

Lakeland Community College

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Lakeland Community College opened its doors in 1967 as the first college in Ohio established by a vote of local citizens committed to providing higher education opportunities for people in the community. Since the college began, we have had the extraordinary opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our learners. Lakeland's mission is to provide quality learning opportunities to meet the social and economic needs of the community.

Our current strategic plan supports our core purpose to impact lives through learning, and our core values of excellence, accessibility, diversity, integrity, innovation, and joy. Strategic plan priorities include student success, access and affordability, financial capacity, quality, and opportunity.

We offer more than 130 associate degree and certificate programs, as well as numerous noncredit courses, seminars and training opportunities for community members of all ages. Each year, approximately 13,000 students take advantage of our credit coursework. Over 60 percent of our students reside in Lake County, and the remaining 40 percent reside in neighboring Cuyahoga, Geauga and Ashtabula counties.

Of the 13,000 students, approximately 42 percent are full-time, 60 percent are women, the average age is 28, and about 50 percent receive financial aid. We serve a growing number of minority students. Approximately 7,000 community members participate each year in our noncredit programming.

Lakeland employs 129 full-time and 458 part-time faculty members dedicated to student success and the social and economic needs of the community. Their work is supported by 223 full-time and 104 part-time staff and administrators. Approximately 250 individuals deliver our noncredit programming.

Five associate degrees are offered: Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Applied Business, and Associate of Technical Studies. We have numerous articulation agreements for seamless transfer to four-year institutions, several of which offer courses on our campus. Many of our degree and certificate programs prepare graduates to immediately enter the workforce upon program completion.

Our distance learning program has grown steadily over the last decade. Over 3,000 students are currently taking fully online courses, and 645 students are taking courses in a hybrid format. All five of our degree programs have been approved to be offered in an online format.

We continue to offer robust programming in the performing and visual arts, and our athletics program remains strong as we field seven intercollegiate teams each year. We are very proud that our student athletes succeed academically as well as athletically.

Classes are offered at our main campus in Kirtland. A limited number of courses are also offered at a course location in Madison, Ohio, 15 miles from our campus. The opening of the Holden University Center in Fall 2011 allows students to complete a bachelor's degree at Lakeland through partnerships with four-year colleges and universities.

Our AQIP journey over the last four years has been significantly impacted by the financial challenges posed by declining state and local revenues. In order to meet these challenges and stay true to our mission and values, we successfully undertook two major local levy campaigns in 2010 and 2011.

Data-informed decision making became even more important to us as we had to learn to do more with fewer resources. In 2011, we began an AQIP action project titled Develop and Implement an Evidence-based Culture of Continuous Quality Improvement which allowed us to develop a Progress Center using Taskstream's Accountability Management System software. All departments develop goals, establish targets, and measure progress and effectiveness. Our Progress Center also allows us to systematically track and address non-academic complaints through a process recently put in place as a result of our Establishing a Process for Student/Stakeholder Non-Academic Complaints action project.

Student learning has particularly benefitted from the Progress Center as academic departments and programs enter assessment information into the center to track achievement of student learning outcomes. We now systematically track achievement and are able to address challenges as they arise.

Another significant AQIP action project for us was integrating the University Center of Lakeland Community College. A 2010 community survey revealed that the highest priority for Lakeland should be partnerships with four-year universities so students can receive a bachelor's degree in the county. To meet this articulated need, we promised the community that if our 2010 levy passed we would dedicate the required resources to this endeavor. Through this action project, we created a seamless transition for the opening of a new facility with state-of-the-art classrooms in only 10 months. There are now seven four-year colleges and universities offering 15 programs. Discussions are underway for further expansion.

The state of Ohio funding model has recently shifted to performance-based funding from an enrollment-based funding model. Several of our AQIP action projects over the past few years have allowed us to put the processes in place which position us to successfully make this transition. The Mandatory New Student Orientation action project, the Improving Student Success by Eliminating Late Registration and Instituting Mandatory Placement action project, and the current Increasing Student Success – Focus on Completion action project will help us assist students in reaching their goals under the new funding formula.

Another challenge facing our college will be the anticipated increasing number of employees retiring as the retirement system in Ohio undergoes a fundamental change at the same time as increasing numbers of employees are reaching retirement age. Lakeland has enjoyed decades of low turnover, but this has the potential to change in 2015 with the amendments to the state retirement law making retirement prior to June 30, 2015 more attractive. Our current Succession Planning and Talent Development action project allows us to put in place the systems we need to successfully promote or hire those individuals who will help us continue to serve our students and the community.

Over the last several years, Lakeland has intensified its commitment to student success and completion. Using the nationally renowned Academic Pathways model, we recently launched a comprehensive plan to strengthen student engagement in their fields of study, as well as supportive services geared to each stage of degree or certificate completion. The Academic Pathways initiative enhances and affirms our long-standing values of providing rigorous, high quality academic experiences for students, and the support they need to reach their goals.