Enrollment Types Used by Illinois Programs

One of the key purposes of the study was to determine what kinds of enrollment types Illinois providers were using in their programs, with what frequency, and if different types were associated with certain kinds of classes more than others. This document provides an overview of the responses to the survey question:

**Approximately what percentage of your classes are offered annually in each of the following enrollment structures? (Open, Fixed, Managed).**

This question was repeated for each of the kind of classes offered throughout the adult education system in Illinois: ESL, ABE/ASE multilevel; ASE-GED; Vocational skills; and High school credit classes.

**DEFINITIONS OF ENROLLMENT TYPES PROVIDED IN THE SURVEY**

**OPEN ENTRY OPEN EXIT** Students may enter and exit classes at any point throughout the term (with minor locally determined exceptions)

**FIXED ENROLLMENT** Fixed entry classes have a fixed starting and ending date which is the same for all students. Students may only enter class only during the first 3 days of class.

**MANAGED ENROLLMENT** Classes have a beginning and ending date. Students enter as groups on specific designated days within the starting and ending dates of the class. Note: Managed enrollment is a legitimate type to be using in Illinois. You may be using managed enrollment without realizing it, and claiming hours as fixed or open enrollment hours, which is appropriate (see examples).

**EXAMPLES OF MANAGED ENROLLMENT CLASS STRUCTURES**

1. An 8 week GED class divided into four 2-week modules, each covering a specific topic area. New students may enter only at the beginning of each two week module.

2. A fixed enrollment ESL class allows entry of new students on the first Monday of every month. Students can have no more than 3 absences before being dropped from the class and waiting until the next session to re-enroll.

3. Students enroll in one course. The course includes Orientation, reading, math, writing, and personal skill building sessions. New students may enter at the beginning of any new session and cycle through until they complete all session.
Overview of Findings.

- Illinois providers use all 3 kinds of enrollment structures.
- Open enrollment is the most commonly used structure; followed by fixed enrollment. Managed enrollment is also being used.
- Open enrollment is the most common model for adult education programs. Approximately 60% of all adult education classes are structured using open enrollment.
- Fixed enrollment is the second most common model, and is used in approximately 30% of adult education classes.
- Managed enrollment is used in approximately 10% of adult education classes, When managed enrollment is used, it is just as likely to be used as the sole enrollment model for a program as it is to be used in combination with open or fixed. When it is used in combination with open and fixed, there is likely to be a greater number of open and fixed classes offered in the program than managed.
- All 3 enrollment types are being used in every type of adult education program and in every kind of class offered in the state.
- Although some classes use only “open enrollment”, many programs appear to use, or at least are experimenting with using, a variety of enrollment approaches.

Research Response

According to the latest national survey available, open enrollment was used by approximately 80% of U.S. adult education programs. According to the U.S. Dept. of Education’s Report to Congress on State Performance, more states are beginning to implement managed enrollment policies in order to meet the NRS requirements. However, no national studies have been done to collect this data, According to the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy and other sources, there are no adequate data sources to provide us with current valid and reliable information regarding use of different enrollment types. The Illinois study will add to a critical need for a database. Sources: Comings (2006); Tamassia (2007); U.S. Department of Education Report to Congress (2003).

Graphs: Enrollment Types Used With Specific Class Types

The following 7 graphs detail information obtained regarding frequency with which programs used open, fixed, or managed enrollment structures with specific class types. Different charts are detailed for each class type:

1. Summary Chart, All Classes Combined
2. ESL Classes
3. ABE/ASE Multilevel Classes
4. ABE Classes
5. ASE-GED Classes
6. Vocational Skills Classes
7. High School Credit Classes
1. SUMMARY CHART: All Class Types Combined

- 54% of programs used open enrollment structures only.
- 23% of programs used fixed enrollment structures only.
- 7% used managed enrollment structures only.
- 16% used a combination of enrollment structures.
2. ESL CLASSES

- 62 of the 80 programs (77.5%) provided ESL classes, making it the most common adult education class type represented in this survey.
- 34 of the 62 (55%) had “open only” enrollment structures.
- 14 had “fixed only” enrollment structures (23%).
- 5 (8%) had “managed only” enrollment structures.
- 9 (14%) had a combination of structures.
3. ABE/ASE MULTILEVEL CLASSES

- 60 of the 80 programs (75%) provided ABE/ASE multilevel classes, making it also a relatively common adult education class type represented in this survey.

- Compared to the other large/commonly provided programs (i.e., ESL, ABE, ASE/GED) ABE/ASE is most dominated by the “open only” enrollment structure. Almost two of every three (38 of the 60, or 64%) programs had open enrollment as their only structure for their ABE/ASE multilevel classes.

- 10 had “fixed only” enrollment structures (17%).

- 3 had “managed only” enrollment structures (5%).

- 9 had combinations of structures (14%)
4. ABE CLASSES

- 57 of the 80 programs (72%) provided ABE classes, making it also a relatively common adult education program represented in this survey.

- Open enrollment structure only (51%) is by far the most common followed by

- Fixed enrollment structure only (21%), which is a distance second, but more than twice as common as

- Managed enrollment structure only (9%) or any of the

- Combination approaches (19%)
5. GED CLASSES

- 57 of the 80 programs (72%) provided ASE/GED classes, making it also a relatively common adult education program represented in this survey.

- Open enrollment structure only 30 (53%)

- Fixed enrollment structure only 13 (23%)

- Managed enrollment structure only 5 (9%)

- Combination enrollment structures 9 (15%)
6. VOCATIONAL SKILLS CLASSES

- 26 of the 80 programs (33%) provided VOC classes, making it a relatively less common adult education program represented in this survey.

- VOC classes were the only type of adult education program where “open only” enrollment was not the most common enrollment model used. Fixed enrollment was the most common enrollment type used (46% of the programs).

- “Open enrollment only” was used by 8 programs (31%)

- “Fixed enrollment only” was used by 12 programs (46%)

- “Managed enrollment only” was used by 1 program (4%). Managed enrollment was used alone or in combination with other enrollment types by 3 programs (12%)

- A combination of types of enrollment was used by 5 programs (19%)
7. HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT CLASSES

- 21 of the 80 programs (26%) reported providing High School Credit classes, making it the least common adult education program represented in this survey.

- Open enrollment only was used by 14 programs (67%)

- Fixed enrollment only was used by 5 programs (24%)

- Managed enrollment only was used by 1 program (4.5%)

- One program used a combination of open and managed enrollment (4.5%)

We would like to thank the Illinois administrators completing the survey for the time and attention to detail taken in providing the responses to this question.