



Fourth Report on the Condition of Higher Education in Ohio



## Underrepresented Ohioans Need More Education To Meet the State's Workforce Needs

Ohio needs to deliver high quality education to more underrepresented students to meet workforce needs

**Ohio**

John R. Kasich, Governor  
Jim Petro, Chancellor

University System of Ohio  
Board of Regents

April 2011

Highlights from the Fourth Report on the  
Condition of Higher Education in Ohio

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## 2 What are barriers for underrepresented citizens? How can they be overcome?

### Conclusions:

- 1) Ohio must take bold actions to overcome barriers for underrepresented citizens, including issues involving academic preparedness, economic situation, knowledge and support systems, cultural preparedness and higher education structure/course/program delivery.
- 2) Ohio and many other states have many programs designed to assist low-income, underrepresented students, but many students and families are not aware of the programs, and many colleges are not aware of successful programs in other colleges.

## 3 How does Ohio's degree production compare with the nation?

### Conclusions:

- 1) Ohio must improve degree production at the graduate level.
- 2) Ohio has made progress during the last decade, but still must "catch up" with other states in degree production.

## 4 How does Ohio's degree production compare with the nation? What are the contributions of various institutional sectors to degree attainment?

### Conclusions:

- 1) Public and private colleges and universities are producing substantial numbers of degrees.
- 2) With the demands of a knowledge economy, Ohio should focus on awarding more STEM degrees, particularly at the baccalaureate level.

## 5 What are the linkages among the economy, employers, and higher education?

### Conclusions:

- 1) Work is being redefined by a technology- and information-driven global economy. A postsecondary degree or credential is increasingly valued in the marketplace for both new labor force entrants and those already employed. While gaining ground, Ohio is behind other states in the educational attainment of its citizens.
- 2) Four in 10 Ohio employers report having a hard time finding qualified workers.
- 3) Ohio's associate and bachelor's graduates stay in Ohio and earn high wages.
- 4) Ohioans are making significant investments to improve the economic well-being of the state with the Third Frontier, new student internships for businesses and other programs designed to improve the lives of Ohioans.
- 5) Ohio is realizing some improvements in its economic competitiveness.
- 6) Ohio needs better data across the P-20/workforce spectrum to help students be more successful and meet employers' needs.

## Underrepresented Ohioans Need More Education to Meet the State's Workforce Needs

*The Fourth Report on the Condition of Higher Education in Ohio* focuses on the need to educate more underrepresented Ohioans. A knowledge economy demands capable, highly skilled workers. Four in 10 Ohio employers report having a hard or very hard time finding qualified workers. Not enough Ohioans have degrees; degree attainment is particularly low among underrepresented adults and racial-ethnic, first-generation college and low-income individuals. Ohio must tap the capabilities of these citizens to meet future manpower needs. Ohio's businesses and industries are more likely to expand and new industries are more likely to move to Ohio when highly skilled workers are available.

It is important for Ohio that these students attain degrees. The degree matters for the individual, the state, and businesses and industries. Those who earn associate and bachelor's degrees in Ohio, stay in Ohio. They earn good incomes. They have low unemployment rates. Most of Ohio's future jobs will require some post-secondary education.

To assess Ohio's potential to educate many more underrepresented students who are ready for the workforce, the Ohio Board of Regents asked five questions. Those questions and their conclusions are summarized in this document.

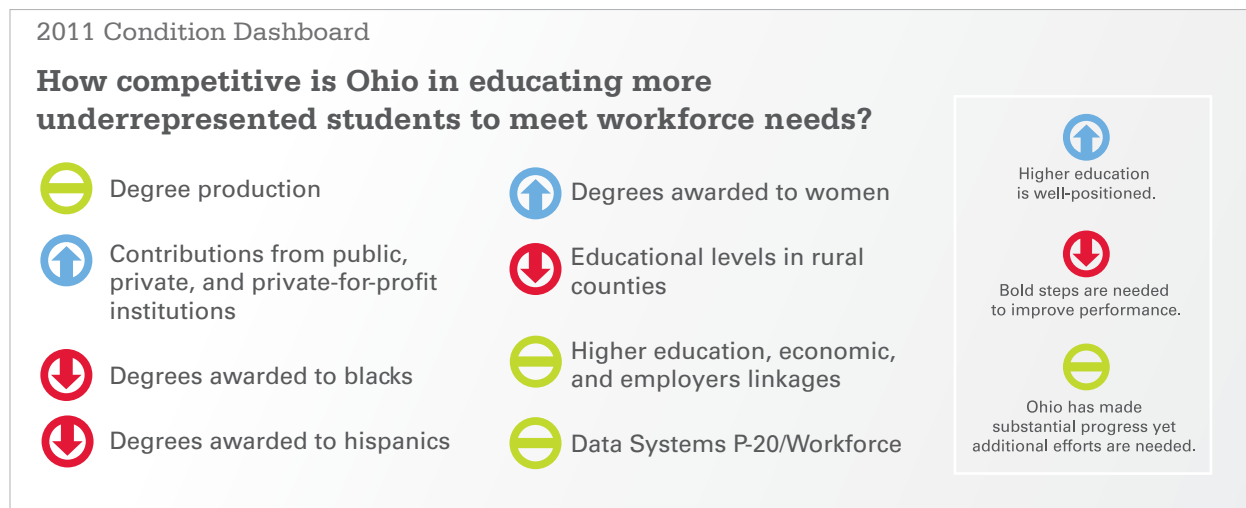
### 1 Who is underrepresented? How and when are they underrepresented?

#### Conclusions:

- 1) Ohio's black and Hispanic populations lack the degrees they need to meet workforce demands; the gap is particularly wide for bachelor's and graduate degrees and for STEM degrees. While first-year enrollment is high, first-to-second year retention is low.
- 2) Women have made tremendous gains, yet a gap exists for doctoral STEM degrees.
- 3) Citizens in many of Ohio's small, rural Appalachian counties lack the degrees they need to meet workforce demands.
- 4) Adults (over age 24) make up half of the online enrollments.
- 5) The number of bachelor's degree recipients with one or more years of course work at a community college has grown dramatically.
- 6) Individuals who receive an undergraduate degree in Ohio, stay in Ohio.
- 7) Ohio should find ways to increase the number of degrees awarded to adults, low-income, first-generation college, underserved racial/ethnic groups and citizens from rural counties.
- 8) Ohio should find ways to increase the number of degrees awarded in the science, math, engineering and technology to adults, underserved racial/ethnic groups and women.
- 9) K-12 is a critical tipping point; lack of success in K-12 is a major barrier for many underrepresented students to succeed in college and the workplace.
- 10) Returning to college for the second year is a critical tipping point that is essential for underrepresented students to succeed economically.
- 11) Ohio has many programs designed to assist underrepresented students, but many students and families are not aware of the programs, and many colleges are not aware of successful programs in other colleges and states. Ohio needs a centralized source for all programs that have documented success in delivering high quality education to underrepresented groups.

## Underrepresented Ohioans Need More Education to Meet the State's Workforce Needs

If Ohio is to produce more underrepresented graduates in the numbers and disciplines needed for a thriving 21<sup>st</sup> century economy, how competitive is higher education? The Regents assess higher education's condition in the following dashboard:



In assessing the current condition of the University System of Ohio, keeping in mind the workforce needs of business and industry and the need to educate more underrepresented students, the Regents conclude:

- Ohio is improving degree attainment and degrees granted
- More Ohioans must earn degrees
- Ohio must find ways to increase the number of degrees awarded to adults, underrepresented racial/ethnic groups and citizens in rural counties
- Ohio must find ways to increase the number of degrees awarded in the science, technology, engineering, math and medical fields to adults, underrepresented racial/ethnic groups and women
- Ohio has a strong, diverse, high quality higher education system
- Ohio's higher education institutions are making noteworthy contributions to Ohio's workforce and economy and to its future economic strength
- Ohio's return on investment from the Third Frontier has been substantial
- Colleges and universities must make some improvements in preparing students effectively for a global economy
- Ohio has made substantial progress in moving toward a common academic calendar, in integrating the adult career centers into the University System of Ohio and streamlining less-expensive pathways to degrees
- Ohio has achieved success in growing its online educational offerings
- Ohio has improved services for veterans and their families
- Ohio needs better data across the P-20/workforce spectrum to help students succeed.

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**Consultant**  
Brenda Norman Albright served  
as consultant to the Board of  
Regents in the development of the  
*Condition Report*.