The Status of Illinois’ Tech Prep Consortia:  
Summary Results for the  
FY '00 Final Tech Prep Reports

Lisa K. Hood  
Graduate Research Associate

Debra D. Bragg  
Associate Professor & Director

Elisabeth Barnett  
Information Specialist

Office of Community College Research and Leadership  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Children’s Research Center  
MC-672  
51 Gerty Drive  
Champaign, IL 61820  
217/244-9390  
http://occrl.ed.uiuc.edu/

April 2002
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tech Prep consortia in Illinois complete the Final Tech Prep Report Form at the end of each fiscal year to describe accomplishments, barriers, technical assistance needs, and various aspects of Tech Prep implementation. Beginning in 1999, the Office of Community College Research and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign began working with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to enhance the quality of information collected in the report and to compile this information into a summary document. This report provides findings from 38 of 41 Tech Prep consortia. Specifically, information presented in this document represents a synthesis of 38 individual consortium reports in the following areas:

- Student participation
- Program elements
- Staff involvement (including professional development)
- Curriculum reform
- Business partner involvement
- Barriers
- Major accomplishments regarding the essential elements
- Major accomplishments in the Tech Prep consortium
- Technical assistance needs

Summarized below are selected results from the FY ’00 Final Tech Prep Report forms that help to describe the status of Tech Prep implementation during the 1999-00 academic year:

- A total of 484 secondary schools, 96% of all secondary schools in Illinois, reported Tech Prep students in the ISIS data set, representing a slight increase from 93% in 1998-99. Each local consortium had an average of almost 15 secondary schools that received Tech Prep funds, and 13 of these reported Tech Prep students in the ISIS data set.

- For 1999-00, a total of 72,556 Tech Prep students were reported in secondary schools, with 35% (25,782) of these students identified as Tech Prep high school graduates. Total enrollments in Tech Prep may have been slightly lower in 1999-00 than 1998-99 but a direct comparison was not possible because two fewer consortia reported enrollment figures for 1999-00. Enrollment trends will be evident when comparisons are made with 2000-01 and future annual results.

- One goal of Tech Prep is to ensure that high school students progress in the academic curriculum, including taking advanced academics. Estimates by consortium directors of advanced academic course-taking suggest that two-thirds of Tech Prep students had taken 3 years or more of math and social studies, and approximately half had completed 3 years or more of science. Consortium leaders also estimated that 37% of Tech Prep students participated in advanced math at Algebra II or above, 12% enrolled in advanced social studies, including honors and AP, and 28% participated in chemistry or a more advanced level of science.

- Per consortium, an average of 99 first-year Tech Prep students were estimated to earn some form of college credit while still enrolled in secondary education, suggesting articulated or dual credit may be fairly common among Tech Prep students who are matriculating to postsecondary Tech Prep programs in some consortia.

- Based on results of 33 consortia, about 3,500 Tech Prep students enrolled at a community college having finished a sequence of Tech Prep-related courses at the high school level during the
previous year. On average, 109 students who were in Tech Prep course sequences in secondary school enrolled in Tech Prep programs in their respective consortium’s community college. The median estimate, which is a more conservative but stable estimate of central tendency, suggested that 65 first-year students matriculated from high school Tech Prep programs into postsecondary programs. Utilizing either the mean or median, Tech Prep coordinators estimated that between one-third and one-half of first-year Tech Prep students were taking remedial courses, which is a slightly higher estimate than the previous year.

- The proportion of Tech Prep students retained from the first to second year of college is high, regardless of the data source. According to Tech Prep coordinators, most (95) first-year Tech Prep students continued as second-year students from 1998-99 to 1999-00. The previous year approximately 67% of Tech Prep students who started community college were retained from first to second year, based on the ICCB’s A-1 data set, suggesting if Tech Prep students transition to college there is a good chance that they will persist in their degree programs. More trend data are needed to confirm this finding over time.

- Thirty-five (35) of 36 consortia offered articulated secondary-to-postsecondary program sequences, with a mean of approximately 16 programs per consortium. Three-fourths of all consortia in the state offered 11 or more articulated Tech Prep program sequences. For 1999-00, the total number of Tech Prep programs at community colleges in Illinois was 574, with an average of 16 programs per consortium.

- High school teachers accounted for the largest share (60%) of almost 9,000 professional personnel who were involved in inservice activities during 1999-00. Altogether, high school teachers, administrators and counselors accounted for more than 75% of all persons involved in professional development, whereas college personnel accounted for almost 14% and business and industry reps made up about 12% of the total. One-time conferences or workshops and a series of related inservices or workshops were the two most common forms of professional development.

- Changes were reported in the types of curriculum reform being implemented in conjunction with Tech Prep between 1992-93 and 1999-00, at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. Specifically, curriculum reform has remained more prevalent on the secondary than postsecondary level. Second, the most commonly implemented secondary reforms involved supplementing academic content with vocational-technical content, and vice versa. Finally, applied academics was at a high point in 1992-93 wherein over 90% of consortia mentioned using it on the secondary level, then declined to less than 70% in 1998-99 until increasing to about 80% in 1999-00. On the postsecondary level, applied academics remained stable at about 40% usage by consortia until 1999-00 when it increased to almost 55% in 1999-00.

- The business partners who participated in curriculum development and revision increased by 15%, and the number of business partners providing AIP/VIP placements for teachers increased by 6%. Moreover, consortia reported a median of 30 AIP/VIP placements provided by business partners for 1999-00 as compared to 47 in 1998-99, suggesting the number of business partners providing AIP/VIP placements increased while the number of AIP/VIP slots decreased.

- Four barriers were considered the most problematic. They are: too much paperwork associated with administration of tech prep, little time designated for joint planning by academic and vocational or secondary and postsecondary faculty, lack of substitute teachers to fill in for regular teachers during inservice activities, and lack of acceptance that Tech Prep programs are rigorous academic programs.
Consortia reported two primary areas of accomplishment for FY '00 and these areas were identical for FY '99. The two areas are professional development and curriculum development. In FY '00 marketing and career development surpassed articulation as other areas where consortia felt they made progress.

Technical assistance needs were mentioned in areas dealing with personnel, professional development, and more liaison visits and visitations to other local districts; evaluation including more consistent and simpler reporting procedures and use of ISIS to manage data more effectively; and assistance in marketing to students and parents and in getting more business and administrator involvement.

Readers may also be interested in a related report on Tech Prep Implementation entitled, *Illinois’ Tech Prep On-site Review and Improvement Process for 2000-2001: Cross-consortium Results and Implications for Practice* (Kim, Bragg, & Barnett, 2001). This report presents a summary of results for eight local consortia that participated in the first year of full-scale implementation of the On-site Review and Improvement Process associated with Illinois’ Tech Prep Evaluation System. Copies of this report are available from Dora Welker at ISBE or Debra Bragg at OCCRL, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary ......................................................................................................................... iii
Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 1
Student Participation ......................................................................................................................... 2
Program Elements ............................................................................................................................. 6
  Staff Involvement (including professional development) ............................................................... 9
  Curriculum Reform ....................................................................................................................... 16
  Business Partner Involvement ....................................................................................................... 22
  Barriers .......................................................................................................................................... 23
  Major Accomplishments Regarding the Essential Elements ...................................................... 25
  Other Major Accomplishments ..................................................................................................... 26
  Technical Assistance Needs .......................................................................................................... 31
References ......................................................................................................................................... 34
Appendices:
  A. State of Illinois Definition of Tech Prep .................................................................................... 35
  B. Tech Prep Consortium Directory, 2001 ..................................................................................... 37
  C. Secondary Schools Receiving Tech Prep Funds, 2000-2001 .................................................. 43