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New Jersey Community Colleges Data Snapshot

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Project Background

Adults seeking further education have long shown keen interest in noncredit education. An estimated 4 million people enroll in noncredit programs annually, and surveys have found that at least half of adults interested in further postsecondary learning seek an alternative to college degree programs¹. Policymakers also recognize the potential value of noncredit and related programs. A 50-state scan identified state-led initiatives in 28 states, totaling at least \$3.8 billion, in support for attainment of short-term credentials.²

Given the growing interest and public investment in short-term alternatives to college degree programs, policymakers and practitioners generally agree on the importance of a strong evidence base to inform decision-making. Yet state collection and analysis of noncredit data remains inconsistent and difficult to use for policymaking purposes, making direct comparisons across states dauntingly hard. Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers regularly encounter varying definitions, an absence of educational or labor market outcomes data, and overall data quality issues.³ At the most basic level, very little is known about the characteristics of noncredit programs, such as their instructional time, instructional format, requirements for entry, linkages to further education, awarding agencies, cost, and credential types awarded. Better data on noncredit offerings within

¹ Jacoby, T. (September 2021). *The indispensable institution: Taking the measure of community college workforce education*. Opportunity America. <https://opportunityamericaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/FINAL-survey-report.pdf>; Strada. (2020, September 16). *Public viewpoint: Interested but not enrolled: Understanding and serving aspiring adult learners*. <https://cci.stradaeducation.org/pv-release-september-16-2020/>

² Murphy, S. (2023). *A typology and policy landscape analysis of state investments in short-term credential pathways*. HCM Strategists. <https://hcmstrategists.com/resources/a-typology-and-policy-landscape-analysis-of-state-investments-in-short-term-credential-pathways>

³ D'Amico, M. M. (2017). Noncredit education: Specialized programs to meet local needs. In K. B. Wilson & R. L. Garza-Mitchell (Eds.), *Forces shaping community college missions* (No. 180, pp. 57–66). *New directions for community colleges*. Jossey-Bass. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.20281>; Erwin, M. (2019). Noncredit enrollment and related activities (NPEC 2019). National Postsecondary Education Cooperative, with US Department of Education funding; Romano, R. M., & D'Amico, M. M. (2021, July/August). How federal data shortchange the community college. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 53(4), 22–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00091383.2021.1930978>

states will help inform ongoing measurement efforts and ensure those efforts are more grounded in the realities of noncredit delivery, financing, and learner outcomes.

With support from the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES)/National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Rutgers Education and Employment Research Center (EERC) and key partners at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, University of Michigan, and University of California–Irvine are working with state leaders from across the country as part of the State Noncredit Data Project (SNDP). The SNDP examines noncredit data to achieve three key goals:

- Develop an inventory of and consistent operational definitions for state-level noncredit data elements to better understand the noncredit data infrastructure.
- Collect and examine noncredit course/program-level data to explore noncredit offerings and their associations with enrollment rates, outcomes, instructional characteristics, and financial arrangements.
- Uncover the drivers of noncredit offerings and produce relevant policy implications.

In addition to this analysis, the SNDP convenes a Learning Community of states on data for noncredit education and non-degree credentials. The Learning Community is designed to bring together state leaders to share current practices related to state noncredit data. Through our research and convening, SNDP seeks to lay the groundwork for common definitional language for future data collection and analysis efforts to improve understanding of the value and quality of noncredit programs and non-degree credentials.

Methods

This report is one in a series that explores the noncredit data infrastructure of US states and presents descriptive analyses of those data at the course/program and provider level. The findings presented in these reports were reached using a multi-phased collaborative approach with leaders in partner states. The first step was to engage with state partners about the context for noncredit and related data collection. This ongoing engagement included regular conversations, off-line questions, and the collection of relevant policy and process information on noncredit categories, determinants of noncredit success, instructional characteristics, finance, and related topics. The engagement process has been critical to understanding the state noncredit landscape and data collection.

The next step was to develop a robust inventory of each of the data elements potentially available from state agencies and organizations. Through engagement with state partners, cross-state meetings, a review of prior literature and resources,^{4,5,6} and program-level data analyses with our first three research states (Iowa,

⁴ D'Amico, M. M., Morgan, G. B., Robertson, S., & Houchins, C. (2014). An exploration of noncredit community college enrollment. *Journal of Continuing Higher Education*, 62(3), 152–162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07377363.2014.953438>; D'Amico, 2017.

⁵ IPEDS. (2021–22). Glossary. <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>

⁶ Jacoby, T. (2021). The indispensable institution: Taking the measure of community college workforce education. Opportunity America. <https://opportunityamericaonline.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/10/FINAL-survey-report.pdf>

Louisiana, and Virginia), the project team created a noncredit data taxonomy⁷ for the organization of relevant data elements. The key elements in the taxonomy—(1) purpose and design, (2) outcomes, (3) demographics and enrollment, and (4) finance—guide the organization of available data elements in the present report (see Table 1) and the subsequent analyses on providers and programs that follow. In this next phase of the project, the project team is working with an additional group of states (including South Carolina, Maryland, New Jersey, Oregon, and Tennessee) to understand the nature of their noncredit data.

The New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (NJOSHE) has been collecting data on noncredit education in the state’s county colleges since 2007.⁸ NJOSHE annually requests that New Jersey county colleges provide student-course/activity-level data on their noncredit offerings for its Student Unit Record (SURE) system and issues a separate request for data about customized training.⁹

The New Jersey Department of Labor (NJDOLE) also collects data on both noncredit and credit education, under a separate jurisdiction, as part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and its Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). NJOSHE meets regularly with NJDOLE, the New Jersey’s Department of Education, and the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority under the auspices of the Executive Leadership Committee of the New Jersey Statewide Data System (SDS), the state’s longitudinal data system. The Executive Leadership Committee discusses the kinds of data each agency collects, differences between their data, and opportunities to collaborate; sets and approves the research agenda for the SDS; and monitors the system’s use via the state’s research partner, the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development in the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University, New Brunswick.¹⁰

This report, focused on NJOSHE’s noncredit data, is one of three reports documenting the landscape of noncredit data in New Jersey. Another report in the series supplements the findings in this report with institutional-level findings about the state’s county colleges’ noncredit data and how they collect these data. The third report examines the noncredit data collected by NJDOLE for its ETPL.

⁷D’Amico, M., Van Noy, M., Srivastava, A., Bahr, P., & Xu, D. (2023). Collecting and understanding noncredit community college data: A taxonomy and how-to guide for states. Rutgers Education and Employment Research Center. https://sites.rutgers.edu/state-noncredit-data/wp-content/uploads/sites/794/2023/11/State-Noncredit-Taxonomy_EERC_11.17.23.pdf

⁸New Jersey community colleges refer to themselves as both community colleges and county colleges. We use the terms interchangeably.

⁹D’Amico, M., Van Noy, M., Srivastava, A., Bahr, P., & Xu, D. (2023). Collecting and understanding noncredit community college data: A taxonomy and how-to guide for states. Rutgers Education and Employment Research Center. https://sites.rutgers.edu/state-noncredit-data/wp-content/uploads/sites/794/2023/11/State-Noncredit-Taxonomy_EERC_11.17.23.pdf

¹⁰ More information about the New Jersey State Longitudinal Data System can be found at this webpage: https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/documents/pdf/research/Q3_2016SeasonalityGuide.pdf

NJDOL and NJOSHE have some overlap in their interest and jurisdiction over noncredit programming and data collection. One significant jurisdictional difference between the two agencies is that while NJOSHE primarily oversees and collects data from New Jersey's 18 community colleges, NJDOL develops its data from a wider range of training providers in the state that participate in the ETPL, including vocational/technical schools, private training schools, four-year colleges and universities, and providers of apprenticeship programs in addition to the community colleges covered by NJOSHE. There is enough overlap, however, that the two agencies meet regularly to discuss the kinds of noncredit data they collect, differences between their data, and how they might work together.¹¹

New Jersey OSHE's Policy Context for Noncredit

NJOSHE develops postsecondary education policy and provides coordination for the state's higher education institutions. This authority encompasses oversight for noncredit education offered by these institutions with related data collections from the state's 18 county colleges. Although New Jersey's county colleges operate independently from each other, they report data uniformly to NJOSHE's systems. In addition, while not a government agency, the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC) plays a key role in the New Jersey higher education landscape because it develops the formula that allocates state-appropriated funds to community colleges. The following sections outline some of the important policy drivers of noncredit offerings as governed by NJOSHE for New Jersey.

Noncredit Policy Priorities

NJOSHE has a comprehensive vision aimed at increasing engagement with, enrollment in, and completion of postsecondary education across the state. This vision highlights noncredit programming, including nontraditional and experiential education, alongside more traditional credit-bearing offerings.¹² NJOSHE's support of noncredit education helps ensure New Jersey residents have a variety of pathways toward further education and high-quality credential attainment. These pathways work in tandem with efforts to increase college enrollment among high school students and to reengage working-age adults in postsecondary education.

NJOSHE'S policy goals related to noncredit education include closing equity gaps between New Jersey populations and engaging more adults in postsecondary education, including those with some college education who do not have postsecondary degrees.¹³ Among its recommendations for practice, NJOSHE's plan encourages colleges to facilitate transitions from noncredit education to degree programs by designing

¹¹ EERC conversation with Stefani Thachik, Vance Stephens, and Chad May, NJOSHE, June 20, 2024.

¹² NJOSHE. (2019, February). *Where opportunity meets innovation: A student-centered vision for New Jersey higher education*. <https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/documents/pdf/StateEducationplan.pdf>

¹³ NJOSHE, 12, 15.

offerings that may be stacked and/or embedded within degree programs.¹⁴ NJOSHE also recommends that colleges engage with employers to enhance the quality of work-based and experiential learning.¹⁵

Funding

Neither NJOSHE's noncredit data collection from county colleges nor its state-level reporting are tied to funding. Instead, its data collection is part of a historic process that occurs along with data collection for credit-bearing programs. NJOSHE collects both noncredit and for-credit educational data from county colleges for its SURE system and makes reports on those data publicly available each year.¹⁶ Only information about NJOSHE's noncredit data is presented in this report.

Drivers of Noncredit Data Collection

NJOSHE is interested in examining and updating its noncredit data collection requests. The SURE noncredit data codebook and both SURE and customized-training data collection processes have become routinized with annual collections from county colleges. At the same time, NJOSHE envisions that collecting more noncredit data, including data that will support policy development for transitions between noncredit and credit education, might support efforts to meet a statewide attainment goal ("65 by 25," discussed below) and establish policies supporting colleges' noncredit programmatic priorities. Having both established data collection processes and aspirations for future developments creates incentives to continue historic processes until more information becomes available and the department is ready to consider the needs for data collection updates and expansions.

New Jersey's "65 by 25," an aspirational goal that 65 percent of working-age New Jerseyans will have a high-quality credential or degree by the year 2025,¹⁷ has intensified state-level interest in exploring the noncredit data it currently collects because the attainment of high-quality noncredit credentials helps fulfil this goal. One incentive for NJOSHE to consider expanding its noncredit data collection efforts is to better understand what county colleges already collect and could report to NJOSHE in the future. Currently county colleges may use certain data for their own purposes or to meet state reporting requirements that they do not necessarily report to NJOSHE. Comprehensive and quality data can aid the state in understanding the areas, audiences, and industries where county colleges are focusing their programmatic efforts. An important use of these data is that NJOSHE provides noncredit data as part of the information they supply to the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, which publishes an annual *Fact Book* for the colleges.

¹⁴ NJOSHE, 34.

¹⁵ NJOSHE, 38.

¹⁶ New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education. *Office of Research and Accountability: Student Unit Record (SURE)*. Official Site of The State of New Jersey. <https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/research/SURE.shtml>

¹⁷ NJOSHE, 14.

Noncredit Data Collection Process

NJOSHE requests that county colleges upload noncredit data in October of each year. Although many types of institutions participate in SURE, including public four-year colleges and universities and private nonprofit and for-profit institutions, noncredit data are reported only by county colleges. NJOSHE supplies colleges with a codebook, checklist, and template for the noncredit data the department requests at student-unit levels. Institutions upload data files via a secure File Transfer Protocol with data elements unique to each student.¹⁸ The customized-training data template, sent separately in October of each year, requests aggregated data and does not collect information on individual students. Both of these data collections are for the prior fiscal year.¹⁹

Classifying Noncredit Offerings

The SURE data collected by NJOSHE separate noncredit course content into two broad categories: occupational training/career enhancement (“career enhancement”) and personal interest/avocational (“avocational”). However, these data, because they are collected at the student level, lack information on specific program content that could help the state better understand the types of programs offered and the kinds of workforce skills, industries, or interests they address. They also do not distinguish between courses that are part of programs and those that are not. Noncredit education is measured in terms of “experiences,” which may be short offerings or series of offerings spanning a longer timeframe.

Data Inventory

Categories from our work with other states guide this review of data elements on noncredit offerings collected by NJOSHE. When embarking on our first round of the SNDP with partner states Iowa, Louisiana, and Virginia, the project team worked with state representatives to explore common course- and program-level data elements within state data systems, which are different from those included in the student-level data collected by NJOSHE.²⁰ In reviewing NJOSHE’s noncredit data, we sought to conduct a data inventory that was in alignment with other states in our project. With that in mind, we categorized noncredit offerings by types of educational objectives. Table 1 shows the terms that NJOSHE uses as they relate to the categories we have distinguished for our first three partner states.

NJOSHE provides a data dictionary covering key elements of the noncredit student-level data they collect.²¹ As noted above, NJOSHE’s SURE data divide noncredit offerings into two types based on course content—career enhancement and avocational. Avocational offerings are those intended for personal development,

¹⁸ Communication, New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education.

¹⁹ IPEDS, *Glossary*.

²⁰ D’Amico, M., Van Noy, M., Srivastava, A., Bahr, P., & Xu, D. (2023). *The state community college noncredit data infrastructure: Lessons from Iowa, Louisiana, and Virginia*. Rutgers Education and Employment Research Center. <https://sites.rutgers.edu/state-noncredit-data/wp-content/uploads/sites/794/2023/08/The-State-Community-College-EERC-8.2023.pdf>

²¹ New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education. (2023, July). Noncredit Open Enrollment Data File Handbook [Version 3.1]. State of New Jersey, 16. <https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/documents/pdf/research/NoncreditDataDictionary.pdf>

and career enhancement offerings are those aimed at “building skills and can be used for career development and/or can lead to certification.”²² SURE reports unduplicated headcounts, registrations, and sums of clock hours for New Jersey noncredit offerings within these two course content categories, as well as information on each offering’s target audience: youth/children, general adult population, or senior citizens.

Table 1: Alignment of Noncredit Types with NJOSHE State-Level Categories

| Noncredit Types | NJOSHE Noncredit Categories |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Occupational training | Career enhancement |
| Sponsored occupational training | Customized training |
| Personal interest | Avocational |
| Pre-College | NJOSHE does not have a separate noncredit data category for pre-college. |

To make sense of NJOSHE’s SURE data, we reviewed its data elements relative to the SNDP’s developing national data taxonomy, which includes four primary categories of noncredit data elements: (1) purpose and design, (2) outcomes, (3) demographics and enrollment, and (4) finance. This taxonomy was first developed as part of our initial phase of state-level work to serve as a practical tool for states just beginning noncredit data collection or refining their approach.²³ Because a key goal of the SNDP is to arrive at a data taxonomy that incorporates the perspective of a variety of states, that initial version is being updated in phases as the project team reviews data from additional states, including these from New Jersey.

Table 2 shows an inventory of potential noncredit data elements that has been re-organized from that original work based on the new taxonomy. New Jersey captures several data elements new to the noncredit data taxonomy that will be incorporated into the next version. Data elements unique to New Jersey are italicized in Table 2. These include targeted audience for a course (of note because of its value as an indicator of noncredit offerings’ intent), zip code, county, and state-of-residence information as well as citizenship status. Both SURE and customized-training data contain data elements for registrations as well as calculations for FTEs (full-time equivalent enrollments) and ratios of clock hours to registrations. Customized-training data also contain data elements new to our taxonomy that are related to course sections and to FTEs per company and business clients served.

Table 2 documents which data elements on noncredit offerings are captured by NJOSHE and to what degree. We use the same analytic system for New Jersey that we used with our first three state partners when describing data availability; however, unlike the program-level data we reported for our first three state partners’ data availability, our analysis here is reported at the student level. Table 2 examines if data are

²² New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education 2023, 16.

²³ D’Amico, M., Van Noy, M., Srivastava, A., Bahr, P., & Xu, D., *Collecting and understanding noncredit community college data: A taxonomy and how-to guide for states*. Rutgers Education and Employment Research Center. https://sites.rutgers.edu/state-noncredit-data/wp-content/uploads/sites/794/2023/11/State-Noncredit-Taxonomy_EERC_11.17.23.pdf

available for NJOSHE’s data on *all* students, *most* students (more than 2/3), *many* students (more than 1/3 but fewer than 2/3), *some* students (fewer than 1/3), or *none* of the students enrolled in noncredit offerings.

Table 2: State-Level Noncredit NJOSHE Data Inventory

| Category | Subcategory* | State-Level Data Availability ¹ | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|
| | | NJOSHE Student Unit Records (SURE) Data Collection (FY2021-2022) | NJOSHE Customized-Training Data Collection (FY2021-2022) |
| Purpose and Design | | | |
| Field of Study | Course/Program name | None | None |
| | CIP code | None | None |
| | SOC code | None | None |
| | Career cluster | None | None |
| Noncredit Type | Occupational, sponsored, pre-college, personal interest or aligned with IPEDS | All ² | All |
| Program Length ³ | Number of courses if multi-course program | None | None |
| | Total contact hours | None | None |
| Delivery | Face-to-face | None | None |
| | Face-to-face location | None | None |
| | Online | None | None |
| | Blended | None | None |
| | Competency-based | None | None |
| | Work-based learning required | None | None |
| | Student service availability | None | None |
| | Faculty data | None | None |
| Associated Credentials | Certifications, licensure, certificates, microcredentials associated with courses | None | None |
| Outcomes | | | |
| Academic Outcomes | Students continue to credit | None ⁴ | None |
| | Completion data availability | None | None |
| Labor Market Outcomes | Pre-enrollment employment | None | None |
| | Post-enrollment employment | None | None |
| | Pre-enrollment salary/wage | None | None |
| | Post-enrollment salary/wage | None | None |
| Non-Degree Credential Outcomes | Industry certification | None | None |
| | Occupational licensure | None | None |
| | College-issued certificate | None | None |
| | Microcredentials | None | None |

| | Apprenticeship | None | None | |
|---|--|--------------------------------|------------------------|------|
| Demographics and Enrollment | | | | |
| Enrollments | Headcount | All ⁵ | None | |
| | <i>Registrations</i> | <i>All</i> | <i>All</i> | |
| | Contact hours (sums - totals) | All ⁶ | All | |
| | <i>FTEs - calculated by NJOSHE</i> | <i>All</i> | <i>All</i> | |
| | <i>Ratio of clock hours to registrations⁷</i> | <i>All</i> | <i>All</i> | |
| | <i>Number of course sections delivered</i> | <i>None</i> | <i>All^p</i> | |
| | <i>Ratio of registrations to course sections</i> | <i>None</i> | <i>All^p</i> | |
| | <i>FTEs/company</i> | <i>None</i> | <i>All^p</i> | |
| | <i>Number of business clients served</i> | <i>None</i> | <i>All^p</i> | |
| | Demographics | Race/Ethnicity | Many ¹⁰ | None |
| Age | | Some ⁷ | None | |
| <i>Targeted audience (youth/children, general adult population, or senior citizens)</i> | | <i>All^p</i> | <i>None</i> | |
| Sex | | Most | None | |
| <i>Citizenship</i> | | <i>Many</i> | <i>None</i> | |
| <i>Zip code of mailing address</i> | | <i>Most</i> | <i>None</i> | |
| <i>State of residence</i> | | <i>Most</i> | <i>None</i> | |
| <i>New Jersey county of residence</i> | | <i>Most</i> | <i>None</i> | |
| <i>Institution code (identifier for the institution and not a unique student ID)</i> | | <i>All</i> | <i>All</i> | |
| <i>NJ SMART identification number¹¹</i> | | <i>None</i> | <i>None</i> | |
| Identifiers | Social Security number | Many | None | |
| | Institutional identification number | All | None | |
| | Name | None | None | |
| | Birth date | Some | None | |
| Finance | | | | |
| Tuition | Course/Program tuition | None | None | |
| | State reimbursement | None | None | |
| | WIOA-eligible training provider | None | None | |
| | State and Federal Funding | Economic development incentive | None | None |
| | | Other federal grants | None | None |
| | | Other state grants | None | None |

Note: Italicized data elements are new to our taxonomy.

Table Note 1: Data availability is reported for the state level. Individual institutions or providers may have additional data elements that are not collected by state-level agencies or departments.

Table Note 2: We categorize this data element as having all data available although data were missing for one student.

Table Note 3: NJOSHE data are not available at the program level.

Table Note 4: NJOSHE has not calculated these data but potentially could link two data tables for students enrolled in noncredit and credit offerings and see if there are matches. How successful such an exercise would be depends upon how many student identifiers there are

that have actual Social Security numbers rather than other types of identifying numbers that may not be able to be accurately matched across noncredit and for-credit data.

Table Note 5: NJOSHE calculates based on Social Security number or institutional ID. They calculate with the assumption that student IDs are unique IDs.

Table Note 6: NJOSHE has sums of clock hours by institutions.

Table Note 7: NJOSHE calculates this with the data they have collected.

Table Note 8: We categorize this data element as not having any data available although there is 1% data availability.

Table Note 9: NJOSHE calculates this data element with data that the county colleges provide.

Table Note 10: This percentage rounds to exactly 33.3%. We discuss missing demographic data in a later report section.

Table Note 11: This data element is a New Jersey Department of Education identification number for the New Jersey Standards Measurement and Resource for Teaching (NJ SMART) system.

Description of Data

We present the findings from our analysis of NJOSHE’s SURE and customized-training data for FY2021–22 below as they correspond to the following key areas from our noncredit data taxonomy: purpose and design of the noncredit offerings, and noncredit course demographics and enrollment.

Purpose and Design

Course content categories (career enhancement and avocational) form the key organizational element of NJOSHE’s SURE data. In both the SURE and customized-training data, NJOSHE captures registrations as well as sums of clock hours. The SURE system includes unique student identifiers within file types, including the county college noncredit file, which allows unduplicated headcounts per college to be calculated and reported. Customized-training headcounts are not available because those data capture only registrations, which may count the same student more than once if they register for more than one offering. While there may be overlap between the SURE and customized-training data as presented, NJOSHE does not have a way of knowing to what extent that may occur.

Table 3 reports on registrations and clock hours across course content categories (career enhancement and avocational) for SURE and customized-training data collected by NJOSHE.

Table 3: Total Registrations and Clock Hours by Noncredit Type, FY2021-22

| Noncredit Type | FY2021–22 Registrations | | FY2021–22 Sum of Clock Hours | |
|--|-------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|
| | N | % | N | % |
| SURE Data | 55,727 | 100.0 | 2,802,273 | 100.0 |
| Occupational Training/Career Enhancement | 35,450 | 63.6 | 1,612,462 | 57.5 |
| Personal Interest/Avocational | 20,277 | 36.4 | 1,189,810 | 42.5 |
| Customized Training | 15,979 | 100.0 | 194,449 | 100.0 |

Source: NJOSHE’s Student Unit Records (SURE) and customized-training data.

We narrow our focus to SURE data in Table 4 to investigate headcount enrollment and further investigate clock hours by noncredit type.

Table 4: Headcount and Clock Hours by Noncredit Type, FY2021-22

| Noncredit Type | Headcount | | Clock Hours | |
|--|-----------|-------|---------------------|------|
| | N | % | Median ^a | Mean |
| Occupational training/Career Enhancement | 24,781 | 64.6% | 15 | 65 |
| Personal Interest/Avocational | 13,573 | 35.4% | 16 | 88 |
| Total | 38,355 | 100% | N/A | N/A |

Source: NJOSHE's Student Unit Records (SURE) data.

^a Median is based on clock hours for each course, not for unique students.

Key findings from these data include the following:

- NJOSHE's SURE data reports an unduplicated headcount of 38,355 students with 55,728 registrations and a total sum of clock hours of 2,802,292. More noncredit enrollments were in courses that provided career enhancement than avocational content. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of noncredit students were enrolled in career enhancement, while 35 percent were in avocational offerings.
- Career enhancement composed well over half (58%) of noncredit educational clock hours compared with avocational offerings (43%).
- Median clock hours were similar for career enhancement and avocational offerings (15 and 16 hours, respectively). However, the higher mean clock hours for avocational offerings (88 hours versus 65 hours for career enhancement) reveals that some of those offerings involved more clock hours than most career enhancement offerings.

Across the offerings reported in NJOSHE's customized-training data, there were 15,979 registrations and 194,449 clock hours.

Enrollment and Demographics

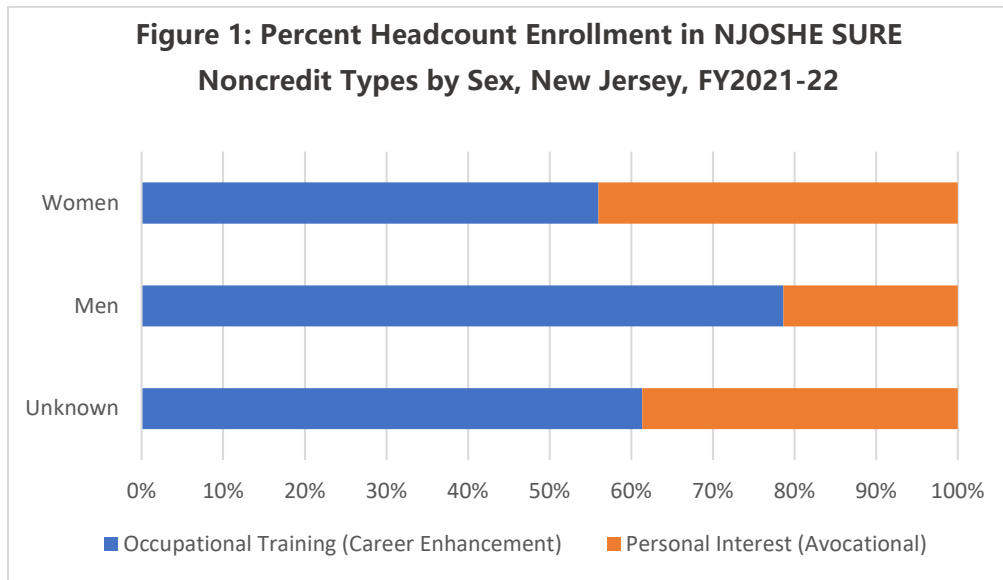
Key findings from the SURE system for noncredit offerings include the following:

- Although noncredit data are available for both sex²⁴ and race/ethnicity, missing data is an issue. Sex demographics are unknown for nearly one-quarter of SURE noncredit enrollments (22% for career enhancement and 25% for avocational offerings; see Figure 2). Race and ethnicity data are missing

²⁴ NJOSHE's data dictionary has only three answer choices for sex: male, female, or unknown.

for nearly two-thirds (60%) of students enrolled in career enhancement and more than three-quarters (79%) of those enrolled personal interest/avocational offerings (See Figure 4).

- Figure 1 shows that among SURE noncredit students reporting sex data, men enrolled in career enhancement over avocational offerings at a higher rate (79% vs. 21%) than women (56% vs. 44%). Figure 2 reveals that women accounted for over half (56%) of avocational enrollees whereas men accounted for only 20 percent; data are unavailable for the remaining 25 percent. Although men tended to choose career enhancement at higher rates than women, the sex breakdown within career enhancement offerings was more or less equal (40% male versus 39% female, with 22% unknown) because more women than men enrolled in noncredit education overall (17,111 women compared to 12,563 men).
- Nonresidents²⁵ and members of most racial and ethnic groups were more likely to enroll in career enhancement than in avocational noncredit offerings. (See Figure 3.) For example, career enhancement was favored by 89 percent of nonresidents and 83 percent of Hispanics. Students reporting two or more races were the exception, choosing career enhancement only 46 percent of the time.



²⁵ Under current standards set by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), "only US citizens or permanent residents are reported with a requisite self-reported race/ethnicity category." (IPEDS. [n.d.]. *Definitions for New Race and Ethnicity Categories*. US Department of Education. <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/report-your-data/race-ethnicity-definitions#:~:text=Eligible%20noncitizens%20include%20all%20students,time%20of%20high%20school%20graduation>). NJOSHE's non-resident category is aligned with the NCES/IPEDS definition of "eligible noncitizen": "All students who completed high school or a GED equivalency within the United States (including DACA and undocumented students) and who were not on an F-1 nonimmigrant student visa at the time of high school graduation".

Figure 2: Percent Headcount Enrollment by Sex within NJOSHE SURE Noncredit Types, New Jersey, 2021-22

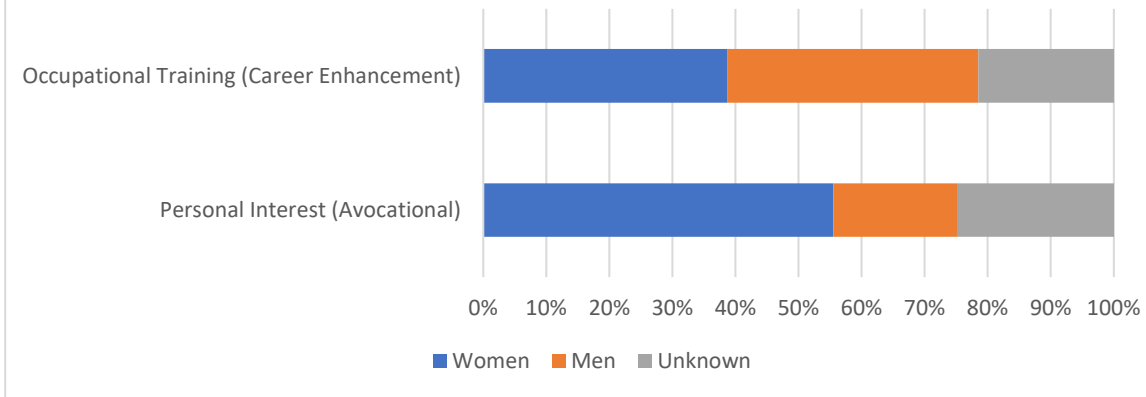


Figure 3: Percent Headcount Enrollment in NJOSHE SURE Noncredit Types by Race and Ethnicity, New Jersey, FY2021-22

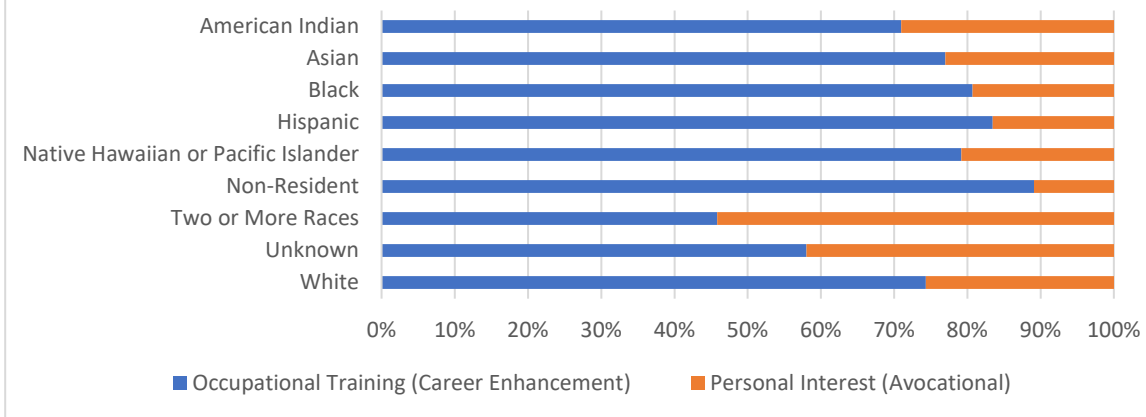
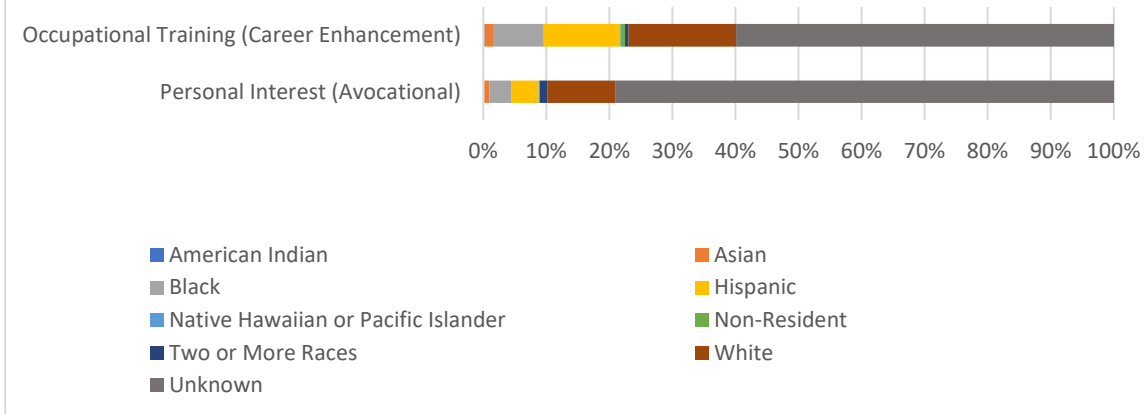
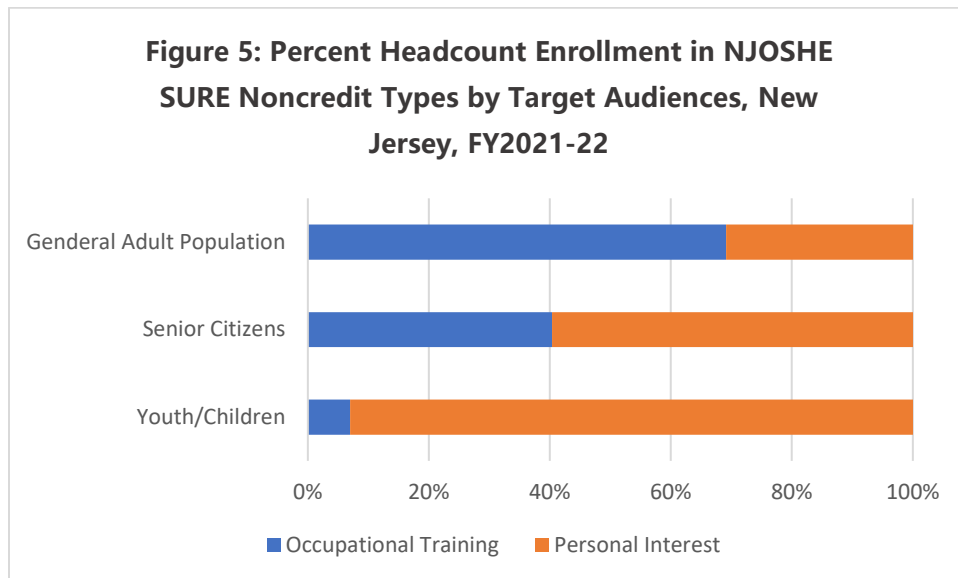


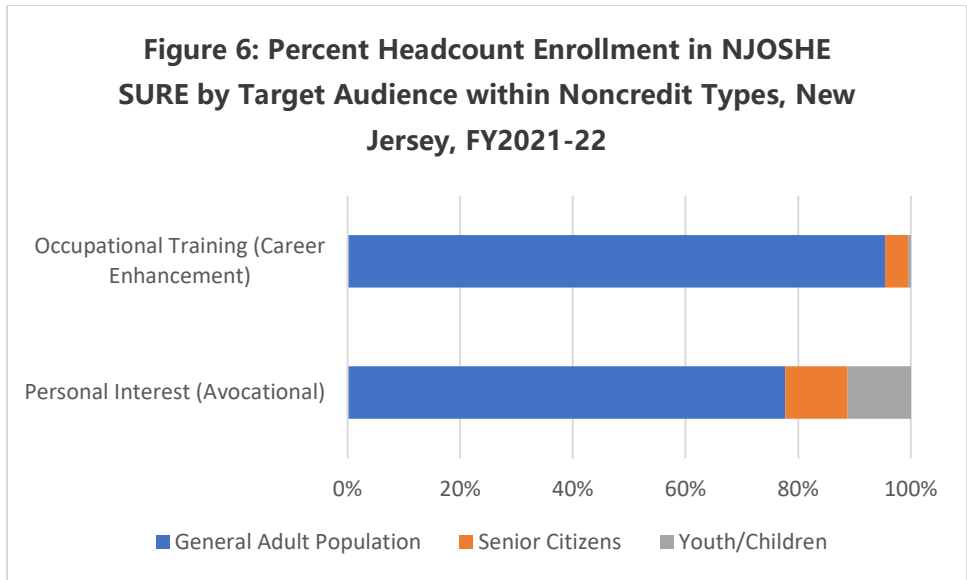
Figure 4: Percent Headcount Enrollment in NJOSHE SURE by Race and Ethnicity within Noncredit Types, New Jersey, FY2021-22



New Jersey is the first of our project states to have data for intended audiences of noncredit offerings. Related findings are shown in Figures 5 and 6.

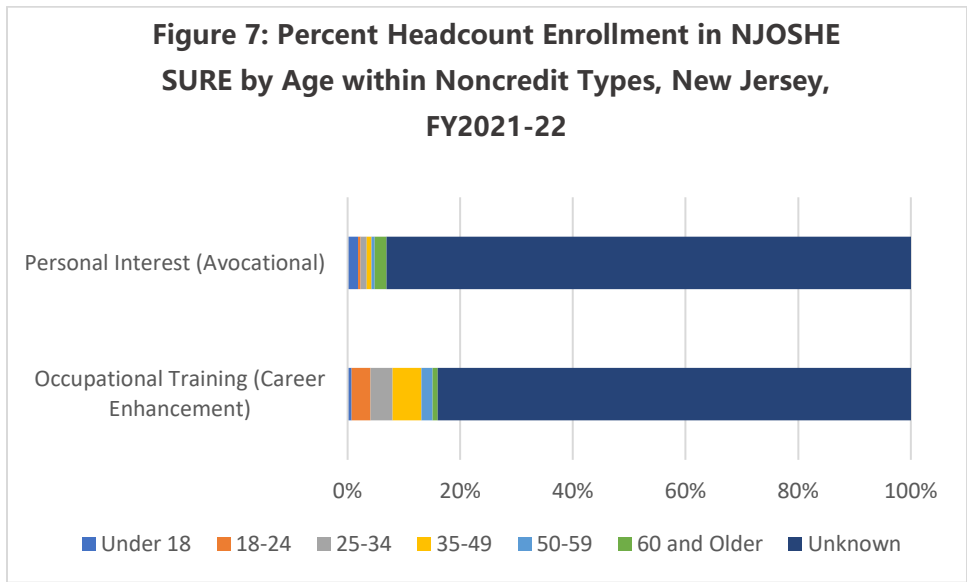
- There were 34,198 individuals enrolled in noncredit offerings targeted toward the general adult population, 2,516 in those designed specifically for senior citizens, and 1,640 in offerings intended for youth/children. Over two-thirds (69%) of enrollments in general adult offerings were in the career enhancement category. Avocational offerings accounted for the majority of enrollments in courses designed both for senior citizens and for youth/children (60% and 93%, respectively).
- By target audiences, the vast majority (95%) of career enhancement offerings were geared toward the general adult population. Only a small percentage (4%) of those offerings were targeted toward senior citizens, and less than 1 percent were intended for youth/children. Most (78%) avocational headcounts were in offerings targeted toward the general adult population. The remaining headcount enrollments in avocational offerings were evenly split between courses targeted toward senior citizens and youth/children, each accounting for 11 percent.





Note: There is one headcount enrollment with a personal interest (personal interest/avocational) course content for which the target audience is unknown. This represents less than 1% of all enrollments with personal interest/avocational course content so is not represented in the figure.

In addition to target audience, NJOSHE collects data on the age of participants in noncredit offerings. These data are shown in Figure 7. We do not provide detailed breakdowns of noncredit type by age due to the high rate of missingness: 93 percent of data are missing for avocational offerings, and 84 percent of data are missing for career enhancement offerings.



Conclusion

Several conclusions and lessons learned from the findings from NJOSHE and community college data contribute to broader lessons about the noncredit data infrastructure.

First, NJOSHE has established data systems from which it can build. Course content, demographic, and target audience data are among the elements currently available in the SURE data. Customized-training data have some data elements unique to those offerings. These elements provide a firm basis from which NJOSHE may consider expanding its noncredit data collection. Additional data elements NJOSHE does not currently request that might inform policy and practice are program-level details about course content, lengths, and delivery modes; finance data, especially important given New Jersey lacks state-level funding for noncredit education; and student-outcomes data.

Second, knowledge about the potential overlap between the SURE data and customized-training data would present a clearer picture of noncredit education in New Jersey. Numbers of enrollments or registrations in course content areas suggest that noncredit education in occupational training/career enhancement and personal interest/avocational offerings, as well as customized training, are relevant to the needs of key stakeholders and target audiences in the state. A clearer understanding of those data will help to better meet these needs.

The State Noncredit Data Project team is working toward a comprehensive cross-state analysis that includes this work in New Jersey while continuing to cultivate a deeper understanding of the developing national noncredit data taxonomy. Our findings from individual states can help support efforts to develop the noncredit data infrastructure in states across the country.

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