates of Proficiency in Early Childhood Development and Emergency Medical Technician.

Ozarka College currently articulates several courses with Southside High School, allowing students to receive college credit in technical areas for completed high school coursework. The agreement has very specific guidelines, which can be reviewed in the Articulation Agreement found in the Resource Room.

**Course Equivalencies**

<i>Ozarka</i>	<i>Southside</i>
BUS1203    Keyboarding	Word Processing I Word Processing II
CIS2393    Desktop Publishing	Desktop Publishing
MGMT 2643 Management	Interpersonal Relationships Personal Resource Management
NUTR2203    Basic Human Nutrition	Home Economics I Child Development Food and Nutrition

Attempts to establish similar articulation agreements with Batesville and Mountain View High Schools were unsuccessful.

Ozarka was approached by the North Central Area Vocational School about entering into an articulation agreement whereby two semesters of medical terminology will be considered equivalent to BIOL1203, Medical Terminology I, provided the student takes and passes BIOL1213, Medical Terminology II, on the Ozarka campus. The agreement also

provides for articulation of Body Structure and Function, LPN1204, and the complete Certified Nursing Assistant program. The automotive department also has an articulation agreement with NCAVS whereby high school students can complete four areas of automotive training in high school, transfer to Ozarka, and complete four additional areas. If they pass the Automotive Service Excellence Test for the four areas they completed in high school, Ozarka awards credit. These articulation agreements can be found in the resource room.

Assessment in the technical programs generally includes both Alumni and Employer Surveys, with matched questions specific to each program. Results indicate a high level of satisfaction with the practical knowledge gained at Ozarka. In the few areas where problems have been discovered, however, faculty have responded. When nursing graduates, for instance, indicated a need for greater clinical exposure to obstetrics and mental health, the clinical rotations were adjusted, within the parameters mandated by the state Board of Nursing, to include more classroom instruction, stronger laboratory experiences, and longer clinical exposure in these areas.

In addition, all technical programs incorporate some type of end-of-program or licensure testing into their assessment plans. Poor student scores in obstetrics on NCLEX-preparatory testing, for instance, reinforced the student opinion survey results. Business technology student performance on the writing skills portion of the OPAC instrument led to increased emphasis on grammar and usage in Business Communications and other courses.

### **Requirements for Certificates and Degrees**

The College offers two types of certificates: the Certificate of Proficiency and the Technical Certificate. Certificate of Proficiency programs are designed for employment

purposes and are no more than a semester in length. Technical certificate candidates must complete a six-hour general education core including three hours of written communications and three hours of mathematics. The technical certificate programs are also designed for employment purposes and typically require two semesters and 30 to 35 hours of credit for completion. The practical nursing program requires 56 credit hours to meet State Board of Nursing guidelines and takes three semesters to complete.

The Associate of Applied Science degree requires 60 to 72 hours of coursework, including a minimum of six hours of English, three hours of mathematics, three hours of social science, and three hours of computer science. Ozarka's AAS programs require four semesters.

The Associate of Arts requires 62 hours, including 44 hours of general education requirements and 18 hours of electives directed toward the expected major at the baccalaureate level. The program can be completed in four semesters but may take longer if the student needs to take developmental courses before enrolling in college-level English or mathematics.

Requirements for certificates and degrees can be found in the Catalog on pages 68-130. For general education requirements, see pages 65-66.

### **Developmental and Adult Education**

Ozarka College follows an open admissions policy and, as a result, admits students who may require remediation before taking required Mathematics and English courses. The table below shows the College's standing in comparison with other technical, community, and four-year public colleges in Arkansas.

### Students Needing Remediation

Institutions 1998	Math		English		Reading	
	# Tested	% of Freshmen	# Tested	% of Freshmen	# Tested	% of Freshmen
<b>Ozarka</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>78.8</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>44.9</b>
All 2-Yr.	6,589	73.6	6,589	50.7	6,589	42.1
All 4-Yr.	10,181	36.7	10,181	23.3	10,181	19.8
All Arkansas Institutions	18,470	51.6	18,470	34.3	18,470	28.8

Developmental courses are available on campus to bring students up to college level. These courses do not earn college credit but do allow under-prepared students, both GED and high school graduates, to build necessary skills in mathematics, English, and reading. These courses also expose GED graduates to students enrolled in Ozarka's technical and transfer programs, building confidence that they too can succeed in the higher education environment. Available courses include Fundamentals of Arithmetic, Fundamentals of Algebra, Intermediate Algebra, Reading Improvement, Beginning Writing, and Practical Writing.

In addition, beginning in the fall of 2000, any student testing at a developmental level in two or more areas must enroll in a new developmental course, Foundations of College Success, to learn study and time management skills. Another change mandates that entering students whose reading level is not adequate for collegiate work must enroll in Reading Improvement during their first semester. The faculty continue to discuss other curricular and student service modifications which might enhance the success of under-prepared students.

The Learning Laboratory is an important adjunct to developmental courses, providing one-on-one tutoring and computer-assisted instruction to reinforce concepts presented in classes. In some cases instructors may require developmental students to work an assigned

number of hours each week in the Learning Laboratory. The Lab also meets the needs of students who are not prepared to enroll in developmental mathematics and English classes but instead need more basic levels of instruction. In the fall of 1999, 251 students used the Learning Lab in October. With 2,397 logins recorded, the Lab saw an average total of 80 user-hours per day during that month.

During the 1999-2000 school year, instructors of developmental courses adopted a revised assessment plan to evaluate the effectiveness of remedial courses on the Ozarka campus. Results showed that about 65 percent of students enrolled in developmental English and mathematics successfully completed those courses, earning a C or better. In reading, however, less than 60 percent succeeded. Although the total number of students enrolled in reading was small enough that percentage results were heavily affected by results for a few students, the faculty needs to consider what actions might be necessary to improve this rate. An additional reading course is being discussed to better serve students who need extra help with reading at a college level. Across the board, most students not succeeding either withdrew or simply quit coming to class.

The Adult Education program is an important component of Ozarka College, and Adult Education concerns are reflected in the institutional objectives developed through the planning process. Program goals are given on page 58 of the 1999-2000 catalog. The program employs an administrator, a correctional counselor/instructor, two on-campus instructors, and a secretary. Varying numbers of part-time instructors teach satellite classes throughout the service area. In addition, the Ozarka Special Needs Evaluator directs all testing connected with the program. This sharing of responsibilities ensures that the Adult Education program is fully integrated into the organization and administration of Ozarka

College. Ozarka is in the process of building an Adult Education Center. To assist with the building, a Memorial Building Fund has been established in memory of Adult Education instructor Wyth Duke.

ABE and GED instruction is available during the day in the Learning Laboratory on the Ozarka campus. An individualized educational plan based on computer-aided instruction, small group instruction, and one-on-one tutoring allows every student to begin at an appropriate level and progress at his or her own pace. ABE and GED classes offering small-group or individualized instruction meet in the evening in several locations. A special group of satellite classes constitutes the correctional program, which mainly serves under-educated youth offenders who do not adjust well to normal class offerings. Computer literacy classes are also held on campus and in a variety of satellite locations.

The Adult Education program serves some special constituencies. The Adult Education Center and the Learning Laboratory on the Ozarka campus are both handicapped accessible, so that the program can serve students with challenging conditions. The administrator works with area Literacy Councils to identify potential students with low reading skills.

The Adult Education program serves students in ABE, GED, and computer literacy classes. In 1999-2000, Ozarka's GED passage rate was 77 percent. Assessment of adult education focuses on measures required by the state's "Efficient and Effective" report. They include items such as a passage rate of at least 75 percent, interest in further education, and obtaining or advancing on the job.

## Learning Resources

Ozarka College's major learning resources include the library, the Learning Laboratory, and the SSS Laboratory. The library is an integral part of the educational process at Ozarka, its mission being to support the efforts of the College as it strives to meet the higher education needs of the community and to serve as an educational facility where students and faculty may learn new methods of accessing and retrieving information to facilitate the learning process.

Goals of the Ozarka library include providing up-to-date access to information resources that will support the needs of the College; educating patrons in critical use of information access points and resources; functioning as a resource in providing access to information and materials in other libraries through the development of regional and national information networks and system; providing a collection of materials relevant to professional development and enrichment for staff members; providing qualified professional personnel to serve students, faculty, and staff and evaluate services and activities on a continuing basis; serving as a resource to Ozarka patrons by providing a balance of materials, thus allowing development of critical analysis and promoting informed judgment; serving as a resource to patrons by providing information resources and training in information access for lifelong learning.

The library provides the following services:

1. Reference (information assistance, interlibrary loan, Internet access, and library use);
2. Circulation (reserve shelf, check-outs, and periodicals);
3. Technical (acquisitions, cataloging, and equipment);
4. Audiovisual (projectors, screens, and audiovisual equipment);

5. Administration (supervision, planning, and cooperative agreements);
6. Instructional (research orientation and one-on-one).

Library policies and procedures are developed and implemented by the Librarian under the direction of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and, as necessary, approved by the Board of Trustees. The library's Advisory Committee also assists in the preparation and updating of the Policy Manual. The Library Mission Statement and Goals and fifteen specific policies help achieve uniform and consistent methods of library management: Challenged Materials Policy, Circulation Policy, Collection Development Policy, Community Patronage Policy, Copyright Policy, Fine Policy, Gift Policy, Interlibrary Loan Policies and Procedures, Lost or Damaged Materials Policy, Reciprocal Agreements, Reserve Policy, Selection Policy, Software Policy, Weeding Policy, and Disability Policy. A Circulation Policies and Procedures Manual is available. Both of the manuals are kept at the circulation desk and are available in the Resource Room.

The Advisory Committee is composed of the Librarian, faculty, area school and public librarians, community members, and a student representative. It meets twice a year to plan library development. This committee promotes the library within the community and provides advice and guidance to the Librarian in the acquisition process and in other matters such as the effectiveness of library services.

Currently the library is open 54 hours per week during regular terms and 42 hours during the summer semester. Hours during the fall and spring semesters are set to provide services for the evening students and community users who cannot come to the library during the day. Open hours for the fall and spring semesters are from 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Friday. In addition, the library opens for additional hours upon request from instructors.

The Librarian works closely with faculty to identify instructional materials which will support the curriculum. She is actively involved in discussions of curriculum development and approval, serving on the Curriculum Committee. She plans for the identification and acquisition of resources to support curricular changes and prepares appropriate bibliographic/library instruction. All students and faculty are encouraged to make recommendations for library acquisitions. The Institutional Improvement Committee of the Faculty Council has developed a Collection Evaluation Form that faculty use to evaluate the library's coverage of content areas and to recommend additions to or deletions from the collection.

The library's Selection Policy emphasizes the appropriateness and adequacy of the collection in relation to the institutional mission and philosophy, instructional programs and services, and student learning goals. In the selection of materials, the library staff relies on faculty, staff, student input, and Interlibrary Loan requests, and uses selection aids when adopting periodicals, books, online services and databases, and other specialized materials. Policies are adjusted when there is a demonstrated need for a change.

Much has been accomplished in library development since the conversion to collegiate status:

1. Beginning in 1991, ADHE assisted all technical colleges by providing workshops and guidance. ADHE also supported the move to automate college libraries by providing funds to all the new technical colleges. Because most of the technical colleges bought the same system, there is consistency among this group of schools.
2. Library of Congress Classification is used to stay consistent with four-year institutions.

3. Periodicals have grown from 500 (paper form and CD-ROM) to over 2,000 (print, CD-ROM, and Internet Online).
4. AL@N (Interlibrary Loan) is used to borrow information from other libraries anywhere in Arkansas or the United States.
5. The collection has grown from 1,700 to over 9,000 books.
6. Policies are in place to insure uniformity of library functions and services.
7. The library maintains day and evening hours of operation to increase availability to students.
8. Library circulation rose from 1,200 items per year in 1990 to 5,700 in 1999.
9. The Stone County Education Center at Mountain View has the start of a small reference library. Each year for the next five years, \$5000.00 has been designated for that campus to improve information access.

According to several surveys, students, faculty, and staff feel they have been well served by the library. Ninety-eight percent of respondents to the latest Alumni Survey agreed they knew how to use a library to find needed information. Ninety percent of faculty and staff indicated that on the 2000 Employee Opinion Survey they were satisfied or very satisfied with the ability of students to use the library for research. Eighty-seven percent were satisfied with adequacy of materials in the library, and 86 percent were satisfied with media/audiovisual services and equipment. In the most recent Student Opinion Survey, 90 percent were positive about the adequacy of library holdings, 95 percent were pleased with instruction in library research skills, and 99 percent found library personnel helpful.

Another major learning resource at Ozarka is the Learning Lab. Located in the John E. Miller Education Complex, the Lab makes extensive use of computers to offer individualized instruction in basic skills areas essential in college-level-courses, GED-level classes, and many life pursuits. Students use the Lab to do work assignments, write research

papers, and complete other course-related exercises. The Lab is open to all regularly enrolled Ozarka College students, as well as to any interested members of the community, Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The College also expects to identify a student worker to keep the Lab open for four hours on Saturdays. Students may schedule hours in the Lab at their own convenience to accommodate their class and work schedules.

Student Support Services (SSS) is a federally-funded (Title IV) program designed to help low-income, first-generation students and those with disabilities to achieve their academic potential throughout their enrollment at Ozarka and beyond. Some 200 students are admitted the SSS program and advised on academic, career, and financial matters through group and peer tutoring, workshops, computer-aided instruction, and one-on-one counseling. All services are provided to qualified students free of charge. A small computer lab is available on the main campus to allow professional staff and peer tutors to assist students with assignments. Staff also visit the Stone County Education Center on a regular basis.

SSS staff help students make a smooth transition from Ozarka to other educational institutions. The program sponsors visits to four-year colleges and universities to help students choose the setting that best suits them and their educational plans.

In addition to on-campus services and transfer trips, SSS helps broaden students' horizons by exposure to various cultural events. Several times a year, SSS sponsors trips to museums, plays, art exhibits, and other events.

## **Assessment of Student Learning**

Assessment of student learning takes place while students are enrolled and after they leave Ozarka, whether or not they complete an educational program. Faculty members, adult

education staff, and the Director of Continuing Education and Business Outreach develop lists of desired student outcomes for each individual program area. The two to four most important outcomes, as defined by the faculty, are targeted for assessment. Assessment tools and techniques (as well as a feedback loop to be used to improve instruction) are also determined by the faculty.

Responsibility for administering the assessment program lies with the Vice President for Planning and Assessment, with assistance from the division chairs and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Results come to the VPPA, who analyzes them and reports the results to faculty, administration, and students, as appropriate. Annually, needed changes are made according to assessment results, and those findings are incorporated into next year's assessment plan. Assessment at Ozarka is more than just the written plan: it is a program with widespread involvement and continuing efforts to improve the teaching and learning processes.

The assessment plan has been regularly reviewed and updated since its inception in 1993 and is now in its third written form. In May 1997, faculty learned interactive classroom techniques which could help in developing meaningful assessment and the next fall began to incorporate various techniques into their classroom activities. At the end of the spring 1999 semester, faculty challenged themselves to rework the entire plan for assessment of student learning outcomes. During the fall of 1999, all faculty met by disciplines, and by December all disciplines, along with developmental education, adult education, continuing education, and the library, had completed their plans and begun implementation of new measures. Also, in November 1999, the VPPA offered faculty a mini-course on Angelo and Cross's

Classroom Assessment Techniques. The spring 2000 Employee Opinion Survey showed 96 percent satisfaction with information gained from assessment activities.

Student learning outcomes are grouped within four different categories: general education, major field, adult education, and continuing education and business outreach. For all technical certificate and degree programs, one or more aspects of general education are examined. Desired outcomes in general education include skills in library research, critical thinking and problem solving, writing, mathematical reasoning and communication, appreciation of diversity, and an understanding of the value of general education in one's own life.

Students who have graduated are questioned about the adequacy of their general education, the thoroughness of skills learned in technical programs, and their perception of what Ozarka added to their lives. After leaving Ozarka, students are expected to continue to use and apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills learned during their coursework.

Student learning outcomes in the major field include development of at least minimum competency in the necessary skills, whether these skills are directed at employment or transfer to a four-year institution of higher education. Also, AA students are expected to perform well on the CAAP test.

### **Strengths**

1. Ozarka has a low student:instructor ratio.
2. Ozarka faculty and staff are highly motivated to assist students in their educational endeavors.
3. Ozarka maintains excellent tutoring services and other student assistance through SSS.

4. Ozarka dedicates a full-time administrative position to planning and assessment so that planning and assessment activities can give direction to the prioritized goals of the institution.
5. Ozarka has a strong commitment to adult education evidenced by hiring a full-time developmental instructor and developing plans to build an adult education center.
6. Ozarka exemplifies a diversified commitment to the community by also serving, through its technical programs, those not desiring a four-year college education.
7. Ozarka has determined priorities for additional degree programs and supporting facilities.
8. Ozarka offers a collection of distance learning programs, including web-based instruction, telecourses, interactive videoconferencing-based courses, Stone County Education Center programs, and concurrent offerings at local high schools.

### **Challenges**

1. Ozarka does not provide placement services to aid students in finding jobs in their field following completion of technical programs.
2. Employment opportunities in the region limit the options for adding technical programs which will prepare graduates for existing jobs.
3. As attending college becomes a more popular option than ever before in our service area, adequate developmental education becomes a bigger challenge.

### **Recommendations**

1. Ozarka needs to explore the option of adding additional staff devoted to placement and/or develop a placement policy.
2. Ozarka needs to analyze the job market in the area and seek out appropriate technical programs.
3. Ozarka needs to consider options for making developmental courses more effective, such as clustering them prior to students' taking more advanced courses.

***CRITERION III: The institution is accomplishing its . . . other purposes.***

**Other Purposes**

Besides its objectives for providing for-credit instruction, adult education, and developmental education, Ozarka College also stresses its commitment to objectives for continuing education, student support, and community service. Institutional assessment helps determine how well these objectives are met.

**Continuing Education**

The non-credit offerings at Ozarka College can be divided into two categories, both managed by the Director of Continuing Education and Business Outreach: community education/personal enrichment and business outreach/workforce development. These areas sometimes overlap, i.e., a CPR training class where some attend for personal knowledge and others are sponsored by their employers to obtain safety training.

Continuing education programs provide non-credit opportunities for individuals who wish to explore new areas of interest, enrich their personal lives, enhance use of leisure time, or gain understanding of their culture and environment. The primary focus of the continuing education program is to respond to interests and needs of area communities. Special effort is taken to offer a variety of programs which may interest a broad range of individuals, whether it be a summer youth project or an exercise class for senior adults. Courses are planned and offered based on expression of interest in the subject. Data collection involves telephone surveys and reference to requests for additional courses on registration forms completed by students who enroll in other continuing education classes.

Fees for continuing education courses include a cost-recovery factor, with the schedule arranged to accommodate the group as much as possible. Depending on the nature

of the course, classes will meet on campus in Melbourne or Mountain View when resources are available only in those locations, as in the case of Internet training or web page design, where network access is required. In addition to on-campus offerings, an effort is made to identify sites within various communities to hold classes in convenient locations throughout the service area. For example, local public schools have been outstanding partners in allowing classrooms to be used at night and on weekends for continuing education classes with Ozarka instructors. Local churches and community centers are also sites used for non-credit coursework in the four-county area.

Examples of courses offered through Continuing Education include graphology, basic sign language, step aerobics, oil painting, holiday cooking, basic stock market, and introductory piano. Ozarka also hosts Kids College, a summer youth education program which brings students from grades 1 through 12 on campus for drama, criminology, art, dance, science, computer applications, cooking, and other classes.

Business outreach and workforce development programs are targeted to local businesses or industry or are developed upon request for a specific company. Sometimes workforce training takes place as a result of common demands within various businesses and industries. At other times, workforce development courses are scheduled as an exclusive offering for one company. Upon request from the business or industry, classes are generally scheduled to take place at the company site for the convenience of the employees involved in the training. When asked to host the training, Ozarka has adequate space for workforce development in the industry training room of the Miller Education Complex. Also, the Continuing Education/Business Outreach Office has two sets of portable computers to support software training in a variety of locations on or off campus.

The first staff member dedicated directly to continuing education was hired in 1994 and was also responsible for marketing and public relations. Before that, little was done about offering courses to support personal enrichment, and business outreach was handled by a training coordinator shared with another two-year college. Since then, Ozarka has partnered with Arkansas' Department of Workforce Education and the Division of Economic Development to identify and respond to the training needs of businesses and industries in the service area. Customized training coordinators from these state departments work with Ozarka's Director of Continuing Education and Business Outreach to recommend, develop, and deliver specific customized training as needed. Ozarka has committed one staff person full time since 1997 just to continuing education and business outreach.

In addition to development of programs with the Customized Training Coordinator, the Director consults with the Vice President for Academic Affairs to provide special job-training projects such as child care orientation, emergency medical technician basic courses, and real estate continuing education seminars, as well as internal staff development sessions. On-campus professional development projects include training on Microsoft Word, using email on campus, and safety issues. In some cases, such as childcare and EMT training, what began as a non-credit program has developed into a for-credit Certificate of Proficiency program.

In June 1999, the Director completed certification to provide AchieveGlobal (formerly Zenger-Miller) skill modules in response to requests from a local industry for team concept and leadership training. AchieveGlobal trainers have access to several skill modules designed to be packaged according to an industry's specific goals to improve employee performance. At present, relatively few certified trainers are located in Arkansas. Ozarka

has been able to provide extensive training in this area for Unifirst, a uniform company in Sharp County.

As Arkansas moves forward with implementation of the Federal Workforce Investment Act, Ozarka has taken an active role in supporting the State WIA Board by attending policy-making and strategic planning sessions. At the local level, Ozarka works with county elected officials and TEA (Transitional Employment Assistance) Coalitions to develop workforce readiness curricula for clients who are moving from welfare to work. The TEA Coalition has designated funding to sponsor students who enroll in college courses at Ozarka. Also in conjunction with the local WIA boards, Ozarka hosts the county job coordinators who serve as liaisons between employers and students who are preparing to enter the world of work.

## **Recruitment**

Recruitment activities are the primary responsibility of the Director of Student Services/Registrar. Assistance in providing comprehensive recruiting services involves not only the DSS/R but also the Counselor, the Vice President for Planning and Assessment, who is responsible for marketing activities, and the Director of Continuing Education and Business Outreach. These individuals make up the recruitment team which is supported by the College's administration, faculty, and staff. Ozarka does not have an employee dedicated solely to recruitment and admissions.

The financial aid office also plays an important role in recruitment because availability of grants, loans, and scholarships is key to students' ability to enroll in college. The Director of Continuing Education and Business Outreach, Counselor, and Director of Student Services represent Ozarka at college fairs and career days as well as drop-in visits to

area high schools at least two or three times per semester to show accessibility to high school counselors.

The Student Services staff, recruitment team, and the Counseling Advisory Committee provide essential input into the recruitment process. The Counseling Advisory Committee includes local high school counselors in its make-up so that it also provides a forum for their suggestions and comments on the effectiveness of College recruiting strategies.

Strong enrollments continue to indicate that Ozarka College has developed a sound plan for recruitment of prospective students. As previously mentioned, recruitment team members regularly visit local public schools. Selected high schools in Central and Northeast Arkansas are also targeted for promotion of Ozarka's specialty programs such as culinary arts and physical therapist assistant. These outreach efforts are enhanced by encouraging students to visit campus for tours or attend activities hosted by the College. A High School College Planning Day is sponsored by Ozarka College each fall in cooperation with the Arkansas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (ArkACRAO), allowing approximately 500 local high school seniors and juniors to visit campus and meet with representatives from lending institutions, military services, other educational institutions, and local businesses/industries. Another means of bringing high school students to Ozarka is competitions the College sponsors or hosts for area high school students, such as Quiz Bowl, choral festivals, and business information technology competitions for members of Future Business Leaders of America.

In efforts to reach non-traditional students, an adult education recruitment plan facilitates the transition of Adult Basic Education/GED graduates into degree or certificate

programs at Ozarka. The Continuing Education Department also serves as an avenue to reach adult learners who are interested in expanding their education.

The Student Ambassador program implemented in 1996 allows concurrently enrolled students at local high schools to receive scholarships to serve as ambassadors to assist with recruitment efforts in their area. This program is being revamped to allow high school counselors more flexibility in recommending concurrent students who will represent Ozarka and be recognized at a spring luncheon. The Ambassadors receive a scholarship from the College Foundation Board and also are provided training on the mission and goals of Ozarka, the recruitment process and their role as liaisons between area students, counselors and Ozarka staff.

Recruitment materials have been updated on a regular basis. In-house design allows customization of the materials, more accurately targeting the prospective student market. A four-color general brochure is distributed at career fairs and high school visits. Departmental brochures are also available based on individual student interest. Catalogs, applications, and financial aid brochures are offered to all students. Schedules are mailed each semester to all postal patrons in the service area plus selected neighboring ZIP codes.

Media promotion of Ozarka activities is comprehensive. News releases are mailed to area newspapers, radio, and local cable stations on a weekly basis. Comprehensive radio advertising is broadcast over stations covering the service area, while newspaper advertising emphasizes registration periods. Two billboards rotate through different locations within the service area. Notices are also posted on school and community kiosks as appropriate. Examples of advertising items are available in the Resource Room.

## **Student Services**

The mission of student services compliments the overall mission of Ozarka College, with support provided to students by various components of the College. Student services include advising, career planning, counseling, testing, tutoring, financial aid, records management, student activities, and organizations.

### **Student Support Services**

An important service offered to students at Ozarka College is the Student Support Services program (SSS), which helps students expand their knowledge both on and off campus. Currently in the final year of a four-year grant supported by Title IV, SSS is requesting renewal of its funding. The program serves students who are low-income, disabled, and/or first generation college students. Academic goals of the SSS program include ensuring that each year 80 percent of participants maintain or exceed a 2.00 grade point average; 75 percent are retained; 20 percent of students pursuing an Associate of Arts degree transfer to a four-year college or university; and 20 percent of eligible sophomore participants graduate. Through tutoring, academic advising, transfer advising, campus visits, and provision of a small computer lab, Ozarka's SSS program has met or exceeded all of these goals on each of its annual federal reports. Responses on the 1999 Student Opinion Survey showed 94 percent satisfaction with availability of help from SSS and 93 percent satisfaction with effectiveness of the tutoring offered.

The most used services by far include peer tutoring and the computer lab. Peer tutors are available to all SSS students at both the Melbourne and Mountain View campuses. The SSS computer lab on the main campus operates during extended hours two nights a week and

has grown by 64 percent since its inception. With the increase in the number of computers, however, lack of space is now a concern.

Realizing that quality education involves more than classroom instruction, SSS exposes students to a variety of cultural activities otherwise not available to them in Ozarka's rural service area. Student surveys revealed that students were interested in trips that would expose them to diverse activities. SSS has striven to provide more variety in cultural enrichment trips to attract more participants to take advantage of the cultural awareness available through SSS funding.

## **Counseling**

The Counseling Office provides other services--counseling, advising, and testing--to the general student body. Two kinds of counseling are available for all students. The first type involves academic planning and advising and assisting with academic placement of students. The second type is professional personal counseling which may include assistance in career planning, assessment of personal strengths, and/or help with personal challenges and issues that students face outside the classroom. Student satisfaction with counseling is strong, as shown by the most recent Student Opinion Survey. Availability of the Counselor and Counselor effectiveness both earned 96 percent approval, and accuracy of information provided was satisfactory to 97 percent. Although Ozarka has only one Counselor, students also obtain advising and assistance from SSS and from faculty advisors.

The Counselor is responsible for supporting educational success of students through academic, career, and personal advisement. Counseling activities specifically include

1. Planning recruitment activities and new student orientation;
2. Assisting students in applying for scholarships and financial aid;

3. Testing and test interpretation for self-awareness and academic placement;
4. Acting as a liaison between students and Student Support Services;
5. Counseling and referring students for services not provided by Ozarka, i.e., rehabilitation, domestic violence or mental health services;
6. Providing students with career information such as college catalogs, job placement information, etc.;
7. Assisting students in transferring to four-year colleges and universities.

The College recognizes the need for educational and career assessment. Testing helps the student explore educational and vocational choices and offers insight into individual strengths and abilities. Ozarka is a national testing center for the ACT. The ASSET placement test and other achievement, aptitude, interest, and personality assessments and inventories are also available to students. The Counselor provides test interpretation and advising based on student score reports.

### **Financial Aid**

The Financial Aid Office maintains records for all state, federal, and private financial aid programs and awards financial assistance to eligible students. The primary purpose of this office is to provide students with an understanding of the financial aid process and to help students defray the cost of their education through a Pell Grant, student loan, or other type of student aid. The number of unduplicated recipients of Federal Pell Grants at Ozarka for 1999-2000 was 416, or approximately 35 percent of total annualized student enrollment (unduplicated headcount of 1192). Numerous students also received loans, state grants, scholarships, waivers, JTPA funding, Rehabilitation Service funds, or other types of financial aid. To receive assistance, students must meet federal/state eligibility requirements as well

as criteria developed by Ozarka College. Information about the types of student aid available can be found in the Catalog and is also readily accessible on Ozarka's webpage.

Federal financial aid (Pell Grant and Stafford Loans) has increased over the past few years as enrollment has grown:

1994-95	\$238,541
1995-96	\$275,761
1996-97	\$394,000
1997-98	\$573,520
1998-99	\$865,518
1999-00	\$1,070,578

The financial aid officer holds seminars, workshops, and informational programs at public schools, career fairs, civic organization meetings, and other events to promote availability of student assistance opportunities. Evening financial aid workshops are scheduled for those who are unable to attend during regular working hours, primarily targeting parents of high school students. Information is channeled to those students as well during personal financial aid counseling with the financial aid officer. The 1999 Student Opinion Survey showed high rates of satisfaction with availability of the financial aid officer (95 percent), her effectiveness (96 percent), and accuracy of information provided (97 percent). Ozarka has one financial aid officer, with secretarial support to assist with clerical tasks.

Students primarily receive financial aid through Pell Grants, Federal Stafford Loans, Veterans Administration, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Workforce Investment Act, Job Training Partnership Act (now being phased out), Arkansas State Assistance Grants, and Ozarka Foundation Scholarships. Other possible sources include MIA/KIA Scholarship, Arkansas National Guard Tuition Assistance Program, Native American Scholarship, Society

for Human Resource Management of Western Arkansas Scholarship, Wear and Share Vocational Scholarship, and Department of Human Services Scholarship Program. Several area civic groups and businesses also provide scholarships, including KTLO radio of Mountain Home, Farm Bureau, Kiwanis, Lions, and others. Federal Work-Study is available to Ozarka students for the first time this fall.

When classes are in session, a representative from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services is on campus biweekly for consultation and student eligibility interviews. WIA representatives visit the campus to talk with potential students for their programs. These visits are scheduled and announced in the campus newspaper and on the webpage.

Students not eligible for sufficient financial aid from other sources have the opportunity to participate in Ozarka's work-study program to help with the costs associated with attending college. These students receive work assignments that mesh with their course schedule. Ozarka also offers institutional scholarships such as Student Ambassadors, Ozarka Foundation Awards, and Academic Excellence Transfer Scholarship. In 1999 the Ozarka Foundation pledged to make work-study, scholarship, and/or loan funds available to any student in good standing whose continuance in school was threatened by financial problems.

### **Records Management**

The Director of Student Services/Registrar and the Institutional Research Officer are responsible for all maintenance of student records and enrollment management. Records for the past six years are maintained in a computer database with a duplicate back-up on file with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. Access to the student records program is limited to approved Ozarka personnel and requires the use of a password. Records from Ozarka Vocational-Technical School have been difficult to access in a timely manner. In

efforts to improve service to alumni and former students, these records are being scanned and will become accessible from compact disks, allowing records to be accessed more conveniently, with duplicates stored off-campus in a protective environment.

### **Data Collection**

The Registrar, Institutional Research Officer, and Applications Programmer assemble data related to admissions, placement, continuing education, graduation, and withdrawal of the student population. The College also collects data concerning student progress, financial aid, on-campus programs, off-site delivery of courses, and non-credit training. The Registrar, Counselor, and Institutional Research Officer maintain and evaluate student progress reports. Availability of an integrated student data system and hiring of the programmer to extract information necessary to prepare reports has simplified the process considerably since 1995.

Working closely with the records management team, the Vice President for Planning and Assessment tracks graduates by sending each an Alumni Survey one semester after completion of a certificate or degree program. She also administers an Entering Student Survey to determine which elements of the recruiting process are most effective and a Non-Returning Student Survey to identify any areas of the College needing improvement to increase retention. In addition, the VPPA coordinates various additional surveys and tracking efforts that are part of the Institutional Assessment Plan, compiles data, and disseminates information to appropriate personnel. Adult Education staff surveys students who have completed GED or Adult Education courses.

## **Student Organizations**

Ozarka College encourages activities both inside and outside the classroom to enrich and supplement learning by providing opportunities for networking, teamwork, and leadership. A variety of organizations address students' varied interests.

The Ozarka Student Council promotes leadership skills and social interaction by planning, scheduling, and participating in school-wide events that enhance the non-instructional aspects of college life. In recent years, they have sponsored festivals, constructed floats for local parades, held fundraising events to benefit the campus, and participated in community service days in Melbourne. Every student group is represented, and at-large members are elected as well.

An international academic honors fraternity, Phi Theta Kappa, provides a forum for students with high academic achievement. Students who achieve an overall 3.50 grade point average on twelve or more credit hours toward an associate degree qualify for membership. Members conduct a community project, such as voter registration or community clean-up, each semester. At graduation, Phi Theta Kappa members are recognized with honor stoles and seals on their diplomas. Beta Alpha Eta chapter has been active on campus since 1994.

The Drama Club has developed in recent years to give students more exposure to the benefits of the theater and at the same time to bring more cultural events into the community. Drama Club sponsors events such as The Studio Players, a traveling troupe, for productions such as "The Foreigner" and "Romeo and Juliet." The club's challenge includes attending more cultural events as well as providing theater projects on campus.

Health Occupation Students of America is open to all allied health students. This organization promotes leadership, fosters networking, builds confidence, and provides

educational opportunities and competitive events. The members perform annual community service projects that include Adopt-a-Highway clean up, blood pressure clinics at area fairs, cystic fibrosis walk, and volunteer time at area Headstart programs. Each student is expected to complete six hours of community service each semester.

All students have the opportunity to be members of Phi Beta Lambda. The goals of this organization are to develop competent, aggressive business leadership, strengthen student confidence, create an interest in and understanding of American business enterprise, encourage individual projects, develop character, foster patriotism, encourage management skills, and facilitate the transition from school to the world of work. Phi Beta Lambda membership has doubled for the 1999-2000 academic year over preceding years. Members have completed many activities including a Red Cross Blood Drive, fall leadership conference, fundraiser for Arkansas Children's Hospital, and an American Enterprise Day Project. Members also assist with new student orientation and the College Planning Day.

The Physical Therapist Assistants Club provides support and fellowship for PTA students, promotes professional ethics, and provides a knowledge base and mentorship for active and past members. The PTA Club participates in selected community service projects and fundraisers. For the past two summers, they have provided a PT clinic on campus for staff as well as the community.

Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA) is open to students, former students, and other interested persons in the fields of culinary arts and automotive service technology. The purpose of VICA is to help students develop service and leadership skills through activities and competitions. The automotive service students participate in skill competitions yearly, and, when awarded state honors, they may compete nationally. The culinary arts

group provides structure to enhance communication, leadership, management, teamwork, and customer service skills. Their main focus has been to get students involved in local, state, and national activities. In 2000, members participated in both state and national skills competitions.

On campus, the Baptist Student Union, while not an official College organization, hosts a monthly group luncheon in addition to small student group meetings throughout the semester. Its mission includes social and fellowship activities and development of a strong support group for studies.

### **Student Honors**

At the end of each semester, the President's List and individual student awards are announced to the local media. Each department selects a Student of the Semester and then a Student of the Year, who is recognized at graduation. Plaques listing recipients of the Student of the Year award remain on display in the student center. Guidelines to student honors are printed in the catalog.

Students in certificate and degree programs are eligible to graduate with honors or high honors from Ozarka College, based on overall grade point average. These students are also recognized at graduation.

### **Community Service**

Ozarka College offers its facilities to the public at large. Area residents are encouraged to use the library and the Learning Lab, and many also use the student center for birthday parties, wedding receptions, anniversary celebrations, and school reunions. Some organizations borrow equipment for community functions. Several groups such as the Melbourne Area Chamber of Commerce, Melbourne Lions Club, Retired Teachers of Izard

County, and Izard County Historical Society, use Ozarka's facilities for their regular meetings. The North Central Arkansas Education Service Center regularly holds seminars on campus, and many local boards of directors use conference meeting rooms for occasional business meetings. In 2000, the Census Bureau has used rooms on campus to test and train census workers. Ozarka serves as a polling place in all area elections.

The culinary program and food services staff at Ozarka frequently cater to various organizations as well as to private parties, both on and off campus. On campus, this service offers convenience for day-long activities and seminars since participants can have meals without going to another location.

Ozarka personnel represent a variety of communities within and outside the College's four-county area and are active on local, county, and state levels. Some participate in the Lions Club, Izard County Fair Board, and Arkansas Arts Council while others are active in their local Chambers of Commerce, city government, or church organizations. Some faculty sponsor student organizations which provide community service ranging from food drives to city-wide cleanup. In 1996, Ozarka's Student Council changed the annual Activity Day to a Community Service Day, with students and faculty performing some activity of benefit to the community. In 1999, Ozarka's Phi Beta Lambda raised over \$4,500 for Arkansas Children's Hospital.

Ozarka's John E. Miller Education Complex was designed with community service in mind. Area public schools use the 802-seat auditorium for graduations and recitals while other groups use the facility for plays, concerts, and beauty pageants. Theatrical groups such as the National Performing Arts Company and the Arkansas Repertory Theatre, as well as

Ozarka's own Drama Club, perform on a regular basis to provide cultural events otherwise rarely available in the immediate area.

The Miller Complex also holds a 150-seat lecture hall which is frequently used for training sessions, teacher workshops, and ACT testing. The Miller Complex also includes a conference room and an industrial training area for community use. Any event held on Ozarka's campus is coordinated through the Personnel Officer.

Ozarka Kids Academy, a child care and preschool center owned by the City of Melbourne and operated by the College, has not only provided a convenient daycare service for students but also assisted parents in the community with reliable and education-based care for children. The goal of the Academy is to prepare young children to learn and to give them the basic skills they need to succeed in the formal educational setting beginning with kindergarten. The Academy also serves as an instructional laboratory for students in the College's Early Childhood Development program. In addition, students in the Practical Nursing and Physical Therapist Assistant programs rotate through the Academy as part of their pediatric experience.

An important community service initiated in 1999 is the on-going facilitation of local implementation of the Governor's Initiative for Statewide Technology Advancement. College officials prepared a proposal leading to the selection of IZard and Stone Counties as the rural model demonstration project for the state. This initiative assists community leaders representing education, social services, protective services, government, business and industry, health care, and telecommunications to identify critical community issues and form coalitions to address those issues. State officials, in selecting the proposal, indicated they were especially impressed with Ozarka's success in implementing the ASTRO lab on campus

in Izard County and also its involvement in winning a grant from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation's Rural Jumpstart Technology program to place public access computers throughout Stone County. The Rockefeller grant also funded computer training provided by Ozarka through the Stone County Education Center. The resulting organization, StoneNet, remains active in community education and economic development in that county.

Over sixty area citizens have participated in the GISTA project to date, forming a Steering Committee and task forces to investigate ways to solve the most significant issues by taking advantage of existing technology. The group will inventory such existing resources as fiber optic cable, other high-speed and broad bandwidth transmission lines, electric and telephone lines, and computer networks, allowing analysis of gaps in the technology necessary to support an Information Age economy. Education of the general public about technology, creation of communications and marketing networks, and recruitment of technology-based employers will strengthen the local economy, making it possible for more people to gain meaningful employment without leaving the area. Ozarka is excited to host the meetings of this group and looks forward to providing much of the educational component in the future.

## **Accomplishment of Purposes**

Evidence cited in this and the previous chapter illustrates that the College is achieving the purposes delineated in its institutional mission statement and objectives. Ongoing assessment of both student learning outcomes and effectiveness of services and processes provides data which are used to celebrate accomplishments and to make improvements where they are needed. Ozarka College believes it meets Criterion III.

## **Strengths**

1. Teamwork is effective in maintaining Ozarka's enrollment. Faculty, staff, and administrators work together to implement programs for students based on understanding students' needs and perceptions.
2. A strong financial aid program makes it possible for more students to attend Ozarka and attain their educational goals.
3. Student services are readily available and used regularly by the student body. Counseling services have expanded, and student organizations are growing in numbers to create more options to meet individual student interests.
4. Within the service area, Ozarka College is known as a place where individuals and organizations can access facilities and expertise for a range of activities, from social functions to community development. The availability of the campus and its personnel creates greater awareness and strengthens the bond between campus and community.

## **Challenges**

1. With the steady increase in enrollment but only limited growth in numbers of employees comes the challenge of maintaining personal service to students at an optimal level.
2. Restricted space for the Student Support Services computer lab limits the number of students who can be assisted at one time.
3. Current funding sources limit Ozarka's ability to pursue additional services and programs for students.

## **Recommendations**

1. While use of technology increases the efficiency of employees in delivering programs and services to students, the College should determine whether additional staff members are needed to provide an excellent level of personal service to students.
2. Ozarka College must continue to seek outside sources for funding such as grants or Foundation development.



***CRITERION IV: The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.***

**Institutional Stability**

Ozarka College strives to live up to its mission statement and strengthen its effectiveness in meeting its objectives. One of the state's leading vocational technical schools for sixteen years, Ozarka has also been a leader among the new colleges created in 1991 by Act 1244. The College was in the first group to gain candidacy with North Central in 1993 and permission to award the Associate of Applied Science. In 1994, a focused visit team enthusiastically recommended a change in Ozarka's affiliation status to permit the awarding of the Associate of Arts degree. In the spring of 1995 a visit for continued candidacy resulted in that team's finding that Ozarka met all criteria for accreditation, and a team visiting the campus the next fall recommended accreditation, which was awarded by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education in the spring of 1996.

The College has stimulated a large increase in the college-going rate in its service area and has seen climbing enrollments, in terms of both headcount and FTEs. Increasing numbers of traditional-age students have chosen to enroll here, concentrating in the Associate of Arts program. In addition, stable older technical programs and additional new programs have brought in growing numbers of full-time technical students. Technical student enrollment in the fall of 1999, for instance, was double the numbers in 1991. This pattern suggests that Ozarka will be able to achieve its long-term enrollment goal of 1,000 students with a corresponding FTE count of at least 650. Assisting in meeting this goal is an improved fall-to-fall retention rate which now exceeds the state average for two-year colleges by some fifteen points, rivaling that of some state universities.

Much of Ozarka's growth has come from taking its educational programs to the students, offering both concurrent and regular-enrollment courses at several area high schools as well as establishing the Stone County Education Center in Mountain View. Telecourses and Internet-supported courses also take instruction into students' homes, wherever they live in the service area. Future plans call for continuing expansion of high-school based instruction, as long as qualified instructors are available. The College is also expanding its offerings in Mountain View and beginning to plan for similar outreach centers in Sharp and Fulton Counties. While some growth is anticipated in telecourses and Internet courses, the major way that technology will expand access to instruction is by using interactive videoconferencing to allow instructors in a single location to teach students in distant locations.

Ozarka's finances are stable. Normal state funding, made available through the legislative process, has increased steadily as Arkansas has experienced strong economic growth during the last five years. Projections for the next biennium, however, look for the economy to slow or possibly even drop slightly below the current level. The governor is now calling for salary increases for public school teachers, higher funding of college scholarships, and additional funds to improve staffing at nursing homes. Legislators acknowledge that it is unlikely all of these items can be fully funded in the next legislative session beginning in January 2001 and that state agencies will probably see little increase in their budgets. Growing student enrollments have, on the other hand, meant growing tuition revenue, so strengthening state scholarships could directly benefit Ozarka in that way. Although level legislative funding could make it more difficult to add faculty and staff or expand academic programs and student services, with its history of excellent fiscal management and

conservative budgeting, Ozarka is in no danger of losing ground and will certainly continue to be able to provide programs at current levels.

Other sources of revenue exist. Ozarka received Carl Perkins Title I funding above the \$50,000 for the first time last year and has seen better than a 10 percent increase in that funding for the current year. As technical enrollment and Pell grant awards both climb, the Perkins entitlement will climb with it. This is an important funding source because it benefits the relatively costly technical programs.

The Ozarka Foundation currently holds almost \$75,000 in a bank account and over \$462,000 in certificates of deposit, with interest on these bringing in more than \$20,000 a year. With an endowment management policy in place, the College should move ahead with setting up an endowment with a moderately aggressive investment strategy to increase the yield.

Another potential source of funds lies in grant writing. Ozarka has submitted proposals each of the last two years to Title III's Strengthening Institutions program and has scored only a point or two below the funding level. Further refinement and resubmission of the proposal for a third time could bring in as much as \$1.7 million over a five-year period. Other federal and private funding sources have not been approached, but proposals to the National Science Foundation and various foundations supporting higher education are possibilities.

### **Institutional Planning**

Ozarka began its first formal planning efforts in June 1992. Much of the planning before that, whether for Ozarka Vocational Technical School or Ozarka Technical College, came from external entities such as the state Vocational-Technical Division or the Arkansas

Department of Higher Education. The first formal effort came in response to a request from ADHE for a five-year projection of capital and human resource needs.

Recognizing the need for additional planning beyond facilities and personnel, in early 1993 the Administrative Council developed a list of long-range and short-range goals, which were subsequently submitted to the faculty and staff for their suggestions and confirmation. As a result, the College set four general institutional priorities, with associated objectives and tasks. These priorities included serving students, strengthening the financial base, supporting and encouraging faculty, and strengthening instructional offerings.

The NCA team visiting in 1993, however, found that all this activity occurred with no underlying planning model and recommended development of a model with annual focal points and institutional goals. Since that time, the Administrative Council and Board of Trustees have held an annual planning retreat each May during which the next year's goals and objectives are set, based on information gained through environmental scans, institutional assessment, and achievement of the previous year's objectives. During the summer, this outline is fleshed out, with responsibilities for each objective assumed by an appropriate administrator. In the fall, a planning yearbook is then distributed to all faculty and staff, and activities are implemented to carry out the objectives and move toward the goals. Copies of the current yearbook and those from the last two years are available in the Resource Room.

### **Vision Statement and Long-Term Goals**

In the spring of 1995, all employees were surveyed to determine their vision of the College in ten years. At that year's planning retreat, the Board and Administrative Council conducted a long-range goals-setting exercise in which they ranked sixteen goals statements,

began development of goals for enrollment, retention, and faculty hiring, and discussed appropriate elements of a vision statement which would undergird development of operational plans.

Building on ideas solicited from all employees, the Board and administration developed the following statements:

### **Vision Statement for 2005**

*By 2005 Ozarka Technical College will enroll and retain a significantly larger student body, with high-quality instruction provided by a well-qualified faculty, both adjunct and full-time. The curriculum will meet identified community needs with a range of individual courses organized into a growing number of degree and certificate programs, along with continuing education and business and industry training. An effective administration will insure that an adequate staff, sufficient funds, and up-to-date equipment and facilities are available to support the institutional mission. Through participative governance, regular institutional assessment, careful planning, and ethical behavior, Ozarka Technical College will continue to be a viable and attractive institution of higher education serving north central Arkansas.*

### **Long-term Enrollment Goals**

*By 2000, Ozarka will enroll 650 students, with a FTE enrollment of 350. At that point, the College will set an achievable goal for 2005. To increase numbers, the College will expand off-campus options, offering credit, non-credit, and adult education instruction. Concurrent credit classes will be offered during the school day in area high schools for advanced learners. A significant number of GED graduates will enroll in credit programs as a result of close contact with on-campus programs and instructors while enrolled in GED classes. An expanded admissions/recruiting staff will allow for more direct contact with prospective students. Other adults will be attracted to credit courses through a good experience in continuing education/business outreach classes, some of which will actually be available for credit.*

### **Long-term Retention Goals**

*Ozarka will develop strategies to raise the fall-to-fall retention rate so that it is above the average for Arkansas 2-year colleges. A freshman orientation course, non-traditional programming, enlarged curriculum, emphasis on the importance of regular attendance, early identification of students having problems, and good advising/counseling will combine to improve the retention rate.*

### **Long-term Goals Related to Faculty**

*In hiring new full-time faculty, consideration will be given to a candidate's qualifications to teach in more than one area and to his or her willingness to teach summer, evening, week-end, or off-campus courses. Consideration will be given to opening a new full-time faculty position when adjuncts have been employed on campus to teach 18 or more hours in the field for three semesters in a row. The ratio of adjunct to full-time faculty on campus will not exceed 2:1. The ratio of over-all FTE student enrollment to over-all FTE faculty will not exceed 25:1.*

The vision statement continues to be operative with only a change in the College's name, as adopted in 1999. Enrollment goals, however, have subsequently been adjusted because the College enrolled in excess of 700 students each semester of 1997-1998, with FTE enrollment exceeding 400. This growth largely resulted from increased off-campus options, including opening the Stone County Education Center in Mountain View; distance learning via telecourses; and implementation of new majors, including Criminal Justice Leadership and Physical Therapist Assistant. The new goal, as has been previously mentioned, is 1000 headcount and 650 FTE. The retention goal has also been met for the past two years. Instituting the SSS program appears to have had a dramatic impact on Ozarka's previous difficulties with retention. Faculty goals remain active.

The vision statement and goals have been reviewed regularly since 1995, with the only significant change being the increased enrollment goal. These statements continue to be useful in setting the College's long-range direction.

### **Plans for the Future**

Academic plans for the immediate future call for adding a new technical program in Information Science Technology, to begin accepting students in January 2001. This program, taking advantage of the laboratory already in place to support ASTRO courses, is designed to allow articulation with a four-year information science technology degree being offered by the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Further development of the Associate

of Arts program calls for adding elective courses to allow students to complete degree requirements with courses related to their expected majors at four-year colleges and universities. While the faculty has grown over the past five years, even more full-time faculty will be needed as enrollment increases to 1000. Probable areas which may require additional faculty are fine arts, social science, and natural science.

In order to increase the efficient use of faculty resources, Ozarka is taking advantage of technology by establishing a high-speed link for real-time interactive video between the main campus in Melbourne and the Stone County Center. Now, one instructor can teach students in two locations. Instead of two sections enrolling marginal numbers, one section can enroll an economically viable number of students. As funds become available, the College will expand use of this technology, perhaps adding a second unit at the Stone County Center as well as placing units at other distant sites throughout the service area. Extension of a link to the Hardy area, most likely at Highland High School, could take place within the next year. These units are used to deliver some coursework in “traditional” compressed video style and also supports videoconferencing for faculty meetings, student services (including advising, counseling, and tutoring), and interactions between faculty and students who are enrolled in telecourse and web-supported offerings.

Ozarka continues to look at the usefulness and effectiveness of Internet-supported instruction to increase scheduling flexibility for its students. In line with its strong commitment to personal attention for all students, the College has no plans, however, to market these offerings beyond its region.

In the areas of instructional support and student services, the College will continue to build the library collection and expand access to electronic resources. An additional librarian

or second library technician will be necessary as the student body grows. It is possible that a second financial aid officer will also become necessary to keep up with the growing volume of students receiving financial aid. Addition of federal work-study for the first time this fall may necessitate additional staffing to manage the paperwork and meet student needs. The Student Support Services program also projects a need for more space, equipment and tutors. Also, SSS staff is considering the value of requiring students to participate in community service.

With completion of the proposed nursing/adult education building, the College does not anticipate a need for additional facilities on the main campus, although some renovation may be required on older existing buildings, including enlarging the library. Expansion at Mountain View, however, will require acquisition and remodeling of other buildings comprising the campus setting there. Establishment of off-campus centers in Sharp and Fulton Counties may also be on the horizon in the next five to ten years, requiring the lease or purchase of suitable buildings and the purchase of appropriate furnishings and equipment.

Ozarka will continue to rely on the Legislature and tuition as major sources of funding. The Melbourne city sales tax will pay off bonds for construction of part of the Miller Complex within the next few years. At that time, the College expects to ask the community to continue the tax in support of educational programs. The Ozarka College Foundation is beginning to acquire meaningful resources, and further work to increase the effectiveness of this body would also benefit the College. During the last two years, Ozarka has submitted proposals for Title III funding and is considering continuing to resubmit, based on the relatively high scores earned by the unfunded proposals. Employment of an experienced consultant to refine the proposal may increase its chances for success.

Ozarka is in the process of equipping classrooms with computer-based presentation equipment and software as budget allows and continues to make acquisition of such equipment a priority in various funding proposals. With the acquisition in the fall of 1999 of the ASTRO Lab, a reasonable capability for local production of fairly sophisticated instructional video now exists on campus. This capability will be extended through further acquisition of equipment and software. One room in the new wing of the Miller Complex features lighting and other enhancements designed to assist in quality video production.

In addition, the College has explored using a variety of distance delivery technologies to offer programming to the North Central Unit of the Arkansas Department of Correction at Calico Rock. At this point, the prison administration has expressed interest in receiving distance-delivered training for staff. As Ozarka develops its videoconferencing system for distance learning, the Calico Rock unit will be a projected site.

The ASTRO lab, opened in the fall of 1999, supports a transition from Industrial Age Classrooms to Information Age Learning Centers. The Lab uses technology as a tool to promote project-based learning with teamwork, growth, and problem solving of real-world problems. Future plans for ASTRO call for offering courses to more area high schools and to expand the program to allow for beginning, intermediate, and advanced ASTRO classes. Also, the program is a catalyst for creation of an Information Science Technology program at Ozarka.

Future initiatives for the business lab include the purchase of a scanner, digital camera, and software to enhance digital photographs. Also of benefit would be the purchase of an electronic white board that would allow students to view the screen and keystrokes needed to perform certain functions while in a software program. Strategically placed TV

monitors to project transparencies/slides, computer screen, and Internet images so the student can see what is being done at the instructor's terminal would greatly enhance the learning process. The clarity and seating positions in the current lab limit students' ability to view images from the instructor's monitor.

Of course with all technology, future hardware upgrades will be needed to keep pace with software as it evolves. This type of equipment would be an advantage in many classrooms to permit instructors in various fields to incorporate technological advances into instruction. Strategically-stationed monitors for computer output viewing of transparencies, the Internet, and the instructor's computer screen would be beneficial in assisting the students to learn when in group situations.

## **Ability to Continue**

Ozarka's traditions of maintaining fiscal stability and planning for its future underlie its belief that the College meets Criterion IV and will be able to continue carrying out its institutional mission and objectives while continually strengthening its educational effectiveness.

### **Strengths**

1. Ozarka College's growing enrollments and stable legislative funding base assure its long-term fiscal viability.
2. With a history of planning for its future, Ozarka has the procedures in place to involve a wide range of constituents in continuing to make information- and data-based plans.

### **Challenges**

1. Ozarka will always be challenged to locate additional funding sources for addition of faculty and staff and for upgrading of technology and other necessary equipment.

2. Although the Ozarka College Foundation has over half a million dollars in assets, it has not established a permanent endowment fund.

### **Recommendations**

1. Persistence in seeking federal and private grant dollars must remain in the forefront of the College's plans.
2. The College Foundation should dedicate a portion of its holdings to implement the endowment policy already in place.



***CRITERION V: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.***

**Public Documents**

Ozarka College's public documents are the cornerstone of its relationships and practices. The College has put considerable effort into creating and maintaining a Board Policies and Procedures Manual, an Employee and Adjunct Handbook, and a Catalog. While all will be subject to continuing refinement and expansion, these documents in their present forms "describe accurately and fairly the institution, its operations, and its programs."

**Board Policies and Procedures Manual**

At the time of its visit for initial candidacy in March 1993, Ozarka did not have a formalized policies and procedures manual. Developing one became a priority item for the President, working with the Vice President for Planning and Assessment. During the 1993-94 school year, the Administrative Council reviewed sample documents from other institutions and developed a draft which was studied by the Faculty Council. Only after both administration and faculty agreed on all items was a draft submitted to the Board of Trustees. Sections 1 and 2 were approved in March 1994 and Sections 3, 4, and 5 in May. Since then, many policies have been revised or corrected, and new policies have been added to bring the Policy Manual and the Employee Handbook into agreement. These changes were a joint effort of staff, faculty, administration, and the College Board of Trustees. A few examples include review and revision of the entire Board manual during the spring of 2000 to reflect various changes over time to policies and procedures. Within the last two years, faculty, administration, and Board have made revisions in the College's mission statement and general education philosophy to reflect the ever-changing and evolving nature of the College. Other less sweeping changes, such as adoption of a new standard set of guidelines for syllabi,

have also occurred. These sorts of corrections and additions will continue, assuring that the Board Policies and Procedures Manual and other publications remain up-to-date.

The Manual's five sections describe both internal workings and external relationships:

*Section 1* deals with College governance and begins with the mission statement and institutional objectives. A Code of Ethics sets the tone for the entire Manual as it guides the direction and operations of the College (BPPM 1.01):

**Integrity** - We demand honesty, courtesy, decency, and fairness in all our dealings with our constituencies. Respect must characterize all of our internal and external relationships.

**Quality** - We insist that quality education be the guiding principle in all our actions. This means a continual evaluation of our educational product and methods.

**Performance** - We hold ourselves and each other, as individuals and as an institution of higher education, accountable for our results.

**Leadership** - We are a leader, not a follower. We lead by innovation in meeting the changing needs of our constituencies.

**Independence** - We cherish our academic freedom. We recognize that this freedom, used responsibly, fosters the innovation and initiative which make Ozarka College unique.

**The Individual** - We know that the commitment and contributions of all employees and students will determine our success. Each employee and student must have the opportunity to participate fully, to grow professionally, and to develop to his or her highest potential.

BPPM 1.00 underwent a complete review and modification of the existing mission statement to reflect the evolution of the College. The revised mission statement was approved at the September 1999 meeting of the College's Board of Trustees. BPPM 1.21 specifies that meetings of the Board of Trustees are open to the public, with notice given under the terms of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

*Section 2* deals with personnel policies and procedures, all of which are consistent with the laws of the United States and the State of Arkansas as well as the requirements of ADHE and AHECB. This section addresses issues of integrity in internal relationships and practices: how the College treats its employees. Included are policies on employment (BPPM 2.10, 2.11, 2.17, 2.19), compensation (2.20-2.23), grievances (2.32), nepotism (2.34), smoking (2.41), copyright (2.42), safety and communicable diseases (2.44, 2.45, 2.46, 2.47, 2.49), drug-and alcohol-free workplace (2.47), sexual harassment (2.48), chemical right-to-know (2.49), leave (2.50-58), and benefits (2.60 and 2.61). The College's commitment to equal employment opportunity and affirmative action are addressed in BPPM 2.10.

*Section 3* covers finance and administration, addressing budgeting (BPPM 3.00-3.02), accounting (3.11), student tuition, fees and refunds (3.20, 3.23), travel (3.21), and purchasing (3.22). Other provisions cover safety and security issues (3.31, 3.33, 3.34 and 3.35), parking (3.36), and the use of College property and facilities by outside groups (3.32 and 3.40).

*Section 4* describes the College's educational practices and relationships with students, under academic policies and procedures. Curriculum design and maintenance (4.00-4.06), assessment and assessment standards (4.10, 4.11), grading and advising (4.20, 4.21), Student privacy rights are covered in BPPM 4.23, safety in BBPM 4.24 and non-discrimination in 4.25. BPPM 4.27 addresses academic freedom. Approval of Polls and Questionnaires using the OC name can be found in BPPM 4.28. Graduation requirements, including grades, standards of progress, adding or changing classes, repeating courses, and academic honesty are covered in BPPM 4.30-4.39. The College's Guaranteed Skills policy for graduates of technical programs is found in BPPM 4.40. The policy for articulation agreements is found in BPPM 4.51. Others include Academic clemency (4.54), conditional

admissions (4.55), and VA approval of programs (4.60). Class scheduling, periods, ratio of contact/credit hours and affiliation agreements can be found in BPPM4.61-4.64. Faculty and student health requirements can be found in 4.65. The course cancellation policy is set forth in BPPM 4.67, and the student academic grievance procedure is laid out in BPPM 4.68. In October of 1998, Ozarka adopted a computer usage policy in response to increased use of information technology on campus. This policy, which ensures ethical use of College property, is outlined in BPPM 4.69.

*Section 5* covers student services and describes non-academic practices and relationships with students, including general responsibilities, recruiting/marketing, and admissions requirements (BPPM 5.00-5.24). Standards for student conduct, including due process and non-academic grievance procedures, are found in BPPM 5.40. Accommodation of disabled students' needs is outlined in BPPM 5.60.

Recently completely reviewed and revised, the Board Policies and Procedures Manual accurately reflects the current state of the College and will always be subject to continued refinement, reflecting the growth and concomitant changes in the institution. A copy is available to students, faculty, staff, and the general public in the College library. The team will find a copy in the Resource Room.

### **Employee Handbook**

The College published its first Employee Handbook in 1993. (As Ozarka Vocational Technical School, it had provided a similar document based on state personnel regulations.) With the development the following year of the Board Policies and Procedures Manual, it became clear that many major revisions were needed to keep both documents consistent with each other and with the College Catalog. During the 1993-94 school year, the Professional

Development Committee of the Faculty Council began revising the Handbook to bring it in line with changes that had taken place since Ozarka's transition to collegiate status.

The Handbook is the result of collaboration between faculty, staff, and administration, as all involved tried to produce a thorough, useable document. It does not replace the Board Policy and Procedures Manual but instead distills the information most necessary in the daily work of College employees, along with providing useful general information. Since that time, the Employee handbook has undergone additional revisions to reflect the current status of the College in terms of revisions in the Board Policy and Procedures manual, with the latest revision in process at the present time.

The Employee Handbook contains sections on mission, planning and assessment, committees and councils, professionalism, instructional information, faculty, library/learning resource center, business affairs, employment, compensation and benefits, leave, and general policies. Academic freedom and professional development are covered in the section on professionalism. Teaching loads, various academic policies, and classroom safety are located under Instructional Information. Purchasing and travel regulations are found in the business affairs section. Hiring practices, evaluation procedures, and guidelines covering dismissals are given under employment. The general policies section includes working hours, political activity, outside employment, grievance procedure, sexual harassment, drug-free workplace, smoking, chemical right-to-know, and response to accidents, which covers AIDS precautions.

A copy of either a full-time employee or adjunct instructor handbook, as appropriate, is given to employees 1) at the time of their employment, 2) after revisions, or 3) anytime to those who request one. The adjunct faculty handbook, given out at the time of employment,

was developed after the last NCA visit. This handbook includes aspects of the employee handbook which are pertinent only to this group of employees.

## **Catalog**

In the conversion of Ozarka from a vocational technical school to a college, the Catalog underwent drastic change, with the present document bearing little resemblance to the catalogs published before 1992. The current Catalog reflects Ozarka's collegiate status in its format, language, and tone and describes the institution's operations and programs fairly and accurately. Early in its collegiate history, Ozarka printed both a Catalog and a Student Handbook. Most of the content of the Handbook, however, duplicated information in the Catalog, and since 1994 the College has issued only a Catalog, including in it the student regulations that were the only vital distinguishing feature of the previous Student Handbooks. Copies are provided to all students, faculty, staff, and administrators, as well as to any member of the public who requests one. Many are mailed to prospective students, and entering students have indicated that information in the Catalog played an important role in their decision to enroll at Ozarka.

The Ozarka College 2000-2001 Catalog is clear and useful. It contains dependable consumer information and accurate descriptions of the College's education programs and degree requirements, its learning resources, its admission policies and practices, its academic and non-academic policies and procedures directly affecting students, its charges and refund policies, its assessment activities, its College and individual program accreditation status and the academic credentials of its faculty and administrators. It also reiterates the College's equal opportunity and affirmative action policies. Whenever new information develops after a Catalog had gone to press, public notice is given via press releases to inform students and

the public of any new program offerings or articulation agreements. These types of changes as well as others are also provided by means of bulletin inserts. In 1999, 97 percent of students completing the annual Student Opinion Survey were satisfied with accuracy and helpfulness of the Catalog. The most recent employee survey (spring 2000) found 98 percent satisfaction with the Catalog's accuracy and usefulness.

## **Consistency of Policies and Practices**

Ozarka College's practices are consistent with its policies and grow from the College's Values Statement in BPPM 1.01. Its constituents are aware of policies and procedures contained in the Catalog, Employee Handbook, and Policy Manual because they have been provided with copies or have access to copies and because they have been involved in shaping those policies.

No conflicts of interest exist at the Board, administrative, or faculty levels. Board members have no financial interest in the College and do not engage in businesses that serve the College, in keeping with BPPM 1.20. Neither administration nor faculty is allowed to sell goods or services to Ozarka through a company they own. Policy 2.34 allows the employment of qualified persons related to other employees so long as one relative does not exert administrative control or direction over another. Currently, Ozarka employs some persons who are related, but none directly supervises a relative.

Only two formal grievances have ever been filed against Ozarka College. One employee complaint was found to be without merit by the EEOC. One student complaint related to financial aid was resolved with a communication from the Vice President for Academic Affairs and did not proceed to higher levels of appeal. On the occasions where persons have had complaints (such as a student who is unhappy about a grade), these have

been resolved at the supervisory or lower level. The Vice President for Academic Affairs is the designated individual for maintaining records of student grievances as stated in BPPM 4.68.

Ozarka attempts to ensure that administration, faculty, and students comply with policies regarding academic honesty. Policies are included in every Ozarka catalog and part of the syllabus for each course. Other attempts that ensure this consistency include the VPAA's evaluation/observations of every class, peer evaluations, and student feedback. Technical programs on campus are obligated to abide by the policies and guidelines not only set forth by the College, but also each accrediting/approving body. The individual policies established by the above ensures that each program is operating under the provisions of quality and integrity.

Financial audits, at both federal and state levels, have found no indication of unethical or irresponsible practices. Between 1993 and 1997, the student loan default rate has shown a general pattern of decline from 18.1 percent to only 10.5 percent in 1997, the last year to be reported, after spiking to 21.0 percent in 1996. In all cases, the number of loans made to Ozarka students has been small, leading to a high percentage rate when only a very few individuals fail to repay. All financial dealings are made available to the College's constituents and the public at any time. Audit reports are available as well from the College by request or from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education web site. A "Fact Book" is available from both of the above sources, providing information and statistics on revenues and expenditures.

The most recent employee survey, administered in the spring of 2000, showed overall satisfaction with College practices. Eighty percent or more indicated satisfaction with

opportunities for input into developing policies, employee evaluation procedures, knowledge of what is happening on campus, the way the College manages its resources, concern for individuals, level of trust at the College, respect and appreciation for others, sense of belonging to the campus community, the way individuals' ideas are welcomed and considered, interest in each other's welfare and growth, and general level of morale on campus. Ninety percent or more were satisfied with fairness of grievance procedures, how well the College is meeting its mission, the recruiting process, opportunities for professional development, personnel policies and procedures; news releases (in fact, a review of recent publications, statements, and advertising show that OC describes its institution, operations, and programs accurately and fairly), handicapped accessibility, opportunities to interact with the Board of Trustees, and the way the College plans for its future.

The fall 1999 Student Opinion Survey showed that students were also satisfied with College practices. Ninety percent or more expressed satisfaction with accuracy of information from the College Counselor and financial aid officer, admissions procedures, usefulness of information and advice from academic advisors, quality of instruction, faculty interest in students and availability outside class, faculty and staff attitudes toward students, fairness of student grievance and disciplinary procedures, handicapped accessibility, and fairness of the attendance policy. Responses generally showed satisfaction with the way policies are carried out.

Respondents to a survey of 1998 graduates overwhelmingly agreed with the statements "My instructors cared about me as a person" (90 percent) and "Other Ozarka personnel treated me well"(98 percent). Ninety-two percent agreed that Ozarka improved their quality of life, and 94 percent stated the College helped them have a more productive

life. Ninety-two percent stated they would choose the College again if they were starting over. Surveys of non-returning non-graduates show that the major reasons students do not re-enroll are course of study not available (these students have generally transferred without completing the Associate of Arts degree), family responsibilities, inability to handle both job and coursework, financial difficulties, and health problems.

All visiting NCA teams have found that students and employees are generally satisfied and believe the College behaves in an ethical manner.

### **Access, Equity, and Diversity**

Ozarka College is committed to being accessible to all individuals in its service area and to treating each one equitably. It is also committed to equity in its hiring practices.

These commitments, however, do not translate directly into a very diverse student or employee population. Located in a monocultural setting, Ozarka draws from and serves an almost totally white population. The College enrolls African-American, Native American, Asian, and Hispanic students in very small numbers. Even the College's Adult Education program has had few minority enrollees in the past. For the Fall 1999 semester, fourteen students indicating minority/ethnic status enrolled (1.7 percent of the student body). In the spring, twelve minority students comprised 1.6 percent of the total.

Because no sizeable minority population exists in the legal service area, Ozarka is unlikely to enroll many members of minorities, being prohibited from actively recruiting for most programs outside that defined area. Minority enrollment figures compare favorably with the percentage of minority citizens living where the College can recruit. Likewise, minority applicants for positions at the College are rare. Ozarka currently has one full-time minority employee, a Hispanic female, out of a total of sixty-eight full-time employees (1.5

percent). One adjunct instructor, an Asian-American female, is the only minority/ethnic faculty member. A contract for a full-time faculty position was offered to an Asian female for the current academic year, but she was unable to accept because she was unable to obtain the required work permit. The College has also previously employed an African-European male as an adjunct instructor.

Ozarka has attempted to address diversity in the classroom by offering coursework that integrates cultural diversity into the established curriculum. In a random survey of Ozarka faculty in the fall of 1999, many departments reported that cultural diversity is offered in some form or another (lectures, projects, etc.) in many classes. Examples include teaching cultural diversity in the Early Childhood Development program and building sensitivity to cultural diversity into the practical nursing curriculum. Students in Early Childhood Development are taught how to promote cultural diversity in the lesson plans they develop, in the books they read to the children, and even in the pictures displayed at the day care centers and pre-schools where they are employed. At Ozarka Kids Academy, teachers have the children do projects such as “Christmas Around the World” and select varied cultures to study. In nursing, entering students are surveyed about their level of comfort in providing care to different groups of people and then resurveyed at the end of the program to determine whether they have developed greater tolerance from their classroom and clinical experiences.

Cultural diversity is implemented in other departments on campus, ranging from literature, sociology, anthropology, geography, and English to business, the sciences, and Physical Therapist Assistant. Some faculty have even reported that they have developed student learning objectives in their course syllabi addressing cultural diversity. However, not

all programs were represented in the survey. In addition, reporting faculty stated that they wanted to continue to improve in this area.

The Ozarka campus is accessible to persons with disabilities and has served several students who used wheelchairs. The VPAA has worked with the faculty to educate them about the special needs of learning-disabled students. The Director of Students Services/Registrar serves as Coordinator of Disability Services. Students may use tape recorders or request a notetaker, and they may be given special accommodations for testing, such as extra time or oral examinations. Information about services to and rights of persons with disabilities can be found on pages 33-34 of the Catalog.

In addition, the faculty requested in 1999 that guidelines for syllabi be revised to include a special needs statement addressing modifications/accommodations in the classroom. The Student Support Services program also expects to add special services for students with specific types of disabilities.

## **Relationships**

In carrying out its mission and objectives, Ozarka interacts with a wide range of individuals and entities, including other colleges and universities, public schools, area businesses and industries, clinical sites supporting student instruction, state and local governmental units, and numerous others. In all these relationships, the College strives to act in an ethical manner.

### **Relationships with Institutions of Higher Education**

From 1991 through the end of the second summer session in 1993, the college transfer curriculum at Ozarka College was offered by Arkansas State University at Jonesboro. The terms of this arrangement were detailed in an Institutional Agreement

entered into by both institutions and ADHE. After Ozarka received permission from ADHE to assume the contract courses, Ozarka and ASU maintained an excellent working relationship.

At present, Ozarka interacts with ASU in several ways. First, ASU offers an Associate of Science in Nursing (RN) program on the Ozarka campus through a compressed video link between the two campuses. A number of licensed practical nurses, many newly graduated from Ozarka's program, are selected to participate. They complete their prerequisites through Ozarka, including English composition, algebra, social science courses, anatomy and physiology, microbiology, and microcomputer applications. The professional nursing courses are all offered through ASU, which places a full-time instructor on the Ozarka campus. Courses may originate from any one of several locations in the region where ASU has similar arrangements. This arrangement has been beneficial to Ozarka, boosting enrollment in several courses and allowing earlier development of the biology curriculum than has been the case at most other Arkansas technical colleges. Expansion of this relationship to include the BSN is under consideration.

A second important relationship is an articulation agreement affecting transfer of the completed Associate of Arts from Ozarka to ASU. According to a partnership agreement executed by the presidents and academic vice presidents of both institutions, Ozarka graduates holding the AA will be able to enter ASU with junior standing and with all general education requirements met. All courses counted toward completion of the AA degree will be accepted at ASU. Transferring students without the degree are subject to terms of a separate course-by-course equivalency agreement. ASU has designated a member of its

admissions staff to work directly with Ozarka students, making regular visits to campus to meet with them and answer any questions they or Ozarka faculty may have.

Ozarka also provides space for graduate level courses offered in Melbourne by ASU. Some Ozarka faculty members take advantage of the compressed video link to take courses toward an Associate of Science degree in technical and vocational education.

In 1999 the College was approached by Lyon College, a selective liberal arts college located at Batesville, to set up an articulation agreement. Completion of a specified cluster of courses, with electives selected from a designated list, allows students completing the Associate of Arts to enter Lyon with junior standing. Those with a grade point average of at least 3.00 are guaranteed acceptance with a transfer scholarship.

Ozarka also cooperates with the Criminal Justice Institute, a division of the University of Arkansas system, in a non-credit program for area law enforcement and correctional officers. Ozarka College publicizes the classes and provides its facilities so that officers in its service area have easy access to this opportunity. Class participants then have the option of drawing on knowledge gained in groups of these courses to earn Ozarka credit toward the Associate of Applied Science in Criminal Justice Leadership.

The College is also participating in discussions with Arkansas Tech University to initiate joint Bachelor of Science degree programs in Hospitality Administration, building on Ozarka's Culinary Arts program, and Management and Marketing, drawing on the Business Technology. Both would also involve coursework offered as part of the Associate of Arts program. Ozarka may also have the opportunity in the future to host some graduate-level courses offered by ATU.

In addition, the College has transfer agreements with the University of Central Arkansas, University of Arkansas, Williams Baptist College, Harding University, Hendrix College, and Ouachita Baptist University that allow graduates of Ozarka's AA program to transfer with junior classification. Furthermore, Ozarka's general education courses transfer to all of Arkansas' two- and four-year public colleges and universities.

Because Ozarka and the University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville (UACCB) are only thirty miles apart and share similar missions, both administrations try to coordinate offerings so that each college has strong, well-populated programs rather than small, competing programs. This kind of cooperation was included in the "Consultative Advice" offered by the 1993 NCA team, which noted that Ozarka had already made efforts toward "fitting in and serving the existing community rather than working in isolation, remaining misunderstood, or being a threat" (pp. 29 and 34).

The major example of this coordination was the decision to phase out Industrial Maintenance Technology at Ozarka and Automotive Service Technology at UACCB. Ozarka's service area has little industry and relatively few jobs are available in industrial maintenance, while UACCB's service area includes several large industries. On the other hand, Ozarka's well-developed and well-equipped Automotive Service Technology program enjoys an excellent reputation and has an outstanding placement record, while UACCB's program experienced declining enrollments in the latter years of its existence. Offering only one of these programs at each college allows resources to be concentrated to provide students with a solid technical education and access to up-to-date equipment.

## **Relationships with Other Entities**

Ozarka interacts with several external entities, including area, regional and national hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care facilities, the state prison at Calico Rock, the City of Melbourne, the U.S. Department of Education, White River Housing Authority, Region II Career Opportunities Council, Workforce Investment Board, Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, and the Ozarka College Foundation.

The health care facilities serve as sites for clinical training of physical therapist assistant, nursing and medical transcription students. These relationships are regulated by Cooperative Agreements of Affiliation which set forth the responsibilities of each party. Typically, the affiliating facility agrees to provide qualified personnel to supervise students, maintain the rotations through all required clinical experience areas, provide orientation, and meet regularly with Ozarka faculty to promote cooperative working relationships regarding the educational program for the students. The College commits that its faculty will prepare the master plan of rotations, provide clinical supervisors with necessary student data, assist with supervision of students at the clinical site when needed, and meet with staff of the affiliating facility. The facility may request that students be withdrawn if they are causing problems or not performing clinical duties in a professional manner. All nursing agreements are signed by the College President and relevant faculty member and the facility administrator and Director of Nursing. The PTA agreements are signed by the President, VPAA, and relevant faculty of the College as well as the health care facility's Administrator and Center Coordinator of Clinical Education (CCCE).

The state prison at Calico Rock provides work crews to a variety of governmental, educational, and other non-profit entities in the area to perform certain kinds of manual labor

at no cost. At Ozarka, crews invested many hours over the course of several years in clearing underbrush and planting trees and shrubs on campus to enhance the campus' appearance.

The College voluntarily provides a noon meal to prisoners and guards when they are working on campus.

The College has two agreements with the City of Melbourne. First, Ozarka's relationship with the City of Melbourne relates to the passage of a special one-cent city sales tax in 1992 to benefit the College. This tax, which generates approximately \$240,000 per year, is collected and dispersed by the city. Any interest earned on bank deposits of the tax revenue is also dedicated to the College. The tax proceeds are used to retire \$1.37 million in bonds for construction of the John E. Miller Complex. In a typical sale-leaseback agreement, the College has deeded the portion of the campus where this structure will sit back to the city. A contract between city and College specifies that the city will build an auditorium and classroom facility for Ozarka's use, giving it and the land back to the College once the bonds are retired. In addition, ADHE matched the first \$283,000 in sales tax money, with the state monies also dedicated to construction of the building. The Ozarka Foundation also raised money for equipment and furnishings. Since its construction, the city and various community groups have, with proper notice, used the auditorium for civic, cultural, and educational functions. Second, the College deeded two acres of property to the city for the site of the Ozarka Kids Academy. The city paid for construction of the facility with a state grant, and the College leases the facility for \$1.00 a year.

Ozarka College participates in an agreement with the federal Department of Education for administering federal financial aid. Ozarka retains the right to participate and

is approved as an eligible institution. The College's technical certificate and associate degree programs are all approved by USDE.

Ozarka's agreement with the White River Housing Authority includes the deeding of property by the College to the Housing Authority for the construction of Delta Hills Apartments. Eleven apartments, a short walk from College classroom buildings, are available on a first-come, first-serve basis to students and residents of Melbourne alike, with preference given to Ozarka students.

Ozarka College is the fiscal agent for the Region II Career Opportunities Council. This program uses a variety of methods to inform students from kindergarten through the first two years of college about career opportunities. In addition, this program provides teachers with the knowledge to incorporate units on career opportunities into their curricula. The President of the College sits on this council.

Through a \$130,000 grant from the Winthrop Rockefeller foundation, Ozarka led in the establishment of a computer network of twelve sites in publicly accessible locations around Stone County and provided training and technical assistance. The focus of StoneNet is presently upon the maintenance and expansion of a community web site and continued training and access to information technology for all Stone County citizens. Two individuals, one who functions as the grant administrator and the other who serves as an instructor for the computer courses, are responsible for the overall operations of the program. Some of the StoneNet computers are housed at Ozarka's Stone County Education Center.

The Ozarka College Foundation was incorporated in 1991 to "assist with the development and enhancement of programs and facilities at Ozarka College . . . by encouraging gifts of money" and other items of value (Foundation Bylaws). The Internal

Revenue Service approved 501(c)(3) designation in 1992. Between five and twenty-five members may serve five-year terms as representatives of the service area counties. Current membership is fifteen.

The Foundation operates independently but involves Ozarka administrators, including the President, Vice President for Finance, Vice President for Planning and Assessment, and Director of Continuing Education and Business Outreach in information-gathering. The relationships are typical of those in college foundations across the country. Minutes of Foundation Board and fund-raising committee meetings are in the Resource Room.

## **Ethical Behavior**

The College believes that it does, indeed, demonstrate integrity in its practices and relationships and therefore satisfies Criterion V. The administration strives to be open and to communicate clearly the policies and procedures by which it operates. Its public documents are accurate, and in its relations with the public, its students, and its employees, Ozarka is honest and forthright. It is a good steward of its resources. In its policies and practices, Ozarka demonstrates the integrity expected of an institution of higher education.

## **Strengths**

1. The College publishes a Board Policies and Procedures Manual, an Employee and Adjunct Instructor Handbook, and a Catalog which provide useful, accurate information to its students, employees, and the general public.
2. Ozarka has good relationships with other institutions of higher education, especially Arkansas State University and Lyon College, and continues to increase its number of articulation agreements with state-supported and private institutions of higher education.
3. Ozarka has established ethical relationships with external entities that provide services to the College and its students.

### **Concern**

1. The College's curriculum needs to reflect more cultural diversity.

### **Recommendation**

1. The topic of cultural diversity should be integrated into the curriculum of all programs, and related student learning objectives should be stated in course syllabi.

## **Federal Compliance**

Since 1997, all colleges seeking accreditation from NCA have been required to report on federal compliance in various designated areas. Ozarka is in compliance with all federal requirements.

### **Credits, Program Length, and Tuition**

Ozarka bases credit awarded on semester credit hours and shows these hours on its transcripts. Awards offered are the Certificate of Proficiency (one semester or less in length and 16 or fewer credit hours), Technical Certificate (typically two semesters in length and 30 credit hours), the Associate of Applied Science (four semesters in length and 60 to 72 credit hours), and the Associate of Arts (four semesters and 62 credit hours). An exception among the Technical Certificate programs occurs with practical nursing, which requires three semesters and 56 credit hours to meet all standards of the Arkansas State Board of Nursing.

Ozarka's certificate and degree programs are comparable in length to similar programs offered by other institutions of higher education. No program requires program-specific tuition. Instead, tuition is based on the number of credit hours being taken, up to a maximum of twelve hours per semester. Hours beyond twelve incur no additional tuition charge. Complete information on credit hours, program length, and tuition cost may be found in the Ozarka Catalog.

### **Higher Education Reauthorization Act**

The following table shows student loan default rates for the last five years for which data are available. Because Ozarka has never had a default rate high enough to trigger probationary standing with USDE, no plan to address the default rate has been developed, and Ozarka remains in full compliance with all relevant federal regulations.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Default Rate</b>
1993	18.1
1994	17.2
1995	15.6
1996	21.0
1997	10.5

### **Institutional Advertising and Recruitment Materials**

Institutions which mention their accreditation status with NCA must include information enabling constituents to contact the Commission on Institution of Higher Education. The only place where Ozarka refers to its status is in its Catalog, where the required information may be found on page 1.

Ozarka strives to present accurate and useful information in all of its advertising and recruiting materials, including its news releases to the media. In connection with this self-study, a faculty committee examined news releases and print advertising from the last year and found no inaccuracies. Examples of these materials are available in the Resource Room.

### **Professional Accreditation**

Various technical programs at Ozarka College are either accredited or approved by external agencies. All, however, enroll relatively small numbers and follow, for the most part, their own specialized curricula, the only exceptions being in the area of general education requirements and program prerequisites. Ozarka has not received any adverse actions from any of these accrediting or approving agencies. The College is not accredited by any other institutional accrediting body.

<b><u>Program</u></b>	<b><u>Approving/Accrediting Agency</u></b>
Automotive Service Technology	National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation
Early Childhood Development	Arkansas Department of Human Services,

	Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
Emergency Medical Technician	Arkansas Department of Health, Division of Emergency Medical Services
Banking & Finance Option	American Institute of Banking
Culinary Arts	Arkansas Hospitality Association
Physical Therapist Assistant	Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education/APTA, 111 No. Fairfax, Alexandria, VA 2314-1488, (703) 684-2782
Nursing Assistant	Arkansas Department of Human Services, Office of Long-Term Care
Practical Nursing	Arkansas State Board of Nursing



## Summary of Strengths

Ozarka College has existed as an educational institution for twenty-five years. Opening as a vocational technical school, it was always one of the best—among the first in the state to be accredited by NCA’s Commission on Schools, one of the leaders in instituting communications and mathematics requirements for its students, a pace-setter in computer-aided instruction in its Learning Laboratory, a leader in licensure rates for its practical nursing students.

When opportunity came to move to collegiate status, the administration put the question to the entire faculty: which way should Ozarka go. Only after long discussion and careful consideration did they vote unanimously to make the change. Out of twenty-four postsecondary vocational technical schools in Arkansas, Ozarka was one of only thirteen institutions which decided to go forward. Since 1991, six of those thirteen have merged with other two-year colleges or affiliated with a four-year university or university system, leaving only seven which are still completely independent. In the effort to gain accreditation as an institution of higher education, Ozarka was consistently a leader among its peers, the first to achieve both candidacy status and accreditation.

This self-study report provides evidence that Ozarka has continued to meet the General Institutional Requirements and the five Criteria for Accreditation. Ozarka has also continued to be a leader among two-year colleges in Arkansas, with its identified strengths far outweighing its challenges. It understands and publicly states its mission to serve citizens of north central Arkansas by providing a wide range of credit and non-credit educational programs and by offering its facilities and expertise in support of its communities. Its Board, administration, and faculty understand their roles in governance of the institution, and its

student body is still growing. Its use of technology has been recognized as exemplary, its facilities are in excellent condition, and its financial base is sound. Students are highly satisfied with their instruction, and direct measures of learning indicate that they typically achieve at higher rates than others across the state and nation. A supportive environment and generous financial aid program assist the College in maintaining an enviable retention rate. The community relies on Ozarka for leadership in economic development and access to outstanding public facilities. Institutional planning produces documents which guide the College toward meeting its identified long-range goals, and its assessment plan produces useful data for improvement of the educational program, administrative processes, services, and facilities. It is perceived by its many publics as an ethical and caring partner.

## **Summary of Challenges**

None of the challenges is of such pervasive importance that it threatens the College's ability to achieve its mission, improve its educational programs, or continue to grow. Of course, the College must continue to review its mission statement and objectives, policies, publications, and plans regularly and revise them as needed to continue forward momentum. Opportunities certainly exist to maximize enrollment from Fulton, Sharp, and Stone Counties, requiring investment in physical facilities in those locations and/or in the technology which can link existing facilities in Izard and Stone Counties to the rest of the service area. Technology at all locations must be kept up to date, and library holdings need to grow at an accelerating rate to reach ACRL standards. Growth in students and facilities suggests a need for additional personnel to teach, provide student services, and maintain buildings and equipment. Additional funding must be sought outside the legislative base and tuition, necessitating dedication of administrative time to locating appropriate funding

sources and crafting successful grant proposals, as well as working with the Foundation Board to establish and manage a permanent endowment fund. Finally, Ozarka continues to find it difficult to attract employees from diverse ethnic and minority groups.

## **Request**

With the success that Ozarka has enjoyed during its first nine years as an institution of higher education, the College is confident in requesting continuing accreditation from the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association.

